

Development of Bisexual Identity

Desenvolvimento da identidade bissexual

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Abstract *Bisexuality is the sexual, romantic, emotional and physical attraction that a person experiments for both of the biological sexes (men and women). Since the Venezuelan society is built under a heteronormative paradigm sometimes is considered that those sexualities, that drift apart from the social reality, are not comprehended thus generating a reject. Therefore, we conducted a study that was titled “Construction of Bisexual Identity in Venezuelan Adults: ‘It is Not a transition, I Just Simply Am Like That’” that had as a general objective the understanding of the bisexual identity in Venezuelan adults. This article contemplates one dimension of this major project degree. In-depths interviews were carried out to willing participants and the obtained data were analyzed with the constant comparative method following an emerging design. Among the results four major categories were described, however, in this article we will be only focusing on the development of the bisexual identity.*

Key words *Bisexuality, Bisexual identity, Experiences, Construction of meanings, Qualitative research*

Resumo *Bissexualidade é a atração sexual, romântica, emocional e física que uma pessoa experimenta para ambos os sexos biológicos (homens e mulheres). Uma vez que a sociedade venezuelana é construída sob um paradigma heteronormativo, às vezes, considera-se que aquelas sexualidades, que se afastam da realidade social, não são compreendidas, gerando assim um rejeito. Por isso, realizamos um estudo intitulado “Construção da identidade bissexual em adultos venezuelanos: ‘Não é uma transição, simplesmente sou assim’” que teve como objetivo geral a compreensão da identidade bissexual em adultos venezuelanos. Este artigo contempla uma dimensão deste grande grau de projeto. Entrevistas em profundidade foram realizadas para os participantes dispostos e os dados obtidos foram analisados com o método comparativo constante seguindo um design emergente. Entre os resultados, quatro grandes categorias foram descritas, no entanto, neste artigo iremos focar apenas no desenvolvimento da identidade bissexual.*

Palavras-chave *Bissexualidade, Identidade bissexual, Experiências, Construção de significados, Pesquisa qualitativa*

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Introduction

The sexual diversity found in the human being is a subject that throughout recent years has been more studied in both the positivist and emergent paradigms in order to generate new theoretical perspectives that allow a better comprehension of it. In spite of the growth of the academic research there still is a grand theoretical gap that limits the vision of the human sexuality¹. One of the main reasons that could explain this situation is the focalization of such studies in the heterosexual-homosexual dichotomy that enable a binary system which makes invisible other sexual identities².

As a result, bisexuality is seen as the sum of heterosexuality and homosexuality. Some theories, such as the essentialists, consider that the bisexual identity is a mask used to hide the true homosexual identity, whereas, the ones based on the social constructionism, acknowledge that it is a real identity³. In addition, it is important to highlight the social environment that is found in Venezuela, where there is a heteronormative culture, that seeks to position heterosexuality as a social and moral ideal to which all the individuals must aspire to arrive regardless of the person's homosexual or bisexual identity⁴.

With this article we aim to increase the theoretical value of the subject, because in agreement with what has been investigated, the stigmatization of the bisexuality, for being considered a "doubtful sexuality" or a "transitional sexuality", is still a topic of discussion filled with taboos, prejudgments and discrimination¹. Moreover, we will present some of the results of a larger investigation focusing on the development of the bisexual identity in venezuelan adults and the feelings and emotions associated with it. Given the previously mentioned this research had as a general objective the understanding of the bisexual identity in venezuelan adults.

Methodology

This article presents some of the results of a larger investigation in which the qualitative methodology was applied in order to dive in the reality and world of the participants.

Regarding the access to the field of investigation the interviews were conducted in familiar and safe places for the dialogue with a previous agreement with each participant. That is why some of the physical interviews were transformed

into virtual interviews using Skype. This modality was also used for the participants that live in Madrid. In addition, it is important to highlight that all the participants were informed, before conducting any interview, about the objective of the study as well as the methodology and the techniques applied to collect the data stating that if they wished to abandon the study they could. After informing the above mentioned each participant agreed and consented to be interviewed by the researchers. Also, the anonymity of the participants was guaranteed in order to prevent any moral, psychological, social, physical and emotional damage.

We carried out a theoretical sampling so the process of the recollection of the data was guided by the continuous comparison with the emerging theory. That way we approximated each case depending on the evolution of the theory⁵. The analysis of the interviews determined the characteristics of the next participant and opened new questions thanks to the different experiences and points of view associated with bisexuality. Moreover, we used a case-type sampling so as to study the construction of meanings in a determined social group, in this case venezuelan bisexual adults⁶. The snowball sampling was also carried out so the participants contacted by us led us to others as well as the convenience sampling. The sample was comprised of 8 venezuelan individuals, four men and four women, residing in Caracas and Madrid, ages 21 to 26, that identify as bisexual, from approximately the same social-economic status, with or without a partner from the same or opposite sex (Chart 1).

We applied the emerging design in order to analyze the construction of their meanings throughout their development and as a way to understand the reality through the point of view of the different social actors, implying that each of them is important for the development of the investigation⁷. In addition to that, this research design allowed us to create a theoretical ordering that came directly from the data collected from the participants and not from pre-established categories. In order to achieve this, we used the open coding from which the categories were born.

The technique that was used to recollect the data was in-depth interviews that allowed us to enter the most internal world of our participants obtaining, in that way, relevant information regarding their daily life, experiences and meanings. Furthermore, the analysis of the data started by the transcription of the in-depth interviews

Chart 1. Description of the participants.

Number	Name	Age	Sex	Partner	Residency	Nationality
1	B.F	21	Woman	No	Caracas	Venezuelan
2	A.T	23	Woman	Yes (M)	Caracas	Venezuelan
3	N.A	23	Man	No	Caracas	Venezuelan
4	L.T	26	Man	No	Caracas	Venezuelan
5	V.S	23	Woman	Yes (W)	Madrid	Venezuelan
6	M.T	22	Man	No	Madrid	Venezuelan
7	M.M	20	Man	No	Caracas	Venezuelan
8	P.B	26	Woman	Yes (M)	Caracas	Venezuelan

Source: own creation

and it was not until the analysis of each interview that we did not proceed to interview another participant. After that we proceeded to the open coding in order to generate the initial categories. Such categories are the product of the analysis through the constant comparative method which is based on the search of similarities and differences within the data so as to produce concepts, characteristics and categories according to repetitive patterns⁸. Once the initial categories were formed we selected the most relevant for the study in a process denominated axial coding. From this we put the most important category in the middle and we started to link it with the other categories and subcategories⁵. It is important to highlight that the relationships between all the categories are based on a theoretical scheme of the construction of the bisexual identity in the venezuelan context. The central core from which the other categories parted was the construction of the bisexual identity and from this four major dimensions were born: meanings associated with bisexuality, development of the bisexual identity, experiences of bisexuality and bisexuality in Venezuela. In this article only the second dimension will be developed.

Finally, in order to assure the quality and validity of this investigation we followed the criteria exposed by Martínez⁹ and Hernández et al.⁶. To ensure the internal reliability of the study we used electronic devices, such as voice recordings, so as to preserve the reality of the data and that it can be contemplated by external watchers. The external reliability was guaranteed through an identification of the participants and their context (social, physical and interpersonal) as well as for the realization of a list of biases by the hand of the investigators. The internal validity or credibility was ensured by the triangulation of theories and investigators, in which, from different

points of view of different evaluators and investigators, a group of data is interpreted in order to give it a structure. In addition to that before presenting the study we returned the results to the participants in order to confirm with them the conclusions of the investigation. The external validity or transferability was guaranteed by a diverse sample including people from both sexes, with or without a partner, in order to extend the results to other populations.

Analysis of results

Identification process with the bisexuality

In this study we came upon the fact that in order for a person to identify as bisexual he/she has to go through a process that for some of the participants has different meanings. Firstly, we have B.F's vision who comments that the process is slow in both the recognition and acceptance, *little by little I started to realize and little by little I started to accept it and now I speak it with more tranquility*. Also, we find A.T's experience, which is described by her as troubled, *with no doubt it is very troublesome*. Nevertheless, the participants L.T and P.B give a complete opposite vision to the ones mentioned before when they affirm that for them the process was neither chaotic nor problematic, *I do not feel that it was a chaotic process; I could not say to you like wow this was very heavy to me, for me it was not, do you understand me?* Taking this into consideration it can be presumed that the development of bisexuality varies according the individual experiences.

It is important to highlight that this process of identification with bisexuality has been divided in different phases in order to provide a better understanding of them. They start with the cu-

riosity to experiment until the complete acceptance. Below, we find a Figure 1 that allows the visualization of such phases:

“Curiosity to experiment”

The first phase of the development of the bisexual identity starts with the curiosity to experiment, which concerns being opened to experiment a lot of situations and not to be closed to the opportunities that are presented as the participant N.A explains, *I believe that is something like an open mind like being opened to taste a lot of things. More than curiosity is that, not to be closed to other things.* This curiosity may present itself in three different stages of the life cycle: childhood, adolescence and early adulthood.

Some participants recognize that in early years they felt a curiosity to interact with both sexes as L.T affirms, *shit... when I was a little boy I had girlfriends in the preschool but I also tried to kiss my male friends,* this agrees with what A.T comments *when I was a little girl, I always stared at other girls, but nothing, I did not like them.* What both participants stated relates to the mentioned by Freud (1905/1992)¹⁰ when the author affirms that in the child sexuality there are components that “from the beginning wrap other people as sexual objects”. Later, these components will get in contact with the genitality.

The next stage, the adolescence, is characterized by the emergence of sexual desires thanks to the effect of hormones in the blood torrent. In the monosexuality (hetero/homosexuality) the person begins to feel attracted by only one sex, meanwhile in the bisexual spectrum such attraction is generated by both, as N.A explains *when I was 15-16 I already had sexual desires and I was sure that it could work with both,* this agrees with what was mentioned by L.T, *yes, I had had a girl-*

friend and I had had relationships with women, but there was a moment in which I had feelings for men. Besides, I studied in an only-boys school, whenever I was with a friend, that stays in your house or invites you to a pool party and you change and stuff, that type of things counts and you say ‘I like this too, there is something’. Nonetheless, in contrast with L.T’s experience, M.M started to feel a curiosity to experiment with women, *I thought I was gay but then I started to accept and view a woman’s body, it didn’t turn me on, but I could say wow ‘she’s beautiful’ and stuff.* Consequently, and taking into consideration what was exposed by the participants, it can be believed that this curiosity in the adolescence is characterized by the desire to experiment with both sexes and not only one.

One of the particularities of the adolescence years is the psychosexual maturity that little by little develops. Authors like Erickson¹¹ establish that between the ages of twelve and twenty the person is looking for his/her identity. Sexuality plays a major role in this quest due to the fact that the adolescent also forms the sexual identity. Through the participants’ experiences we can appreciate what this author explains because it is evident how the sexual awakening is directed towards both sexes.

Authors like Arnett¹¹ affirm that the early adulthood is the period that extends from the eighteen to twenty-five years of age. During that time A.T felt the curiosity to experiment with the same sex *it was not until I was 19 that a weird curiosity got to me and I could not define it until one day I decided to try it and kiss this girl.* Also, she explains that after having experimented with another woman the curiosity started to grow more, *I did not think how amazing was the encounter but how it had opened more my curiosity for women.*

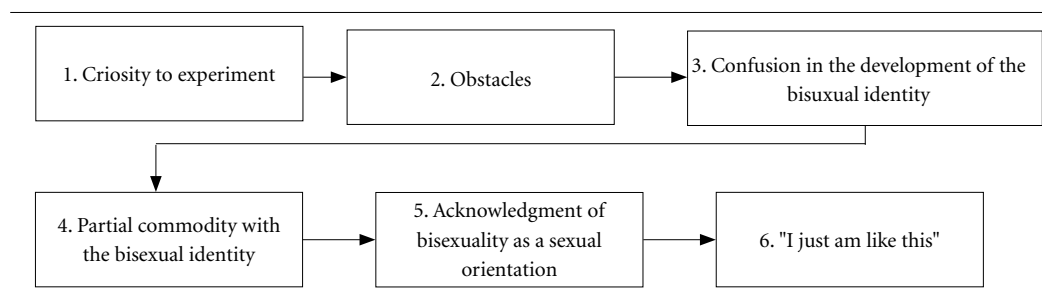


Figure 1. Process of Identification with bisexuality.

Source: own creation.

Obstacles

Once the curiosity to experiment appears in the bisexual person, he/she will face the second phase, which comprises some of the obstacles that may obstruct the way to the acknowledgement and acceptance of bisexuality. Such obstacles are: heterosexuality seen as easier and the lack of support found within the family.

Authors such as Berenstein¹² state that the heterosexual paradigm is the normative axis in which sexual differences collide because the social standards have placed the attraction towards the opposite sex as the only valid sexual orientation and an ideal that must be achieved⁴. Therefore, sexual minorities, such as the bisexual individuals, feel that the development of a heterosexual person, in contrast with their own, is easier, *obviously if the society encourages more the heterosexuality it feels like if it's easier* (B.F.). Hence, it can be presumed that the sexual orientation is the principle obstacle in the development of the bisexual identity seeing that there is a need to hide who the person really is because of fear of being rejected or judged.

Even though the sexual orientation is the principal obstacle in the course of development of the bisexual identity, its communication to others is seen as more difficult than to come out as a homosexual person. About this, B.F. comments *I believe that it would be easier telling my mom that I am a lesbian than telling her that I am bisexual because, for her, you are extending too much the game field, I think*, which agrees with what M.T says when he decided to come out to his sister, *I am a person that needs to live with his truth like I do not like to live in a lie, yes maybe it was easier telling my sister I am gay, but I know it is not true*.

Following the obstacles that a bisexual individual may encounter in the second phase is the lack of support. This feeling could appear because the bisexual person does not feel supported by others due to his/her sexual orientation and identity. About this B.F. comments *it is more difficult because you do not feel supported being bisexual or homosexual*. Moreover, the support within the family group is the main wish in the development of the bisexual identity as B.F. explains *the family support would be great, ok? I have my little brother but it would be even more awesome to sit down my parents and be able to discuss who I like regardless of the sex*.

It could be then that if supported by the family group and be able to express freely, the coping

with bisexuality may be within a positive rather than a negative pole. This can be related to what Arteaga and Mijares¹³ postulate in regard of a positive and receptive attitude towards homosexuality in the family group because “the process of discovery, construction and consolidation of the sexual identity is facilitated and liven up”.

Confusion in the development of the bisexual identity

The majority of the participants affirm that during the discovery of their bisexuality there is a time in which a constant self-questioning appears regarding their sexuality. The principal characteristics of this are that the individuals question what is happening in their lives as well as making comparisons with other people's experiences, that lead to a path of confusion about their identity. About this V.S comments *that self-questioning is like normal at the beginning, the first year, first year and a half, one is constantly questioning... it was always like what am I? what is happening here? something weird is happening that clearly does not affect everybody and I am not sure what it is*. The participant L.T agrees by saying *well I believe that at the beginning like everyone you are going to feel confused because I was like what is this that is happening? How come that I like one person and at the same time another?.* This self-questioning can be presented in different ways.

Firstly, we have to highlight that some participants start by believing that they may be homosexuals due to the attraction for the same sex. About this, N.A says *at the beginning I do not know everything was very confusing and I did not know if I was gay or this frustration because you are confused and you are 15-16 but you do not know what to do or to whom speak*, this can be related to what M.T lived *that's when I said I am gay and that's it, nothing is wrong, move on, and then I liked this woman and it was like what the fuck is happening?.*

On the contrary, V.S comments *it was definitely a confusion because I did not fit with anything that I had read, I never questioned if I was gay or not because I knew I was not gay*, which allows to understand that in this self-questioning the bisexual person may find himself/herself sure that he/she is not a homosexual individual because there is no relation with the experiences associated with this identity. Nonetheless, taking into consideration what has been stated, even though the person can be sure of not being homosexual he/she ignores what is his/her true identity.

The third way in which the self-questioning can present itself is when the person has previously identified as a homosexual, but starts to feel attracted for the opposite sex/gender. About this M.M says *for me I was gay, and it was like yeah I like women but I am something else, at the time it did not fit with me.*

The confusion in the identity leads the person to look for ways to cope with his/her sexuality. In that way, there are different strategies that can be found during this phase which in turn are grouped in search for help and individual strategies.

Search for Help

This coping strategy refers to when the bisexual person seeks help or information whether with a professional specialized in the area (i.e. a psychologist), or through the information collected on the internet in order to achieve a better understanding of what is happening.

Psychotherapy was one of the main coping mechanism used by the participants where they could work on the emotional, physical and psychological effects caused by the self-questioning. About this B.F comments *I realized that I identify with that, with being bisexual, because last summer I had a break down and went to see a psychologist which agrees with what P.B experimented with the psychologist there was a time when she said to me 'you are taking too lightly your bisexuality, let's talk about that, what means to you, what effect has on your life, with your partner', obviously with her I have worked more on that.*

Even though psychotherapy sessions are a space to discover oneself and to learn how to manage different situations authors like Fernandez¹⁴ affirm that they can also be an oppression mechanism for people from the LGBTI community seeing that the psychological interventions can go from conversion therapy to the tolerance of homosexual behavior, when in fact the aim should be the patient's acceptance. Having said that we agree with Jones¹⁴ who points out that there should be a bettering in the formal education and training in both psychology professionals and students about LGBTI issues due to the fact that many people are at risk of receiving psychological interventions that drift away from the objectives of the psychotherapy.

The internet is a tool that facilitates information about bisexuality in both theory and practice. However, the videos called "Coming Out Stories" are outlined as a mechanism to cope

with sexuality because through them a person can know how similar was someone else's experience. In that way, they find alternatives that help communicate with friends and eventually with family. About this B.F points out *I started watching coming out stories, I am not going to come out to my parents yet, but it helped with my friends because they gave me strength.* Authors such as Wuest¹⁵ affirm that these videos help LGBTI youth to overcome social obstacles and ease the identification process thanks to the acculturation and visibility.

Individual strategies

The individual strategies refer to different mechanisms applied by the participants to cope with the confusion, these do not involve any kind of external help but a personal management of the sexuality just as well for the self-questioning and the confusion itself.

The majority of the participants pointed out having denied, for a while, their sexual orientation and their identity as a way to cope with the confusion. Such denial can be towards the homosexual attraction, *at first I was in denial of the homosexual part* (L.T); the heterosexual attraction, *I thought that I was a lesbian, I mean, I thought that I was not going to like someone else, specially a man like I liked her* (A.T); or the bisexuality, *that word for me did not exist, such was the case that I said that bisexual people were not bisexual, that word for me was of no use to describe my sexuality, you were either gay or straight and I believe that comes with the denial of oneself* (B.F).

The difficulty to contemplate bisexuality as a sexual orientation seems to come from the monosexual structure of the occidental society because from the early years we have built a dichotomic system in which you are man or woman, heterosexual or homosexual, rejecting any other category that comes to burst the created structure¹⁶. In consequence, the bisexual person, being within the same system seems to deny for a moment his/her bisexuality in order to belong to a social group. In addition, the previously stated seems to deconstruct the myth surrounding the bisexuality as a bridge that facilitates the identification with homosexuality seeing that accepting oneself as homosexual seems to be less cumbersome due to the fact that it is not necessary to fight against a dichotomic structure that does not allow a third identity.

Other individual strategies, besides the denial, are the introspection, *I was 2 years trying to*

understand it myself before telling it to the people I wanted to share it with (A.T); crying, cry (B.F); spirituality I could say that if you sign up in a spiritual activity it is because you want to discover who you are or what is failing in your life obviously you will find answers (P.B); and watching pornography, there is bisexual pornography and I started watching that but not to masturbate but to see if I felt an attraction... (M.M).

Partial Commodity with the bisexual Identity

After dealing with the confusion through the coping mechanisms the bisexual individual starts to feel more comfortable with the attraction towards both sexes and/or genders without arriving yet to an acknowledgment or an acceptance as B.F explains *there are times in which my brain does not click yet that that is 100% me*. Nevertheless, during this stage starts the path to acceptance daring to pronounce out loud the word “bisexual” and experimenting with both sexes in a sexual, physical, emotional and romantic way as M.M explains *I had a relationship with a woman, not with the same, after that I had another relationship, in fact my longest relationship and the one I liked the most and I said to myself wow I do like this, I still like men, total and completely, and I have also had relationships with men, sexual and romantic, but I like it with women, I liked it, I enjoyed it*.

Acknowledgement of bisexuality as sexual orientation

As it happened in the first phase, “Curiosity to Experiment”, the acknowledgement of bisexuality can occur in different times of the life cycle: puberty, P.B *since I was 12-11 years old, it is not like when I was 17 I said wow I am bisexual*; adolescence, V.S *I think around 15 but I did not accept it until I was 20*; and early adulthood, M.T *I discovered this much older, I came out of the closet to my sister at 21 and I am going to be 23, it has been only 2 years*.

Along this phase we find that a person recognizes his/her bisexuality as a real sexual orientation for himself/herself defining as that and making sense of it in their lives just as B.F comments *for me it is a sexual orientation and the person that feels like that and defines like that is correct because that is what they think, no one is going to come up to me and say ‘no B you are not bisexual’, yes I am because I define like that*. This comes to agree-

ment with what V.S says *this word is mine and I am not going to let that you, external person, own it and give it the meaning that you like, this is what defines me so I make a sense of it how I like*.

This phase of the development of the bisexual identity can be related to what Cass¹⁷ proposes in her “model for the formation of the homosexual identity”, especially in the third stage named “identity tolerance”, in which the author explains there is more commitment with the homosexual identity. For this reason, in this phase there would be a greater sense of commitment with the bisexual identity that brings as results the acknowledgement of the physical, sexual and emotional needs.

“I just am like this”

The last phase of the development of the bisexual identity is characterized by the transformation of the commitment of the previous stage into acceptance. A greater congruence is found between the individual’s external and internal worlds by expressing his/her identity to himself/herself as well as to others. This acceptance leads the person to include the bisexuality in his/her identity. About this, L.T comments *I do not know if I accept my thing and try to live my life making my own rules instead of looking for some rules written somewhere, I believe that is easier*, which comes to an agreement with what P.B says *I believe that when you become an adult the real acceptance starts, I could not say to you that when I was child there was an acceptance because is a lie*.

Not only along this phase a person is capable to integrate his/her bisexuality in other aspects of life but notices that has always known that he/she is bisexual only that it had not been recognized or accepted in their reality. About this, P.B affirms *I always knew that I liked the two that relates to what M.M comments and I said well I am bisexual, and within me I always knew*.

Feelings and emotions associated with the development of the bisexual identity

Feelings and emotions are other important elements that join the development of the bisexual identity. Internal and external stimulus can determine an individual’s mood and generate cognitive, psychological and physical responses. Below we will expose the negative feelings, as well as the positive, that are present during the phases previously mentioned.

Negative feelings

Negative feelings are comprised by anxiety *anxiety was the feeling I most felt* which in turn transforms into fear *anxiety becomes fear* (B.F); vulnerability, more present during the confusion stage, *It was like I did not want to show that vulnerability that I was feeling inside because I was feeling very insecure* (M.T); *inadequacy there are not a lot of people who identify as bisexual so on one hand you have this happy heterosexual community and on the other hand you have this happy homosexual community and you are in the middle, you are neither one nor the other so it is complicated to adapt to the fact that you are purple, you are not red, you are not blue, but purple* (V.S); frustration, linked especially to the obstacles and confusion stages, *at the beginning I do not know everything was very confusing and I did not know if I was gay or this frustration because you are confused and you are 15-16 but you do not know what to do or to whom speak*, (N.A); and regret, *there's a type of blame, because all your life you have been told that that is not correct that it is not good, obviously there is a type of, I can say to you that the first time I was with a woman I regretted it* (P.B). In addition, it seems that these feelings are related to the stages of obstacles, confusion and partial commodity with the bisexual identity due to the fact that in these phases a person experiments the most amount of internal and external conflicts, which in turn have an impact in their emotional state. This relates to what Bardi et al.¹⁸ affirm when they state that in the face of the possibility of being homosexual feelings such as anxiety, fear and confusion arise, which in turn lead the homosexual person to deny his/her interests and behavior. The mentioned above is similar in the bisexual experience, specifically during the confusion and obstacle stages, where some people might deny their bisexual attraction and/or hide the true identity because of fear of being socially rejected.

Positive feelings

Positive feelings are found within a continuum that starts with the liberation feelings *I discover that I am bisexual and I tell you it was like a liberation process in which I could finally remove a weight from me* (M.T); it follows with the commodity with oneself *I felt more comfortable with myself and I felt more relaxed* (B.F); then the relief *it is a relief not having to hide this important part of me to my partner*; and lastly pride *now I*

am proud of my identity, I defend it if I have to, I know what battles to choose. Furthermore, it seems that these feelings are associated with the two last stages of the development of the bisexual identity where a person finally recognizes and accepts his/her bisexuality. The mentioned above relates to what authors such as De la Mora & Terradillos¹⁹ state regarding the culmination of the self-discovery process that leads the person to the complete internal acceptance of their homosexual identity where feelings of completeness and happiness are found.

Discussion

The development of the bisexual identity goes through six phases, which are: curiosity to experiment, obstacles, confusion in the development of the bisexual identity, partial commodity with the bisexual identity, acknowledgement of the bisexuality as a sexual orientation and "I just am like this". The first three explore the emergence of the attraction for both sexes/genders, the difficulties that a person has to face both personally and socially as well as the self-questioning that comes around when being attracted by men and women which in turn brings as result that the individual seeks help with different coping mechanisms, for instance: psychotherapy, looking up information on the internet or the denial of the bisexuality. However, the last three refer to the acceptance path. Firstly, a person starts feeling more comfortable with himself/herself and as a result experiments with both sexes getting closer to bisexuality, for later recognizing it as a sexual orientation. In the last phase, a person is capable to integrate all the aspects of his/her life achieving a much greater sense of congruence between the internal and external world arriving to say: "I am bisexual".

An important part of the development of the bisexual identity are the emotional experiences that join the process. We find negative emotions and feelings, such as: anxiety, fear, frustration, inadequacy, vulnerability and regret, which are linked to the first stages of this development because those are the ones that have a negative impact in the emotional state. The positive emotions and feelings (liberation, commodity with oneself, relief and pride) can be related with the last two phases in which the acknowledgement and acceptance imply a bettering in the individual's subjective well-being.

One aspect that caught our attention is that in the development of bisexuality those negative

emotions and feelings, reported on the first stages, generate an impact on the physical, emotional and psychological state due to the fact that the person must confront himself/herself with a series of social obstacles and internal confusions, such as a constant self-questioning (i.e. "why do I like both and not one?"). Some of the participants along the study manifested having experienced high levels of stress, insecurity, inadequacy, anxiety, fear, frustration and depression that interfere with the adequate course of their daily lives. In addition to that, we believe that the theoretical gap that exists regarding bisexuality contributes to the discomfort found in the participants because they are not able to find valid information that enlighten them on the course of development of their identity. Also, the negative connotations of bisexuality that are found socially in the common language nourishes the prejudgments and stereotypes that influence the professional and ethical exercise of psychologists.

The same misinformation reported during the stages does not help to answer why there is an attraction towards two sexes/genders so the person seeks help in order to comprehend this because socially it is stipulated that one must like only one sex (and it is preferred to like the opposite), and even though the bisexual individual

does not seem to be trying to eliminate the system man/woman, thus recognizing a binarism, it is in fact modifying it because he/she feels attracted to both sexes/genders and is comfortable with it. Therefore, does the bisexual individual is looking to overcome the factors imposed by the culture? When at the final stage one of the main characteristics is in integrating both the internal and external worlds in which the monosexual culture is still present. Our answer to that is that once bisexuality is recognized and accepted in the individual it partially overcomes those factors building a bridge between monosexuality and polysexuality, because on one hand the person recognizes an attraction towards two (man and woman), breaking with the monosexuality patterns; and on the other hand, that same attraction is restricted to two, alienating from what characterizes the polysexuality.

Finally, regarding the limitations of the study we can mention the difficulties to obtain the sample because some people did not consent and agreed to be interviewed by the researchers. We contacted approximately 14 people but we only received consent and agreement from 8. Furthermore, the acquisition of the bibliographical material related to the subject of study was also difficult to obtain especially in spanish.

Collaborations

JPP Gómez: has collaborated in the conception and research design, methodology, analysis of results and redaction. Y Arenas: has collaborated in the conception and research design, methodology, supervision of data collection and analysis of results, conclusions extractions and redaction.

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