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## **Masculinity in Universities: State of the Art**

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Date of publication: February 21st, 2021

Edition period: February 2021 – June 2021

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**To cite this article:** Castro Franco, B.E, Carmona, Parra, J.A. (2021). Masculinity in Universities: State of the Art, *Masculinities and Social Change*, 10(1).77-108. <https://doi.org/10.17583/MCS.2021.5487>

**To link this article:** <https://doi.org/10.17583/MCS.2021.5487>

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# Masculinity in Universities: State of the Art

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## Abstract

This article is the result of a review of existing research on masculinity in the university context. The objective of this study was to determine the topics of analysis, characteristics and trends of recent studies in this field. A search was conducted on Scopus and Ebsco, using the search terms: masculinity and university students, which yielded 72 studies for analysis. The most explored topics among the research reviewed were: the construction of masculinity, male social norms and gender stereotypes, romantic relationships, masculinity and health, attitudes toward sexual minorities and their effects, masculinity and violence, and masculinity and alcohol consumption and the recognition of new models of masculinities. It concluded that the formation of masculinity in the university environment is a complex experience, influenced by the mix of traditional masculinity and overlaid with cultural, social, historical, and personal factors.

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**Keywords:** masculinity in university students, gender, hegemonic masculinity, and the construction of masculinity

# Las Masculinidades en la Universidad: El Estado de la Cuestión

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## Resumen

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Este artículo es el resultado de una revisión de las investigaciones existentes sobre la masculinidad en el contexto universitario. El objetivo de este estudio fue determinar los temas de análisis, características y tendencias de los estudios recientes en este campo. Se realizó una búsqueda en Scopus y Ebsco, utilizando los términos de búsqueda: masculinidad y estudiantes universitarios, que arrojó 72 estudios para su análisis. Los temas más explorados entre las investigaciones revisadas fueron: la construcción de la masculinidad, las normas sociales masculinas y los estereotipos de género, las relaciones románticas, la masculinidad y la salud, las actitudes hacia las minorías sexuales y sus efectos, la masculinidad y la violencia, y la masculinidad y el consumo de alcohol y el reconocimiento de nuevos modelos de masculinidades. Concluyó que la formación de la masculinidad en el entorno universitario es una experiencia compleja, influida por la mezcla de la masculinidad tradicional y superpuesta a factores culturales, sociales, históricos y personales.

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**Palabras clave:** masculinidad en estudiantes universitarios, género, masculinidad hegemónica, construcción de la masculinidad

**T**he study of university masculinity is an issue influenced by conceptual categories that include youth, sex, gender, and the construction of subjectivity. These are linked to the assumption that the university is a space for education, accommodate multiple voices, and can broaden ideas about how masculinity can be oriented toward balanced relationships. However, the literature indicates that being a university student is not enough for men to break with traditional masculinity and move forward in organizing new masculinities that contribute to their own well-being, while decreasing violence against women and people with diverse sexualities. Therefore, the objective of this review of existing research is to identify the characteristics and issues that are addressed in studies of masculinity by university students in order to advance the understanding of the experience of masculinity in a specific context: The university in relation to the cultural and historical aspects in which it is immersed and whose discourses in practice oscillate between the traditional and the emerging, thus contributing to the formation of young men, once strategies are identified that favor transformations of masculinities by university students from an equity perspective. On the other hand, it is considered that this review may be of interest to university educators, gender researchers, university training, and researchers in the human sciences. To achieve this purpose, this review article has been organized, therefore, in three sections: the method of search and selection of studies, the results derived from these studies and the conclusions

### **Method**

For the construction of the review article on masculinity in university students, a search was performed in Scopus, in June of 2019, using the search terms: masculinities and university students. Articles published between 2016 and 2019, in the sociology, psychology, arts, medicine, and business subareas, in English, Spanish, and Portuguese were selected. This resulted in a total of 117 documents, of which 60 were chosen. Articles election criteria included: mention of the masculinity category in university student populations or

higher education institutions, being research, that the study include male university students, between 18-25 years old, and that the study of masculinities be made explicit in the document.

Owing to the meagre presence of articles of Ibero-American origin in Scopus, the above-mentioned search was completed in Ebsco, in August of 2019. The term masculinities was chosen as a search marker for years between 2016-2019, which revealed 278 varied articles. This minimal specificity required subsequent filtering and reapplication of the selection criteria considered in Scopus, which resulted in the selection of 12 documents.

A total of 72 documents were chosen from the combination of the two data bases. Said documents were organized in Excel matrices, in accordance with the following categories: document title, authors, year, journal name, country in which the investigation was performed, topics, research objectives, methods, population, and results.

## **Results**

The results of the review of existing research on masculinities are organized in this article from two perspectives: First, from the characterization of the studies, from which the following categories are derived: year of publication, region to which the research refers, methodologies used in the research, techniques for analyzing the results, and theoretical perspectives that allow for the interpretation of the findings. Secondly, according to the topics identified in the articles, the following categories arise, with their corresponding subcategories: the construction of masculinity in the university context, social masculinity norms and gender stereotypes, romantic relationships, masculinity and health, attitudes toward sexual minorities and their effects, masculinity and gender violence, and masculinity and alcohol consumption.

Based on the characterization of the studies, we have below, the percentage of articles published on this topic, by year, may be observed. See Figure 1.

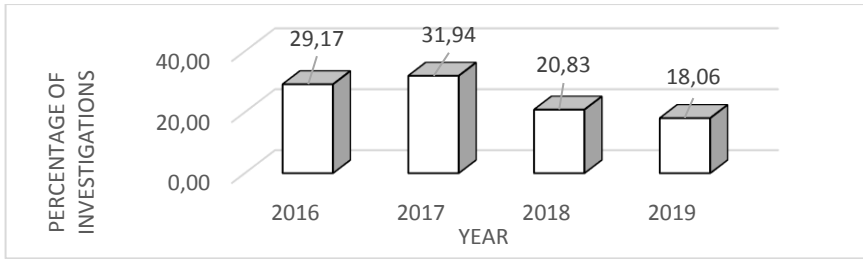


Figure 1. Year of investigation publication.

The following figure shows the percentage of investigations performed by region, in the analyzed sample. See Figure 2.

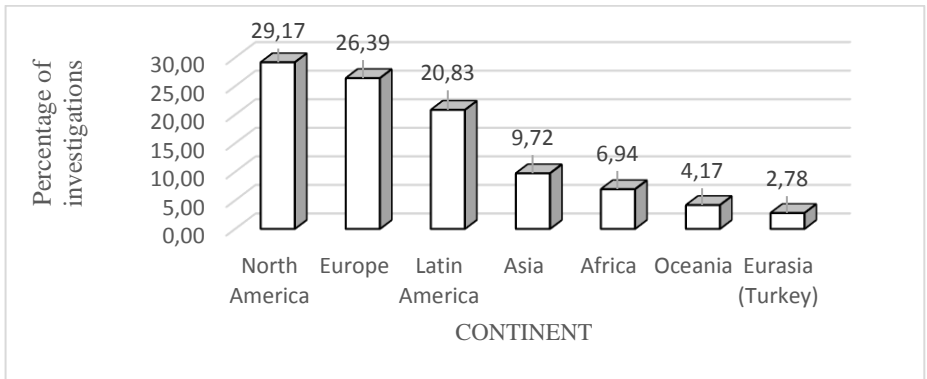


Figure 2. Origin of the population investigated.

Qualitative studies typified the dominant methodological approach. See Figure 3.

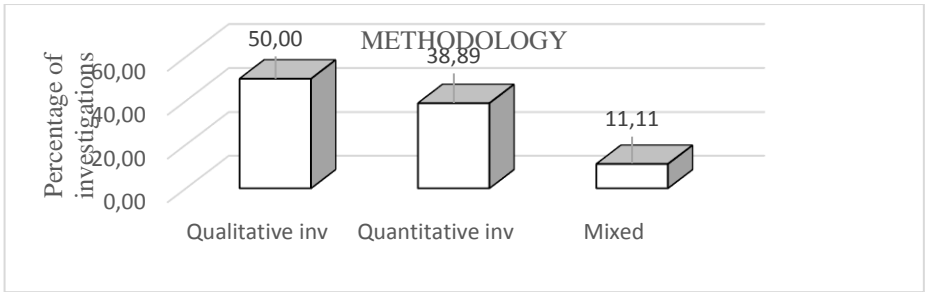


Figure 3. Method of investigation.

Transversal research represented the most common investigative design. See Figure 4.

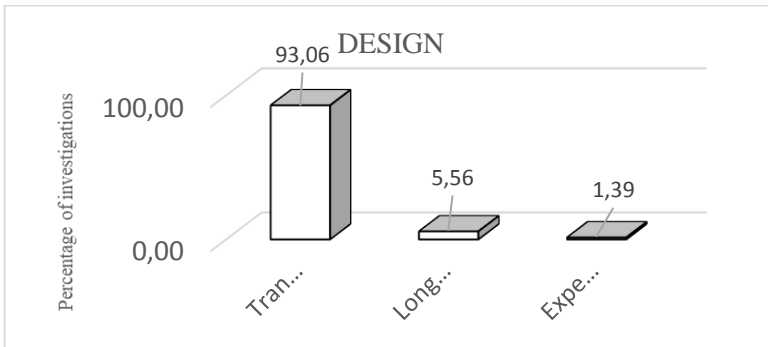
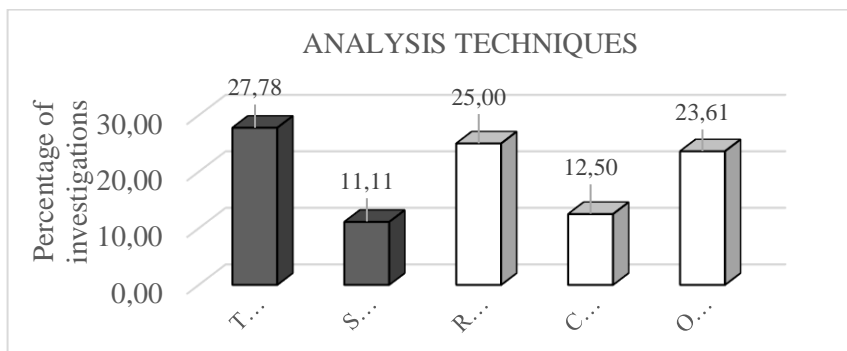


Figure 4. Investigative design.

The most commonly-used information collection technique identified was the interview, employed in 33 studies (45.83%), and sociodemographic questionnaires were used in 22 investigations (30.55%). The most commonly-used qualitative techniques were scales and inventories, in 33 documents (45.83%).

The most commonly-used analysis technique in qualitative investigations was thematic analysis. In quantitative investigations, regression analysis was used most often. See Figure 5.



*Figure 5.* Information analysis techniques.

Theoretically, constructivist gender perspectives were referred to most often. See Figure 6.



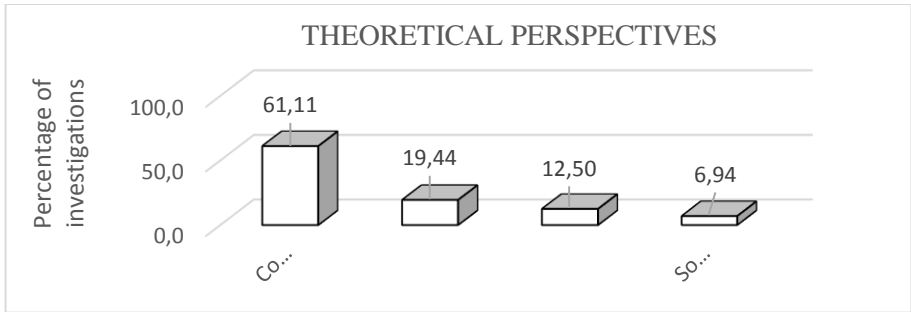


Figure 6. Theoretical investigation perspectives.

In terms of the most commonly-cited authors and theoretical approaches in said investigations, Connell and Messerschmidt’s hegemonic masculinity was found to have been cited in 15 studies (20.83%) and Butler’s performative perspective was cited in 10 articles (13.88%). Other authors cited less often than those mentioned above included Bourdieu, Foucault, Scott, Anderson, Kimmel, and Bonino.

The topics addressed in there view included: the construction of masculinity, in 44research (61.11%), the social norms of masculinity and gender stereotypes, in 21 investigations (29.16%), masculinity and health, in 15 articles (20.83%) masculinity and alcohol consumption, in eight studies (11.11%), and masculinity and violence, in eight investigations (11.11%).

The classification of the articles resulted, according to the topics covered, in the establishment of the categories presented in the diagram below, and their content is discussed in the following paragraphs. See Figure 7.

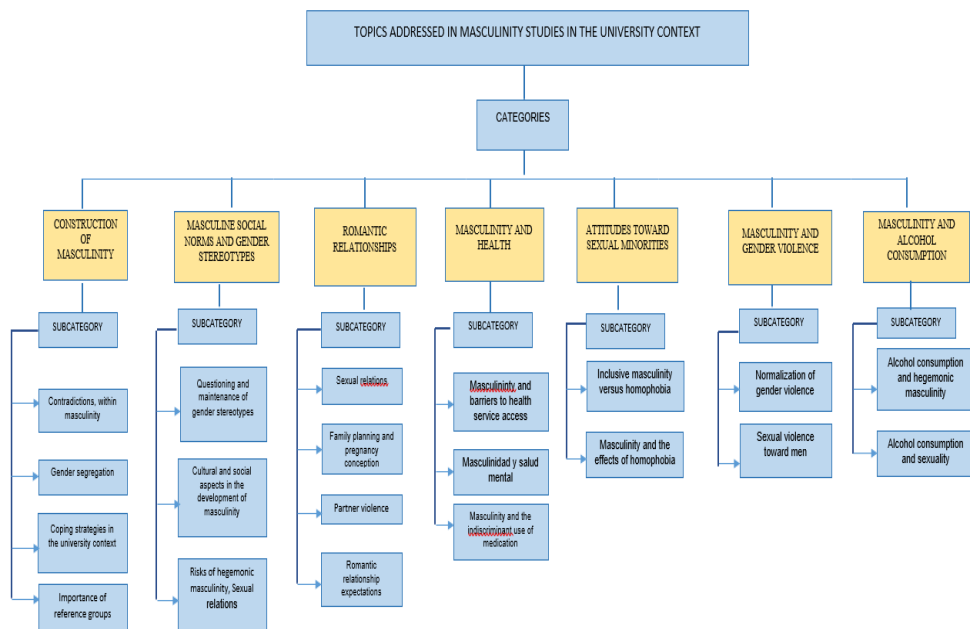


Figure 7. Topics addressed in masculinity studies in the university context.

### The Construction of Masculinity in the University Context.

In this category, consider that masculinities formed through the connection of social, historical, cultural, and personal processes. Therefore, the investigations grouped under this category addressed the following topics, which, for the effects of analysis, will be called subcategories: contradictions within masculinity, gender segregation, coping strategies in the university context, and the importance of reference groups.

**Contradictions within masculinity.** The investigations grouped into this subcategory addressed the ambivalence of male university students upon the linkage of traditional masculinity with emerging discourse, as reported in Lithuanian (Badjanova, Pipere, & Iliško, 2017), Hungarian (Bodó, Szabó, &

Turai, 2019), Africa (Singh, 2016), Ibero-American (Fedele, Masanet, & Ventura, 2019), and Latin American research (Cubillas et al., 2016; Leiva Vizcarra, 2017; Muñoz, 2017).

**Gender segregation.** Studies in various countries have indicated that male students exert segregation on females, particularly in engineering programs. This is expressed in narratives, practices, and rites which depend on the influence of cultural, social, and sex factors, as confirmed in Turkish (Bugay, Delevi, & Mullet, 2019), British (Jeffries, 2019), United States (Mehta, Hojjat, Smith, & Ayotte, 2016; Simon, Wagner, & Killion, 2017; Johansson, Andersson, Johansson, & Lidestav, 2019), and Canadian research (Marulanda & Radtke, 2019). Conversely, one United States investigation proposed that the orientation of gender, and not sex as such, led to variations in the establishment of relationships with individuals of the same and opposite sex, as well as with individuals from sexual minorities (Lammers & Byrd, 2019). Peruvian and Mexican studies have shown that female segregation may be found in engineering programs, owing to the roots of traditional masculinity (Cubillas et al., 2016; Rap & Oré, 2017).

**Coping strategies in the university environment.** A multiplicity of strategies have been shown to be employed by university students to confront emergent proposals of masculinity. This generates mobility in their masculine identities, which accounts for students' own representations, as well as that demanded by the environment. The coping strategies identified included an emphasis on masculinity focused on physical strength, according to one Chinese investigation (Dong, 2016). Further research from China (Liu, 2019), Singapore (Wong, Ringo, Wang, & Fisher, 2016), and Iran (Garousi, Roohollah, & Garrusi, 2016) have identified the adoption of hybrid masculinity. Similarly, in Taiwanese and Australian universities, masculinity deconstructions occur (Liu & Li, 2017; Stahl & Loeser, 2018).

In one investigation in New Zealand, students presented empowerment when faced with hegemonic models (King, 2018). In a Swedish research, university students generate changes after the conflict they experience with hegemonic masculinity as preschool teachers. (Heikkilä, & Hellman, 2017). Conversely, an Irish investigation revealed a group of university

students who protected their identity as stable (Firnhaber, Greenwood, & Quayle, 2019). One American investigation demonstrated that male students adapted a masculinity associated with hard work and achievement (Arbeit, Hershberg, Johnson, Lerner, & Lerner, 2017). Another such investigation with male university students who suffered from micro aggressions found that they implemented strategies for change or resistance to change, depending upon their evaluations of the adverse situational contexts with which they were faced (Quaylan, 2018). However, when the situations were not liminal, investigations with North American and Mexican university students have revealed that subversive expressions are made toward hegemonic masculinity (Chacón & Hernández, 2016; Friedrich, 2017). One investigation with Mexican students employed reflexive resistance strategies to combat the violence they experienced (Hernández, 2017).

Brazilian and Dominican studies have both identified that changes made by university students in order to connect with the university promote greater adherence to hegemonic masculinity (Fleming et al., 2019; Fonseca & De Freitas, 2017). A Brazilian investigation, however, proposed that using photographs of themselves, which they put on a smartphone, diverse representations of masculinity, many of which are non-traditional, may be reproduced (Dutra & Orellana, 2017). Another study conducted in Colombia showed that being men responded to hegemonic masculinity, based on economic success, authority, and active heterosexuality (Muñoz, 2017).

***The importance of reference groups.*** English research team found that peer group pressure represented a risk factor for ceasing alcohol consumption (Allmark, Grogan, & Jeffries, 2018). Other studies highlighted the importance of reference groups for men, as found in investigations performed in China (Dong, 2016), Nigeria (Dumbili & Williams, 2017), the United Kingdom (Carline, Gunby, & Taylor, 2018; Jeffries, 2019), United States (Fleming et al., 2019; Mehta et al., 2016; Salazar et al., 2018; Weinzimmer, & Twill, 2016), and Colombia (Muñoz, 2017). Similarly, reference group relevance has been considered a key tool for the socialization and education process of new masculinity in United States (Carline, et al., 2018), Mexican (Cubillas et al.,

2016; Hernández, 2016), Chilean (Leiva & Vizcarra, 2017), and Colombian research (Carmona et al., 2018).

Based upon the information provided in the above-mentioned studies, it may be said that male university students present contradictions in their constructed masculinity, between that which is traditional and emergent, and employ diverse strategies in their form: they consolidate hegemonic masculinity, develop hybrid masculinity, deconstruct, cause ruptures, and develop agency processes. Also, the influence of reference groups in masculinity construction is identified.

### **Masculine Societal Norms and Gender Stereotypes.**

This category refers to certain global and local behavioral parameters which are considered to allude to the masculine and feminine, and must be assumed by men and women. The following subcategories are identified: the questioning and maintenance of gender stereotypes, the risks of hegemonic masculinity, and those cultural and social aspects immerse in masculinity.

*The questioning and maintenance of gender stereotypes.* One investigation in Taiwan questioned certain gender stereotypes, as it did not identify differences between the sexes in care or critical thinking (Liu, Hsu, Hung, Wu, & Pai, 2019). In contrast, a Turkish investigation found that university students presented both hostile and benevolent sexism, which sustained gender inequality (Curun, Taysi, & Orcan, 2017). In accordance with investigations performed in the United States, students tended to consider certain spheres to be inherent to a given gender (Anderson, & Hopwood, 2017; Castro & Carmona, 2021; Sobal & Milgrim, 2019; Ramkissoon). Another such investigation found that male university student expectations traversed times of passive, reactionary, and proactive construction (Foste & Davis, 2018). Studies conducted in Spain, Mexico, Chile, and Colombia found that men were conformed with gender stereotypes, while women expressed greater resistance (Bustamante, 2018; Castro & Carmona, 2021; Cubillas et al. 2016; Leiva & Vizcarra, 2017; Muñoz, 2017).

***The risks of hegemonic masculinity.*** In Australian (De Andrade, Homel, & Mazerolle, 2019) and American investigations (Green, Kearns, Ledoux, Addis, & Marx, 2018) it was found that men's motivations to expose themselves to risk and self-destructive conduct was linked to traditional masculine norms. Similarly, studies conducted in Spain, Mexico, Chile, and Colombia warned of the social risks that the adoption of hegemonic masculinity norms represented (Carmona et al., 2018; Cubillas et al. 2016; García et al., 2018; Leiva & Vizcarra, 2017; Muñoz, 2017).

***Cultural and social aspects in the development of hegemonic masculinity.*** In an investigation performed in the United States, the adoption of hegemonic masculinity social norms was greater in white males, and was influenced by the institutional contexts in which students were immersed (Akpanudo, Huff, & Godwin, 2019). The same was also identified in Mexico, Chile, Colombia, and Spain (Bustamante, 2018; Cubillas et al. 2016; Leiva & Vizcarra, 2017; Muñoz, 2017).

Based on the above, it may be determined that traditional masculine norms, assumed by male university students, influence the institutional context in which they are immersed. The negative effects that represent the adoption of hegemonic masculinity have also been identified.

### **Romantic Relationships.**

This category refers to the influence of hegemonic masculinity on university students' romantic relationships. The aspects upon which studies grouped into this category are focused include: sexuality, family planning, pregnancy conception, romantic partner relationships, and partner violence.

***Sexual relations.*** A study performed in Tehran concluded that those capable of both masculine and feminine behavior in the face of the different events in their lives had greater levels of marital satisfaction and mental health (Ghasemian, Ebrahimi, & Jalilabadi, 2016). In Ethiopia and Nigeria, it was found that young men used Viagra, as guided by traditional gender ideology (Both, 2016 and Dumbili, 2016).

***Family planning and pregnancy conception.*** Studies in countries including Sweden, the United States, Brazil, and Cuba identified that men distance themselves from diverse aspects of pregnancy and family planning, and consider these to be women's matters (Christianson, Boman, & Essén, 2017; Hawkins, Dalessandro, & Sennott, 2019; Nascimento et al., 2018; Rodríguez et al., 2016).

***Expectations in romantic relationships.*** A Spanish study (Bustamante, 2018) as well as a joint investigation between Colombia, Spain, and Venezuela ((Fedele, et al., 2019). found that experiencing the affection inherent of romantic relationships differed between men and women. One investigation, led by Brazil and Portugal, showed that it was not sex, but rather the form in which masculinity and femininity, and the level at which the culture of honor is accepted, that motivates the type of infidelity that most affects men and women (Canto et al., 2017).

***Partner violence.*** Investigations in both Santo Domingo and Mexico have found that, in romantic relationships, violence is common between the sexes, and is directed by hegemonic masculinity (Fernández, & Flórez, 2018). Another Mexican study adds that women tend to suffer the consequences of said violence to a greater degree (Zamudio, Andrade, & Alvarado, 2017). This proposition was confirmed by the findings of a study performed in Colombia, in cooperation with Spain (García, et al., 2018).

In summary, it may be said that research indicates that romantic relationships throughout the world conserve traditional characteristics, with men displaying minimal commitment to the daily aspects of the relationship, which generates tension in women and fosters violence.

## **Masculinity and Health.**

In this category, gender and sex may influence the way in which men and women access health care. Several of the most relevant aspects of note in the research grouped into this category are: masculinity and barriers to health services access, masculinity and the indiscriminate use of medication, and masculinity and mental health.

***Masculinity and barriers to health service access.*** English (Allmark et al., 2018) and Australian studies (Ewert, Collyer, & Temple-Smith, 2016) have found that male university students did not seek health care, as their masculinity was associated with traditional gender stereotypes. Similarly, in Sweden, one study identified that men presented contradictory emotions regarding STI tests (Christianson et al., 2017). In contrast, one study of North American students indicated that masculine contingencies constituted a barrier for both sexes when seeking health care (Himmelstein & Sánchez, 2016). Brazilian and Cuban studies have found that male university students tended to avoid contact with health services (Nascimento et al., 2018; Rodríguez et al., 2016).

***Masculinity and the indiscriminant use of medication.*** One Ethiopian investigation found that university-age men used Viagra, without medical guidance, with the idea that masculinity was based upon sexual prowess (Both, 2016). An American study, contrarily, found that masculine gender orientation, and not sex, increased the probabilities of the use and abuse of unprescribed medication (Peralta, Stewart, Steele, & Wagner, 2016).

***Masculinity and mental health.*** One United States investigation identified that men and women with more advanced education levels presented fewer depressive symptoms, independent of their gender orientation (Gibson, Baker, & Milner, 2016). However, another United States study with gay and bisexual university students concluded that it was their masculine gender orientation that represented a stress constraint (Pachankis, Sullivan, Feinstein, & Newcomb, 2018). Similar results were obtained in an American investigation in which adherence to heteronormative masculine forms constituted an exposure factor for university students to self-destructive conduct (Green et al., 2018). On the other hand, body-weight conflicts, in both men and women, were both associated with emotional aspects, in accordance with investigations performed in the United States and Chile (Orellana et al., 2016; Peralta & Barr, 2017).

The above-mentioned studies indicate that the assumption of hegemonic masculinity constitute a risk to male mental health. However, there are other variables, such as education and sex, which likely influence health attitudes.



### **Attitudes toward Sexual Minorities and their Effects.**

In this category, it is proposed that masculinity and the gender assumed by men and women influence the way in which sexual diversity is addressed. It is composed of the following subcategories: inclusive masculinity versus homophobia, and masculinity and the effects of homophobia.

***Inclusive masculinity versus homophobia.*** In investigations performed in England and the United Kingdom, experiences of inclusive masculinity are found (Magrath & Scoats, 2019; Morris, 2018). In contrast, a Vietnamese study showed that men presented greater homonegativity than women. Knowledge of homosexuality, however, tended to decrease homonegativity (Nguyen, Kimura, & Morinaga, 2016). A Greek study additionally showed that greater religiosity and right-wing political affiliations increased negative attitudes toward non-heterosexuals, especially in men (Georgiou, Patsantaras, & Kamberidou, 2018). In Medellin, Colombia, homophobia was found to be masked as tolerance and respect in men (Muñoz, 2017).

***Masculinity and the effects of homophobia.*** One study with homosexual male university students found that men with masculine gender orientations reported the highest levels of depression regarding the stigma (Pachankis et al., 2018).

### **Masculinity and Violence.**

This category contemplates the existing relationship between masculinity and violent expressions in male university students. The research grouped into this category focused their interest on two aspects: the normalization of gender violence, and sexual violence toward men. Both types of violence are supported by traditional masculinity.

***The normalization of gender violence.*** In an investigation with British students, it was found that gender violence was linked to gender stereotypes and social hegemonic masculinity norms (Carline et al., 2018). In England, the normalization of gender violence has been identified (Jackson & Sundaram, 2018). The naturalization of harassment is also reflected in the

results of the application of the Disengagement in Sexual Harassment Scale (MDiSH) in the United Kingdom (Page, Pina, & Sorolla, 2016). Similarly, in an American study, the sexual objectification of women was demonstrated (Weinzimmer & Twill, 2016). Another American investigation identified that the sexual aggression perpetrated by male university students was supported by their friend groups (Salazar et al. 2018), and another study carried out in Cali, Colombia identified that, for young men, women are objects for dominance and aggression (Sánchez, 2017).

**Sexual violence toward men.** One research with male university students in the United Kingdom indicated that sexual aggression toward men was not identified, as a consequence of the stereotypes which naturalize the sexism (Javaid, 2017).

Studies which address his category have shown that the ideology of hegemonic masculinity has favored the naturalization, desensitization, and social justification of sexual violence toward women, and the negation there of toward men in the social context.

### **Masculinity and Alcohol Consumption.**

In this category, alcohol is identified as a social medium for the construction and expression of hegemonic masculinity. The investigations pertaining to this category principally focused on the following aspects: alcohol consumption and hegemonic masculinity, and alcohol consumption and sexuality.

**Alcohol consumption and hegemonic masculinity.** Nigerian (Dumbili & Williams, 2017) and French studies (Lebreton, Peralta, Collinson, Chervenak, & Guillaume, 2017) have found that alcohol consumption is a response to male adhesion to the norms of hegemonic masculinity. One United States study found that gender orientation, and not sex, was associated with excessive alcohol consumption (Peralta, Mulhollem, Blue, & Stewart, 2018), while another, performed in Brazil, revealed that alcohol consumption represented a means by which to construct hegemonic masculinity for young men (Rezende, Fontão, & Coelho, 2016).

***Alcohol consumption and sexuality.*** In investigations carried out in Nigeria and the United States, it was identified that male adherence to the traditional masculine gender led to alcohol consumption and rape. (Dumbili, 2016; Dumbili & Williams, 2017; Weinzimmer & Twill, 2016). Studies grouped into this category found that male alcohol consumption responded to the interiorization of traditional masculine norms, which simultaneously influenced the sexual experience as an aggressive act.

The studies cited above highlight the dichotomy between traditional and emerging masculinities. The latter, although they show a change in the construction of masculinities, are still linked to patriarchal manifestations or at least to inequalities within men and between men and women, sustaining violence against women and populations in conditions of sexual diversity.

However, recent research identifies a different position on the part of men, which could become a key perspective for breaking the vicious circle. This reference is posed in terms of "new alternative masculinities" (Flecha, Puigvert & Ríos, 2013, p. 90). The theme of new alternative masculinities, on the one hand, is a new contribution to the study of masculinities and constitutes a very interesting advance in education because it offers answers to the debates and questions of today's society about gender and masculinities.

What underlies the new alternative masculinities is the relationship established between ethics and desire or attractiveness (Flecha, et al., 2013, p. 104) which counteracts the socially fostered link between violence and desire (Flecha, et al., 2013). Indeed, in society, an association between the profile of the violent man and his social attraction is proposed, precisely because he responds to aggressive and transgressive values and attitudes that emphasize the domination of others.

Now, men who are in tune with the models of new alternative masculinities present self-confidence, strength, and courage (Flecha, et al., 2013) when confronting the negative attitudes of traditional and oppressed masculinities. According to Diez-Palomar & Mara (2020) the man of the new alternative masculinities, is a self-confident man, respectful of others, egalitarian, aware of his value and does not agree, with the exercise of violence and his very security makes them gain the respect of others.

On the other hand, Flecha, et al., (2013) propose to develop strategies that favor the emergence and strengthening of masculinities, where the combination of ethical behavior is presented, which includes, being a good man, promoting equality in relationships and at the same time being attractive, by awakening sexual desire among women and respect for men and women.

In fact, research indicates that self-confidence generates attraction in men, even more so when it is linked to egalitarian values, which additionally makes them earn respect. However, this reference to men and new masculinities has to face assumptions, such as the idea that a man's strength and security is opposed to his ability to express his feelings and manage his emotions, or that because he is a man he should not be interested in defending gender equality (Diez-Palomar et al., 2020 & Flecha, et al., 2013).

Being strong, from the model of the new alternative masculinities, is understood in a different way from the conventional use given by society, which assimilates strength to hardness, to the exercise of power, to physical strength (Flecha, et al., 2013) and to the resistance of schooling (Diez-Palomar et al., 2020). However, within the new alternative masculinities, it alludes to the psychological resistance to fight for building equal relationships with women and rejecting masculinities (Flecha, et al., 2013).

The article by Flecha, et al., (2013) also emphasizes the importance of creating social spaces that promote the development of new alternative masculinities in men from the time they are children and in creating contexts based on the link between being attractive and equality as an ethical principle.

Continuing with the possible mechanisms that can contribute to the development of masculinities in favor of gender equality and nonviolence, Redondo (2016) proposes, based on the results of a case study, that there are relations between dialogical leadership, characterized by being democratic and non-hierarchical, and the new alternative masculinities. The study finds that contexts that use democratic and community education have a positive influence on the transformation processes of their beneficiaries, reducing stereotypes and contributing to the visibility of the movement of new alternative masculinities.

On the other hand, the study by Diez-Palomar et al., (2020) finds some aspects that can negatively condition school learning, particularly that of mathematics in young men and that is related to constructions of gender identity based on traditional dominant masculinities and on the social attraction to violence that characterizes hegemonic masculinity.

Likewise, the article points out that, in the specialized literature, there are findings that indicate how the model of the new masculinities can contribute to the interest of men in school learning, especially in mathematics, to the extent that it is associated with positive values towards schooling, generating as a consequence their academic performance, in contrast to students who build their identity based on opposition to authority and expressing aggressive behaviors that they associate with their place of prestige and popularity within the reference group (Diez-Palomar et al., 2020).

In the same way, Diez-Palomar et al., (2020) indicate that it is important in the school setting to identify strategies to bring attention to children, adolescents, and young adults who present a positive attitude toward learning and ethical postures in such a way that they become attractive. Likewise, bear in mind that those men who have not internalized this position will not change immediately, assuming ethical attitudes and academic interest, because these are not attractive to them, as they are not associated with their ideal of manhood.

### **Final Considerations**

Based upon the investigations reviewed, it was found that the majority of studies were performed with United States university populations (29.17%), and tended to be qualitative (50%), transversal research (90.27%) use in-depth interviews (45.83%), and perform thematic analyses of their findings (27.78%) with comparisons based on constructivist gender perspectives (61.11%). These results suggest the presence of academic interest in the comprehension of the experience of masculinity in individuals, and there covery of the testimony of those who participated in said studies. The topics addressed by the aforementioned research include: the construction of

masculinity, masculine social norms and gender stereotypes, romantic relationships, masculinity and health, attitudes toward sexual minorities, masculinity and violence, and masculinity and alcohol consumption. These topics refer to researcher motivations to understand the constitution of the masculine subjectivity, as a social phenomenon, as well as its link to social problems shared by different countries and associated with patriarchy.

In accordance with the findings, it may be stated that male university students present contradictions in constructed masculinity, which oscillate between the traditional and emergent, and are expressed in both their speech and actions. From another perspective, university students employ coping strategies in the university context, which depend upon the significance created from said institutional context. The strategies employed include: the consolidation of hegemonic masculinity, development of hybrid masculinity, deconstruction and rupture, and agency process development via the body, esthetics, and narratives, understood as performative processes. The influence of reference groups in the construction of masculinity and the confrontation thereof was also identified.

Similarly, it was found that, in university, male students continue on with traditional masculine norms, which are appropriated by young men, depending on the institutional context in which they are immersed. Further, male university student abandonment of said masculinity responds to the benefits that these apparently provide, as well as the comfort they generate, and particularly, the minimal awareness regarding these identification processes. Additionally, studies have indicated the negative effects that the acceptance of hegemonic and traditional masculinity represent both for men and the context itself, as well as the minimal recognition of said effects on male university students.

Regarding romantic relationships, the traditional characteristics expressed by gender and sexism stereotypes persist, and present men little obligation to daily relationship life. Conversely, contradictory results were identified, regarding romantic relationship expectations, both in men and women. Certain studies have indicated that the expectation depends on the individual's sex, and others on the constructed gender. They have also found that head

option, on the part of both men and women, of hegemonic masculinity and gender stereotypes, constitute a health risk. However, it is widely recognized that other variables, such as education and sex, likely influence this dimension: firstly, the more highly educated men and women are, the greater access they have to health services. Secondly, being a man, implies increased health risks, in accordance with some studies, as a consequence of the contradictory emotions that health services generate in men.

Results which respond to the relationship between masculinity and homophobia are contradictory. However, the identification of social variables which contribute to exclusion or inclusion, as a result of sexual orientation and gender, should be highlighted, such that greater contact with gay, non-right-wing political orientation and less pronounced religious beliefs favor inclusion. Similarly, it was shown in the studies examined that the hegemonic masculinity ideology has favored the naturalization, desensitization, and social justification of sexual violence toward women, together with the negation of sexual violence toward men.

In addition, research identifies that alcohol consumption by men responds to the internalization of the norms of traditional masculinities, which constitutes a common practice in the collective construction of male subjectivity, and also influences the experience of sexuality as an aggressive act where inequity is reaffirmed, based on gender stereotypes that guide relationships between men and women.

With respect to the new alternative masculinities, as a perspective they constitute a novel contribution to the understanding of masculinities and the difficulties that society has had in overcoming traditional dominant and oppressed masculinities and their nefarious effects on gender relations. It also shows the importance of linking ethics and desire in the construction of masculinities in accordance with new values associated with being a man.

In summary, the researches studied, present diverse and sometimes contradictory results, as far as the confluence of the traditional masculinity with the most modern versions. These studies show that the construction of masculinities is a complex experience, and is impregnated with cultural, social, historical and personal aspects linked to each other.

The ideas that men and women have of masculinity are linked to their concrete life experience, which implies the influence on gender of other categories such as ethnicity, social position, education, urban or rural place of residence, religion, among other aspects framed in socio-historical contexts and expressed in behavior. Thus, in the same country or region, it is to be expected that different ways of conceiving and manifesting masculinities will appear at a given historical moment.

As for university masculinities, the university educational process is insufficient to provoke men's break with traditional masculinity. In this sense, it is necessary to rescue the collective masculine voice, to achieve greater reflection, confrontation, commitment and masculine transformation. Emphasis is placed on the identification of those strategies used by young men, in the face of changing spaces, particularly in university environments, and the promotion of experiences of rupture, transformation and commitment, based on new experiences of dialogical leadership, corporal experience, aesthetics, narrative and performance.

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