

# **VIOLENCE IN UNIVERSITY STUDENT'S UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' SEXUAL BEHAVIOR AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE DEFINITION OF VIOLENCE: AN EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS IN A MEXICAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITY**

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## **Abstract:**

This study is an exploratory approach which objectives are to know the University of Quintana Roo (*UQRoo*) matriculated students' sexual behavior and notion of the definition of violence and identify the practices and knowledge they have about their sexual health. It is relevant for this study to identify the existence of any form of violence among students in the *UQRoo* since aggressive behavior during youth is a predictor for violence in the adulthood. This study is a cross descriptive work containing seven constructs already validated by other studies, both national and international. It was based on a 158-item structured interviewing and self-administered questionnaire taken by 270 matriculated students in *UQRoo*. Related to the concept of violence, the results of the survey participants showed that they did not identify the sexual topic as an aspect in life prone to suffering from violence nor clearly identified the concept of sexual violence. Another result is that the female group of the survey participants never identified as a form of violence their intimate partner's avoidance of using a birth control method. In conclusion, the moral duty for the *UQRoo* is to continue with qualitative and mixed studies that identify the factors that influence the existence of different forms of violence in their matriculated students especially when they may be committing violent acts without being aware. These actions will be the basis for informative

and prevention programmes that will have a positive influence in matriculated students' personal development in a professional context like the *UQRoo*

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**Keywords:** Violence – University - Student's perception

### **Introduction:**

Since the 1980's, the existence and register of the frequency of maltreatment to certain groups in a population (generally the ones with some sort of disadvantage) was considered a characteristic of the private sector. Seen as a regular element of daily life, it was not considered a social issue or a topic worthy to be the subject of a research (Arón, 2001; Corsi, 2003). Since 1999, the UN Development Programme established the pillars for different measures. Their objective is to contribute to the development of a social order based on respect and tolerance for every member of the society (UNDP, 1999). Nowadays, the progress in the study of violence phenomenon among different human groups has increased. Likewise, there have been different domestic and international law initiatives in favor of diminishing the different forms of violence in society (General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence, 2007; Family Violence Prevention and Services Act, 1996; UN, 1979). However, according to the UNICEF (2000) and the World Report on Violence and Health (2002), even with these social, political, economical and scientific efforts, the numbers reveal that it has not been enough because there still are violence victims.

For the last 30 years, international organizations like the World Health Organization (WHO), World Bank Group (WB) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNPF) have identified violence as an object of attention, as a problem for social justice, public health and human rights. In 1996, the World Health Assembly WHA49.25 resolution declared violence a leading problem for the public health around the world (PAHO, 2002).

Besides the domestic and international efforts above mentioned, different research lines have been developed around this phenomenon. These lines have been oriented to study aspects like detection, problem description and analysis of the consequences, the identification of violence risk or related factors and the ways to prevent violence. In addition, different theoretical models have been proposed. Their objectives are to analyze, prevent and treat the violence phenomenon.

**Main Text:****Violence and its theoretical bases**

When studying this phenomenon, diverse models that relate different elements in violence have common concepts. It is observed that violence is considered as any situation in which the abuse of authority and power harm the rights and needs of a person or group of people, having several ways of manifesting, according to the relational context in which operates and the mechanisms one follows to try to submit the other (Corsi, 2003; Pedreira, 2003, Mexican Official Law-046-SSA2-2005). In this context, Corsi (2003) defines violence as any interactional act that involves the use of physical power to control a relation and in which there are no equal conditions or balance in power and it is controlled by the strong over the weak. This unbalanced relationship is characterized by situations of control and power of one subject over another in disadvantage.

Bourdieu states that violence is an element of power in power structures historically unfair and can be a factor that impedes the consolidation of equity, development and peace (Fernández, 2005). It is an structure of domination that is based on forms of violence that are spanned according to a continuum; at one end, there are the most severe ones, like physical and sexual violence and at the other end, the more subtle forms, and generally, the most efficient to secure the lasting of oppression, like symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 2000).

According to Krug et al.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines the act of violence as the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation. The inclusion of the word “power”, in addition to the phrase “use of physical force”, broadens the nature of a violent act and expands the conventional understanding of violence to include those acts that result from a power relationship, including threats and intimidation. The “use of power” also serves to include neglect or acts of omission, in addition to the more obvious violent acts of commission. (2002, p. 3)

**Types of violence**

In accordance to Krug *et al.* the typology proposed by the World Health Organization divides violence into three broad categories according to characteristics of those committing the violent act:

-Self-directed violence (suicidal behavior and self-abuse)

-Interpersonal violence (family and intimate partner violence and community violence)

-Collective violence (social, political and economical violence) (2002, p. 6)

This initial categorization differentiates between violence a person inflicts upon himself or herself, violence inflicted by another individual or by a small group of individuals, and violence inflicted by larger groups such as states, organized political groups, militia groups and terrorist organizations.

According to Krug *et al.* (2002, p.7) based on the nature of violent acts, violence can be physical, sexual, psychological, involving deprivation or neglect. This typology, while imperfect and far from being universally accepted, does provide a useful framework for understanding the complex patterns of violence taking place around the world, as well as violence in the everyday lives of individuals, families and communities. It also overcomes many of the limitations of other typologies by capturing the nature of violent acts, the relevance of the setting, the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim, and – in the case of collective violence – possible motivations for the violence.

### **The ecological model of violence: a theoretical analysis**

According to Krug *et al.*

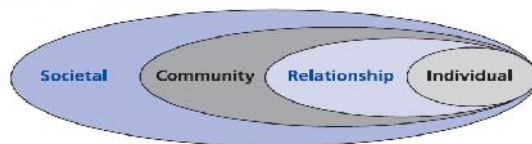
it would be difficult to state that it is clearly a single factor that explains why some individuals behave violently toward others or why violence is more prevalent in some communities than in others. Violence is the result of the complex interplay of individual, relationship, social, cultural and environmental factors. Understanding how these factors are related to violence is one challenge; another is to find the way of preventing it. (2002, p.12)

In consonance with Krug *et al.*'s report (2002, p.12), “the ecological model was proposed to study violence in the 1970’s, and initially was used to study child abuse and subsequently to youth violence (Garbarino J, Crouter A, 1978; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Garbarino J 1985; Tolan y Guerra, 1994). The model explores the relationship between individual and contextual factors and considers violence as the product of multiple levels of influence on behavior”. More recently, researchers have used it to understand intimate partner violence and abuse of the elderly (Chaulk, 1998; Heise, 1998; Schiamberg, Gans 1999).

As Krug *et al.* stated in their work, “the first level of the ecological model, the individual, seeks to identify the biological and personal history factors that an individual

brings to his or her behaviour. In addition to biological and demographic factors, factors such as impulsivity, low educational attainment, substance abuse, and prior history of aggression and abuse are considered. This level of the ecological model focuses on the characteristics of the individual that increase the likelihood of being a victim or a perpetrator of violence”. (2002, p. 12 and 13)

Figure 1. Ecological model for understanding violence, Krug et al. (2002, p.12)



### The relationship level

In this level, as reported by Krug *et al.* (2002, p.13), “proximal social relationships—for example relations with peers, intimate partners and family members – are analyzed since these may become factors that increase the risk for violent victimization and perpetration of violence. In the case of interpersonal violence among youths, research shows that young people are much more likely to engage in negative activities when those behaviors are encouraged and approved by their friends. Peers, intimate partners and family members all have the potential to shape an individual’s behaviour and range of experience”.

### Community

Just as Krug *et al.* stated,

“the third level of the ecological model examines the community contexts in which social relationships are embedded – such as schools, workplaces and neighbourhoods – and seeks to identify the characteristics of these settings that are associated with being victims or perpetrators of violence”. (2002, p.13)

### Societal

According to Krug *et al.*

“The fourth final level of the ecological model examines the larger societal factors that influence rates of violence societal level and that favor the acceptance of violence. Larger societal factors include cultural norms that support violence as an acceptable way to resolve conflicts, and also norms that entrench male dominance over women and children. These factors also include the health, educational,

economic and social policies that maintain high levels of economic or social inequality between groups in society”. (2002, p.13)

### **Violence in university students**

Whether they are among the faculty, teachers with students, students with students and also other actors like family members, administration staff and others, school is one of the institutions in which interpersonal relationships are observed. Every single type of relationship has specific characteristics and interactions. In this way, in the last years the relationships among this community group have been researched and analyzed. The way in which the main members of this community, students, relate among each other is dynamic. Because of the time students spend in the university setting, they share multiple experiences in diverse ways that contribute to build in their minds an idea of society, a concept of him/herself as a person and about human relationships, being the latter the basis of the ways of interacting with others in the future.

University student community members have a predominant characteristic. Most of them are young people. When talking about youths, as a subject of study, Bourdieu and Passeron (1973) consider social class, cultural and genre states. These aspects imply that there is not just one “type of youth” but “different types of youth” without stop having in mind the social, political and cultural transformations implicit in the setting they interact. A phenomenon that has been studied recently is the topic of violence in the university setting as well as the attempt of knowing the factors related to it.

An important element in understanding the origin and analysis of the conception of violence in the university setting is the traditional archetype of masculinity (It’s been pointed out that abuse to children and women constitute a secular behavior that for long time has been tolerated in the name of a natural order that gives men a limitless power over women and considers disdain and violence towards daughters and wives as a right, and even as an indisputable duty for the father and husband). However, there is no male essence that condemns men to forms of violence towards women, just ways of manhood that are based on different forms of domination that are supported on a sexual differentiation of the duties and expectations related to the people’s genre.

In like manner, Elisabeth Badinter (1993) points out that there is no unique masculinity nor a universal masculine model valid anywhere but a heterogeneous diversity of male identities and ways of manhood. The dominant version of male identity does not constitute an essence but an ideology of power and oppression to women to justify the male

domination. And if the male identity is learned thus it can be changed too. In the same way, college is a setting in which not only explicit violent behaviors are developed but there it can be observed apparently more subtle violent phenomena as well, most of which are observed in intimate partners' relationships.

It becomes relevant to identify the presence of violence in this population group due to aggressive behavior during childhood, adolescence and early adulthood since that factor has been identified as a predictor for the presence of violence in adult years. Early aggressive behavior is associated with severe violence, not only during adolescence but also during adulthood. (Dishion, French y Paterson, 1995; Capaldi y Gorman-Smith-, 2003; White y Widom, 2003; Bachman, 2000; Castellano, García y Ramírez,1996; Smith, White y Holand,2003).

Providing the scenario and knowing that violence is a product of the combination of several individual, family, community and environmental factors, this research represents the first local approach to the topic. Its objectives are to know the perception of violence in university students and also to identify their knowledge and practices in the area of sexual health.

### **Methodology: an exploratory study**

This research is a cross descriptive study. It was conducted in the *Unidad Académica Chetumal de la Universidad de Quintana Roo (University of Quintana Roo, Chetumal campus)*. A 158-item structured interviewing and self-administered questionnaire was designed. The 158 items were distributed in seven different constructs that are: general information, housing characteristics, family data, tobacco and alcohol level of consumption, sexual behavior, free time activities and university interaction with other students and conception of violence. The questionnaire was constructed considering different already-validated international questionnaires. With the objective of obtaining a trustworthy list of questions, some opinions from experts in this topic were collected. Three pilot tests in a random sub-sample of the university student community were made. The results were analyzed and adjustments in form and format were made.

The Kappa coefficient was 0.9354. The survey was applied to students in the third, fifth, seventh and ninth semester during Fall 2011 (academic period). The students that participate in the survey were matriculated in eight undergraduate programs in three different academic areas out of a total of four in *Unidad Chetumal (Chetumal campus)*: Academic Area of Political Science and Humanities (Ciencias Políticas y Humanidades (DCPH),

Academic Area of Health Sciences (Ciencias de la Salud (DCS), Academic Area of Science and Engineering (Ciencias e Ingeniería (DCI) and Academic Area of Administration and Economy (Ciencias Económico–Administrativas (DCSEA)).

In this study, three of four academic areas were considered. In these academic areas, nineteen undergraduate programs are offered. The students took part in this study with informed consent. They were given the researcher's name, research goals as well as it was emphasized that their participation was voluntary, without any kind of repercussions and with the only purpose to contribute with this research project. It was decided to compile a random sample taking without replacement with probability proportional to size, in this case, of the number of students registered in every academic area. A final sample of 270 subjects was obtained (with an average of three percent of precision and organized as it follows: DCPH 91 subjects, DCS 115 subjects y DCI 64 subjects). The sampling frame was based on the data base given by the Department of Scholar Services (*Departamento de Servicios Escolares*). The unit of analysis was the student. The information analysis is a univariate analysis to identify the distribution of the variables of interest. The information obtained from the seven constructs grouped in the survey was registered in an Excel 2009 data base and processed using SPSS for Windows.

### **Exploratory study results**

The questionnaire was answered by 188 students in the third, fifth, seventh and ninth semesters during Fall 2011 (academic period) from three different academic areas: Academic Area of Political Sciences and Humanities (*División de Ciencias Políticas y Humanidades, DCPH*), Academic Area of Health Sciences (*División de Ciencias de la Salud, DCS*) and Academic Area of Sciences and Engineering (*División de Ciencias e Ingeniería, DCI*). The average age in this study for women was 21.46 years and for men was 21.49. 82 percent of the subjects that answered the survey was single. About social security, 88 percent of the women in the survey has social security and for men was 75 percent. The distribution for academic area was: 62 (32.97 percent) for Academic Area of Political Science and Humanities (*División de Ciencias Políticas y Humanidades, DCPH*), 90 (47.87 percent) for Academic Area of Health Sciences (*Ciencias de la Salud, DCS*) and 36 (19.4 percent) for Academic Area of Science and Engineering (*División de Ciencias e Ingeniería, DCI*).

Related to religion, it is observed that the majority of the participants in the survey practice at least one religion. 82 percent of the women practice a religion. Related to risky practices, it was registered in the survey participants that alcohol and tobacco were consumed



at least once in their lifetime. Half of the survey participants has consumed tobacco and more than 70 percent alcohol. When the survey was taken, 60 percent of the participants was in an intimate partners’ relationship (See chart 1).

**Chart 1. Characteristics and practices of the students that took part in the survey.**

	<i>n</i>	Average (SD) <b>AGE</b>	<b>RELIGION</b> Practice Average	<b>SPORT</b> Practice average	<b>TOBBACO</b> Consumption Average	<b>ALCOHOL</b> Consumption Average
<b>GENDER</b>						
Female	84	21.4	82.00%	42.50%	48.20%	88.10%
Male	104	(2.69) 21.5 (2.53)	78.00%	61.46%	56.31%	79.41%
<b>ACADEMIC AREA</b>						
DCI	36	21.5	89.56%	56.6%	54.30%	69.44%
DCPH	62	(3.43)	76.23%	38.60%	52.54%	87.93%
DCS	90	21.6 (2.89) 21.1 (1.94)	78.00%	59.30%	53.93%	85.56%

Source: Survey taken by students matriculated in *Unidad Chetumal*, UQRoo. August 2011.

Related to the knowledge about birth control methods, almost all of the participants in the survey knew at least one birth control method, only 2.78 percent answered that they did not know any kind of birth control method. The latter result was obtained exclusively from male participants from Academic Area of Science and Engineering (*División de Ciencias e Ingeniería, DCI*). When analyzing the different birth control methods they know, the most known method was the condom, followed by birth control pills and in third place were the birth control injection. In chart 2, it can be observed the data obtained by genre and academic area. It is important to mention that in chart 2, there can be found only five birth control methods most frequently marked by the students that took the survey. However, there was an

attempt to find out more about their knowledge of more birth control methods (patches, IUD, tubal ligation, vasectomy, emergency contraception (morning-after) pills, creams and gel).

**Chart 2. Average knowledge of the top five most known birth control methods.**

	<b>BIRTH CONTROL METHODS</b> Average knowledge <b>Yes</b> <b>No</b>	Method 1 Condom	Method 2 Oral	Method 3 Injectable	Method 4 Coitus interruptus	Method 5 Fertility Awareness-based
<b>GENRE</b>						
Female	100%	96%	97%	86.90%	72.62%	69.05%
Male	0.00%	95%	88%	75%	77.87%	50.49%
	98.45%					
	1.55%					
<b>ACADEMIC AREA</b>						
DCI	97:22%	88.78%	80.56%	63.89%	77.78%	41.70%
DCPH	2.78%	98.31%	93.22%	78.00%	61.02%	46.50%
DCS	100%	96.67%	96.56%	88.89%	69.05%	75.00%
	100%					

Source: Survey taken by students matriculated in Unidad Chetumal, UQRoo August 2011.

In the topic of the sexual practices, it can be observed in chart 3 that more than two thirds of the survey participants reported to be sexually active. 65.8 percent is women and 71.6 percent is men. When exploring their sexual activity the month before the application of the survey, it was observed that 80 percent of the women had had sexual intercourse; in the case of men, the number was lower. When analyzing the age range in which the survey participants had their first sexual encounter, more than 50 percent of them reported having their first sexual experience between 18 and 22 years old. Love was the main reason for 64.1 percent of the women and the same reason was for 36.1 percent of men, but they also expressed as the main reason inquisitiveness (33.3 percent) and sexual desire (25 percent).

**Chart 3. Sexual behavior in university students**

	SEX REL		LAST SEX		AGE/FIRST SEX RELATION				MOTIVE/FIRST SEX RELATION					
	YES	NO	YES	NO	14-18	19-22	23-25	+25	LOVE	CURTAINS	OTHER	WISDOM	FORGIVENESS	FEAR
<b>SEX</b>	65.8%	34%	78.2%	20%	2.41%	30.12%	4.82%	4.82%	64.12%	20.7%	0%	11.32%	1.89%	1.89%
	71.6%	28.4%	58.3%	40.3%	11.65%	21.39%	4.85%	4.85%	36.11%-	30.3%	5.56%	25%	0%	0%
<b>FACULTY</b>	64.7%	35.3%	66.7%	33.3%	8.33%	22.2%	2.78%	2.78%	34.7%	30.43%	0%	34.7%	0%	0%
	72.4%	27.6%	66.1%	39%	6.78%	25.4%	1.70%	1.70%	26.2%	26.2%	0%	14.3%	2.38%	0%
	69.6%	30.4%	56.6%	27.8%	8.97%	26.14%	7.95%	7.95%	25.4%	25.4%	6.8%	0%	18.6%	1.69%

Source: Survey taken by students matriculated in *Unidad Chetumal*, UQRoo. August 2011.

Chart 4 shows the main data related to the use of any birth control method in the survey participants' last sexual encounter. It was observed that more than 50 percent of the survey participants did not use any birth control method in their last sexual encounter. On the other hand, 46.4 percent of the women answered that they did use a birth control method in their last sexual encounter and 44.2 percent of the men had the same answer. The use of condom was the most frequently used birth control method, 28 percent of the women and 34 percent of the men used it. The second most frequently used birth control method was hormonal methods for women (one out of ten) and for men was coitus interruptus (eight out of a hundred).

**Chart 4. The use of birth control methods in the survey participants' last sexual encounter.**

		<b>BIRTH CONTROL METHODS</b>								
		<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>ORA L</b>	<b>INJ</b>	<b>PA</b>	<b>EM E</b>	<b>CON</b>	<b>RIT</b>	<b>COI</b>
<b>SEX</b>	<b>FE ML E</b>	46.4 %	53.6 %	10%	6%	1.2%	10%	28%	7%	8.7%
	<b>MA LE</b>	44.2 %	55.8 %	2.4%	3%	0%	3.85 %	34%	4.8%	7.6%
<b>FAC ULT Y</b>	<b>DCI</b>	41.4 %	58.6 %	5.56 %	2.7%	8.33 %	5.6%	34%	5.56 %	16.6 %
	<b>DC PH</b>	45.7 %	54.3 %	8.4%	5%	3.4%	3.4%	28.8 %	3.30 %	5.1%
	<b>DC S</b>	45.5 %	54.5 %	4.4%	5.5%	1.1%	8.8%	34%	7.8%	5.6%

Source: Survey taken by students matriculated in Unidad Chetumal, UQRoo. August 2011.

Another aspect that was evaluated was the survey participants' opinion about their intimate partner's permission for using a birth control method. The results showed that 83.3 percent of the women considered their partners irresponsible, 77.3 percent of the women considered them ignorant, 40 percent of the women sees them as authoritarian, 33.3 percent of the women considered them unfair and 27 percent of the women considered them disrespectful. In the case of men, 81.2 percent considered them irresponsible, 68 percent considered them ignorant, 34.6 percent authoritative, 29.7 percent unfair and 26.7 percent considered them disrespectful. Only 2.9 percent of the survey participants answered that they agreed not to use any birth control method in a sexual encounter, 1.2 percent was female.

Related to the notion the survey participants have about the concept of violence, it was noted that 84 percent of the participants considered that violence is using some kind of physical power (e.g., hitting), 81.6 percent considered threatening as a form of violence, 76.6 percent saw insults as another form of violence and 57 percent of the survey participants identified that making fun of someone is another form of violence. What is appealing is that less than a half of the participants identify abandonment or refuse to talk to someone as

violent acts. On the contrary, 64 percent of the survey participants identified control as a characteristic of violence.

When being asked whether the survey participants see themselves as subjects with violent behaviors and reactions, 60 percent of them answered they were not violent people. 30 percent of the participants considered themselves as a little violent and none of them see themselves as highly violent.

### **Conclusion:**

In the list of events that leave their mark in a person's life, there are two that are the most important: the first sexual encounter and the birth of the first child. These two events have a special meaning because they are the result of deeply established social relationships and they imply a radical change in the life of individuals since people acquire new roles: mother and father, family head and intimate partner. Besides, the way in which the first sexual encounter is consummated can affect the youth's ability of making decisions and this ability may improve or get vulnerated. Knowing the age when the first sexual encounter takes place, especially for women, goes beyond demographic registers, it implies the exercise of their sexual and reproductive rights. An important aspect is to know the circumstance under the first sexual encounter took place, for example, to know the age, whether or not there was some kind of negotiation about the use of birth control methods, if there was sexual consent or not, who was the intimate partner of that sexual encounter and social and economic situation of the people involved.

The latter variables are important to bear in mind because the first sexual encounter represents the future of the person's sexual life, the use of their own body to relate with other individuals through pleasure is fundamental to their own emotional development and also to establish balanced relations with others. In the case of the results of the present research, more than 50 percent did not use a birth control method during their first sexual encounter. Due to this fact, it is important to know the survey participants' qualitative opinion about the subject.

The first sexual experience, especially for women, reflects many times the use of power that a person has over them and may result in a traumatic event, completely opposite to the concept of pleasure, and not a product of a personal or intimate partner's decision previously agreed. The pressure of the group to which they belong as well as the intimate partner's, especially in a relationship, are part of the established mechanisms to reach an apparently sexual consent act. In the case of women, the pressure of the group may not be

the main factor to look for a sexual encounter; the female group has identified with love as the central element to consummate a sexual encounter, especially with a boyfriend, under the premise of being a “proof of love”. This information coincides with the results of the present survey, especially in the women’s group, since 65 percent of them answered to have had their first sexual experience because of love.

Sexuality is one of the areas in human life that is more significantly associated with violence, especially in a relationship. According to the studies of Halpern et al. (2001), it is observed a positive correlation between a major number of couples and the risk of suffering violence. To some other studies, the teenage couples that suffer from violence have a higher probability of having a sexual background rather than the ones that have not suffer that kind of violence. In the first place, the obtained results can emphasized that, when asked about the concept of violence, the survey participants did not see the sexual topic as an area of the people’s life susceptible of suffering from violence nor identify the concept of sexual violence. Another aspect that is emphasized is that women, when asked about the intimate partner’s refusal of using a birth control method, never identified it as a violent act itself.

The use of birth control methods in Mexico has spread importantly in the last 30 years. However, there is still some backwardness in some population groups. The knowledge about birth control methods is one conditioning aspects for a couple to decide on their fertility, enjoy their sexual life in a responsible and secure way and have a good reproductive and sexual health. However, for this to be effective, it is necessary to clearly identify the benefits of using them, to know the different varieties up to date, to have an easy access to them and above all, that both intimate partners, consider it as part of their mutual agreements.

One of the challenges for the *Universidad de Quintana Roo* will be to spread trustworthy, up-dated information that tries to solve the needs of the university student community. This information covers topics like violence in intimate partner’s relationships, sexual and reproductive health, sexual violence, compromise between intimate partners, and accurate, pertinent and informed decision making about youth’s sexual and reproductive rights.

The fact of knowing the diversity of birth control methods does not guarantee their use. It will be convenient to continue with studies that help to identify the factors that influence the use of birth control methods in university communities through a qualitative approach that allows identifying aspects beyond statistical data.

Even when the objective of the present research was not to identify the actual situation of STD cases in the university student community members, it will be interesting to analyze the proportion of survey participants that use a condom (barrier method) since this is the method that proves to have different benefits, like protection against STD.

One of the factors associated with unexpected pregnancies is the unfulfilled need of having birth control methods in the population that use them. The unfulfilled needs of having birth control methods vary notably in different stages of the reproductive life. Independently of the stage that is analyzed, young and early adult women are the ones with the most unfulfilled needs. Considering the creation of an accessible physical area accepted by university students that invites them to use its birth control expending services (distribution of birth control methods, information, workshops, among others) that respect the people's exercise of their sexual and reproductive rights is just one measure to be taken.

The use of birth control methods is an example of the exercise of the sexual and reproductive rights and the expression of the human rights proper to women and men just because of the fact of being human.

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