

# Fear among people of sexual diversity for expressing their sexual and gender orientation in Jalisco

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— Abstract—

The objective of this research note is to show the fear why people of sexual diversity hide their sexual or gender orientation in the state of Jalisco, in spaces such as the family and public where coexistence occurs, or also in the networks. social, this due to the fear of being discriminated against or having some type of violence exerted on them.

The note is made up of a brief account of the emergence of the LGBTTTQ + movement, in Mexico and in the state of Jalisco to become visible and fight for their rights, which has brought them negative reactions due to their sexual and gender orientation, such as mockery, discrimination, accusations, violence, etc., the argument why people of sexual diversity reserve their sexual or gender orientation is complemented by a survey by the pollster Kaliopeo, based on its study Jalisco LGBT+ 2023.

**Keywords:**

*Sexual diversity; fear of its expression; concealment of gender identity and undignified acts.*

## FEAR OF EXPRESSING SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY AMONG SEXUALLY DIVERSE INDIVIDUALS IN JALISCO

**S**exual and gender diversity is defined as «all the possibilities that people have to assume, express and live their sexuality, as well as to assume sexual expressions, preferences or sexual orientations and identities. It is based on the recognition that all bodies, all sensations and all desires have the right to exist and manifest, with no limits other than respect for the rights of other people» (National Human Rights Commission [CNDH], n.d.).

The fight for the rights of people of sexual diversity in our country arose on October 2, 1978, in the framework of the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the massacre of students in Tlatelolco. That day, Nancy Cárdenas, leader of the Homosexual Liberation Movement, paraded among the contingents, hence new movements emerged, and its members began to give talks on the subject in high schools and faculties, which brought mockery, rejection and resistance in society (Monsiváis, 2005, p.46).

Writer Carlos Monsiváis reported on the outrageous expressions of contempt directed at LGBTTTQ+ people in Mexico City at that time, and from then on, constant rejection, discrimination, and violence arose in response to the visibility of sexual orientations and gender identities, as seen in Jalisco, and which undoubtedly occurs throughout Mexico.

Now, in Jalisco, in the sexual diversity movement, one of the first groups to become visible was the Homosexual Liberation Pride Group (GOHL) in 1983, but which already operated since 1981 under the name of Lambda de Guadalajara, which was led by Pedro Preciado and began to have visibility in the state capital through demonstrations in the streets (Carrillo, 2022). This leader endured beatings and contempt at a time when homosexuality was still punishable by law (Islas, 2023).

In this context, it was identified that being part of the diversity community has been a constant risk in violation of their integrity for expressing their gender identity, making themselves visible and demanding respect for their rights. It should be noted that gender identity refers to:

Concept and feelings one has about oneself as a sexual being. Each person defines it according to their lifestyle, sexual practices and desires, gender identity, sexual preference, attitudes, and behavioral manifestations (Ministry of the Interior [SEGOB], 2018).

Nowadays, in Jalisco we find a critical panorama on the subject, since people still do not go out to live and freely express their sexual or gender orientation, according to the above, a recent report by the pollster Kaliopeo (2023),

showed the difficulty that people of sexual diversity have expressing themselves freely as part of the community and they do not tell anyone about it because of the risk (of negative reactions) that it may represent. In this context, 67.8% of the people surveyed mentioned that they told a friend, followed by a schoolmate and their mother 7.3%, and 7.0% to their siblings. It was identified that most of them have told a friend because of the trust that this represents. Similarly, they were asked if they felt safe telling, and 71.4% responded affirmatively, while 28.6% said they did not (Ibid).

However, the use of social networks is also part of people, since through it they share feelings, public and family coexistence. In this regard, another question asked of sexually diverse individuals was whether they made their sexual identity or orientation visible on social media. In this matter, 38.2% of the respondents answered yes, while 32.4% said yes, but they hide certain posts from some people. On the other hand, 14% mentioned they do not socialize it (Ibid. p. 20).

Another fear that exists among people of sexual diversity for expressing their sexual or gender identity is to be subjected to conversion therapies or the Efforts for the Correction of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (ECOSIG), with the aim of involuntarily "correcting" them. A representative case of this occurred in April 2022, a few days after the law prohibiting these conversion therapies was passed. That month, a 19-year-old woman from the municipality of Atotonilco el Alto was the victim of this type of practice, a situation that was reported by the organization Atoto Diverso (Orozco, 2022). Besides another important aspect to consider is that people subjected to this type of center who promise to "correct" their sexual or gender orientation may be victims of other abuses, such as the case reported in 2021 by the Unión Diversa Jalisco association, in which a young woman said that she was raped in one of these places, under the pretext that this abuse was what she needed to "correct" her sexual orientation (Ruíz, 2024).

Regarding the central axis of our topic, the Directorate of Sexual Diversity of Jalisco pointed out in a 2019 statement that 9 out of 10 adolescents in the state have been afraid to express their sexual or gender identity for fear of being discriminated against, and that 93.3% have witnessed expressions of hatred, physical aggression and harassment due to their gender identity (Government of Jalisco, 2019). These data showed that the majority of the sexually diverse population in Jalisco has suffered some type of violence or discrimination.

Likewise, Jalisco in 2022 was one of the three entities that presented the highest number of incidents against the sexual diversity community in the country, only after Guanajuato and the State of Mexico, where together there were around a thousand actions against the sexual diversity community (Ramírez, 2023). Likewise, Jalisco in 2022 was one of the three entities

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The expression of people of sexual diversity according to their gender identity, as observed, has brought unfortunate events that have affected their dignity and integrity. In this regard, sexually diverse individuals change their way of being, as stated by 71.9% of the people surveyed, the reason was that there is fear of suffering a negative reaction from other people; while only 28.1% do not hide to express themselves as they are (p.18). In this sense, it is striking that 50.9% of the people surveyed had attended a march, and 49.1% mentioned that they had not (p. 22). In accordance with the above, it was identified that there may be several reasons why they do not express their gender identity. As has been observed, their closest circle, such as their family, does not provide them with the necessary support for their sexual orientation, and they stop being who they are for fear of a negative reaction from others.

Similarly, among the main forms of aggression experienced by sexually diverse people have been verbal harassment, insults, and mockery, which represent 56.4% of cases, followed by discrimination in public places with 15.0% (Kaliopéo, p. 32), with public places, such as squares, parks and streets, being the main ones where they have suffered such aggression, as mentioned by 40.0%, with the main perpetrators of the aggression being unknown (Kaliopéo, p. 33).

According to a note from the digital newspaper *El Occidental*, the reporter Isaura López (2022) wrote that sexually diverse individuals open the door and face discriminatory acts that violate their integrity and dignity, thereby preventing their freedom, development and the guarantee of their human rights. Moreover, she also mentioned that younger generations today experience greater homophobia and violence than ever before, including harassment, violence, kidnappings, disappearances, and murders.

With respect to the previous panorama, pride marches are a space where sexually diverse individuals can express themselves freely without fear of being judged, repressed, violated or discriminated against. They are a special day to show diversity, come out of anonymity and walk the streets manifesting themselves as they are, something they cannot be during each day in their lives, both privately and publicly. Also, when asking to 59% of the people who said they had attended a march about their main reasons, the answers were: 39.1% to celebrate diversity and pride; 30.7% so that sexually diverse individuals have more rights; and 24.3% to assert their identity or make themselves visible (Kaliopéo, p. 23).

The average that the people surveyed gave to the government of Jalisco in the level of respect for the human rights of the sexually diverse population was 6.29 while at the municipal level it was 6.18%. In addition, 48% of respondents said that the state government has done little to address issues that benefit people of sexual diversity. This feeling is the same in the municipalities, since 46% stated that they are not very concerned with this issue (Kaliopéo, pp. 48-49).

In this context, Jalisco is one of the 9 states of Mexico where more than 50% of the sexually diverse population is concentrated, with the State of Mexico, Mexico City, Veracruz, Nuevo León, Puebla, Guanajuato, Chiapas and Oaxaca leading the list (National Institute of Statistics and Geography [INEGI], 2021). However, Jalisco is a state where the sexual diversity community still experiences fear of expressing their gender identity.

Therefore, it is important that the federal, state and municipal governments undertake actions of respect towards people of sexual diversity, since they are a vulnerable sector of society, where they cannot live freely according to their sexual or gender orientation, so it is necessary that actions are taken that stop violating said population and live in a context of peace, freedom, fullness and respect.

## CONCLUSION

This informative note made it possible to know that the visibility of people of sexual diversity continues to be a reason for mockery, fear, and finger-pointing, which is why they are afraid to express their gender identity. In this regard, as could be observed, they continue to hide their sexuality and change their way of being for fear of suffering a negative reaction in the spaces where they interact. Furthermore, they continue to suffer verbal harassment, mockery, insults from society as in 1978 when some organizations talked about these issues and at the same time there was mockery, rejection, and resistance in society. Today, it continues to be replicated despite the existence of laws prohibiting discrimination, such as the *Ley Federal para Prevenir y Eliminar la Discriminación* [Federal Law to Prevent and Eliminate Discrimination] (2003) and the *Ley Estatal para Promover la Igualdad, Prevenir y Eliminar la Discriminación en el Estado de Jalisco* [State Law to Promote Equality, Prevent and Eliminate Discrimination in the State of Jalisco] (2015). Currently in Jalisco there exists a fear of being diverse; there is no guarantee that people can express their sexual orientation or gender identity and live freely.

Actions should be undertaken in the streets to make sexual diversity visible, one of them has been the crosswalks, others can be images in the

streets, in public transportation, galleries, cultural events and, at the same time, that there should be those who guarantee the right.

Much remains to be done, and this is shown by the survey data reviewed. Hopefully in the not-too-distant future in Jalisco there will be a free manifestation of sexual diversity and there will be no more mockery, harassment and violence towards this population, so it will be between society and government that progress will be made towards a new society of respect for plurality and that, with actions in favor of it, it can be achieved. In Jalisco today, people of sexual diversity do not freely express their sexual and gender orientation for fear of negative reactions; this problem must be addressed, and the context must change.

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