# Expression of masculine identities on Facebook and TikTok: The case of *De Machos a Hombres* and *Voices of Brotherhood*[1]

*Expresión de identidades masculinas en Facebook y TikTok: El caso de* De Machos a Hombres *y* Voices of Brotherhood

*Expressão de identidades masculinas no Facebook e no TikTok: o caso de O caso de* De Machos a Hombres *e* Voices of Brotherhood

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The main objective of this paper is to identify, through a content analysis, how masculine identity traits are expressed in the publications of two Mexican profiles on Facebook and TikTok. The main results show that in the case of positive masculinities, this occurs mainly from manifestations of physical and mental self-care and participatory fatherhood. The conclusions highlight a need to propose new scales for measuring masculinities that adjust to changing cultural conditions.

KEYWORDS: Facebook, identity, masculinities, social media, TikTok.

*El objetivo central del presente trabajo es identificar, a través de un análisis de contenido, la manera en que se expresan rasgos de identidad masculina en las publicaciones de dos perfiles mexicanos en Facebook y en TikTok. Los principales resultados muestran que en el caso de las masculinidades positivas, esto ocurre principalmente a partir de manifestaciones sobre el autocuidado físico y mental y la paternidad participativa. En las conclusiones destaca que existe una necesidad de proponer nuevas escalas de medición de las masculinidades, que se ajusten a las condiciones culturales cambiantes.*

*PALABRAS CLAVE: Facebook, identidad, masculinidades, medios sociodigitales, TikTok.*

*O principal objetivo deste artigo é identificar, por meio de uma análise de conteúdo, a maneira pela qual os traços de identidade masculina são expressos nas publicações de dois perfis mexicanos no Facebook e no TikTok. Os principais resultados mostram que, no caso das masculinidades positivas, isso ocorre principalmente por meio de declarações sobre autocuidado físico e mental e paternidade participativa. As conclusões destacam a necessidade de propor novas escalas para medir masculinidades que sejam ajustadas às condições culturais em constante mudança.*

*PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Facebook, identidade, masculinidades, mídia sociodigital, TikTok.*

## INTRODUCTION

Identity is manifested through a wide variety of attributes that encompass both dimensions of collective belonging and aspects of individuality. Among these elements, gender stands out as a highly relevant factor in the dynamics of social interaction (Nagoshi & Nagoshi, 2013). This dimension constitutes a fundamental place from which various modalities of interpersonal relationships between individuals are configured, including both men and women as well as people who identify themselves within the LGBTQ+ diversity.

Based on the above, it is relevant to recognize that, as pointed out by feminism (Butler, 2011), gender is not manifested equally in society. In almost all regions of the world, patterns of domination have been established that are often exercised from hegemonic positions associated with what is considered masculine.

In this context, the media environment (which currently include both traditional media and socio-digital platforms) represents a space in which various social constructions of masculinity are promoted and replicated (Connell, 1987), encompassing both traditional conceptions of masculinity as well as the perspectives that oppose them.

Thus, the primary objective of this paper is to identify and describe the expressions related to masculine identities present in a selection of Facebook and TikTok accounts operating from Mexico and that pose discourses in opposition to the prevailing hegemonic patterns. To achieve this objective, two research questions have been developed: How are hegemonic identities manifested in the accounts observed on Facebook and TikTok, taking as a reference the hegemonic mandates of masculinity proposed by Lagarde (2005)? What are the specific aspects of positive masculinities that emerge most frequently in the analyzed sample?

## MASCULINITIES

The current study of masculinities arises from the discussions that originated in the women's liberation movement between the 1960s and 1970s. In this context, Connell (1987) suggests that it is a complex construct of a social nature, associated with the internalization

of gender roles, and, from a critical perspective based on Gramsci, this author develops a theory on the patriarchal organization of culture transmitted from generation to generation through social reproduction.

There are many definitions and types of masculinity that have been proposed since then. Due to the limitations of space, here we will limit the discussion to hegemonic and positive masculinities. In any case, other approaches to masculinity made by Connell (1995) include subordinate, complicit, and marginalized masculinities. Flood et al. (2007) speak of more than twenty specific ways of exercising masculinities, among which it is possible to mention androgyny, *berdaches,*[3] queer, metrosexual, transvestite, transsexual, and transgender.

Within the cultural dimension that gender implies, Malti-Douglas (2007) asserts that this is associated with cultural traits that vary depending on specific times and places, which suggests that it is a flexible and contextually situated issue, which is not absolute, nor universally homogeneous. In addition to the norms, values, and patterns of behavior that it implies (Segal, 2004), it is also noted that gender gives rise to a set of structural inequalities towards minorities (McGeeney & Harvey, 2015), an aspect that we will elaborate on shortly, regarding the notion of hegemonic masculinity.

According to Connell (1995), hegemonic masculinities are given by a series of behaviors that seek to reproduce and establish unequal relations based on what is traditionally considered masculine. The above refers both to a position in the system of gender relations, as well as to the system itself, and to the ideology that is used to reproduce the various forms of male hegemony, which is usually manifested through actions that include violence, misogyny, and homophobia.[4] As Messerschmidt and Messner (2018) state, this notion was progressively developed by Connell between 1987 and 2005, and in its final version highlights an intersectional approach to variables incident to the unequal exercise of power, such as nationality, class, race, and age.

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[3]   Original term of Native American groups that is currently used to refer to binary non-conformity.

[4]   Aspects that have guided our methodological strategy in the selection of the observation period.

We consider it important to point out that the idea of hegemonic masculinity has been presented in other sources using terms such as *toxic masculinity* (De Dauw & Connell, 2020; Harrington, 2021), *patriarchal masculinity* (Lerner, 1986), *traditional masculinity* (Rivera & Scholar, 2020; Salvati et al., 2021), and in the Ibero-American context, it is frequently associated with *machismo* (Segrest et al., 2003; Rojas & Morales, 2020).

In essence, all these notions revolve around the inequitable positions of power and domination that men exercise towards any other social actor with whom they have any interaction, based on institutionalized devices that reproduce it and that Lagarde (2005) groups into three mandates: traditional manhood, virility, and provisioning.

In the face of these culturally established ways of being a man, various alternative proposals have emerged whose intention is to break with such inequalities and structural violence. With antecedents that can be traced back to the end of the 19th century (Kimmel, 1998), these are positions articulated around terms such as *new masculinities* (Carabí, 2000; Fuller, 2018), *inclusive masculinity* (Anderson, 2009), *post-masculinity* (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012), *non-hegemonic masculinities* (Strier & Perez-Vaisvidovsky, 2021), *protective masculinities* (Elliott, 2016) and *positive masculinities* (Boscán, 2006, 2008; Ojeda et al., 2007; Bascán, 2007; Kiselica & Englar-Carlson, 2010; Messerschmidt & Messner, 2018).

These terms are not necessarily used as mutually exclusive and are sometimes used in combination to describe more inclusive and progressive approaches to masculine identities and gender equality. Although the central issue of all these approaches has to do with the recognition of ways of being a man that transcend patriarchal structures and can lead to more balanced and healthy practices on the socio-relational level, we consider it appropriate to present a slightly more detailed discussion of some of their main approaches.

Fuller (2018) suggests that new masculinities recognize that manhood does not determine a fixed set of characteristics, but that its exercise can transcend traditional expectations, especially in the way in which relationships with otherness are established. This is related to the concept of inclusive masculinities (Anderson, 2009) and post

masculinities (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012), in terms of the experience of masculinity that is also manifested by gay men, trans men, queer people, and gender-fluid people. The latter authors propose that it is possible to have a wide range of valid masculine experiences from some positions in sex-gender diversity.

Non-hegemonic masculinities (Strier & Perez-Vaisvidovsky, 2021) and protective masculinities (Elliott, 2016), both terms are associated with a critical tradition with feminist roots that, in the second case specifically, stems from the Ethical Theory of Care. It is a vision that is related to empathetic and compassionate interpersonal relationships, as well as environmental movements.

For Wilson et al. (2022), some of the most relevant aspects of positive masculinities are given by caring for oneself as a man and for other people, from the establishment of interpersonal relationships based on respect, open communication, and non-violence, overcoming social pressures and focusing on commitment to one's values.

We consider it important to point out that some characterizations of positive masculinities, such as the one developed by Kiselica and Englar-Carlson (2010), in addition to the aspects previously mentioned, propose revaluing some socially beneficial issues traditionally associated with masculinity, such as the sense of protection and care, brotherhood and self-sacrifice, but without falling into practices that could be self-harming.

It is relevant to establish that positive masculinities are part of a complex mosaic concerning how manhood is understood and exercised in the 21st century. As Kimmel (2010) states, alongside emerging positions of genuine solidarity with feminism and diversity, some expressions range between the longing for old structures of male domination of extreme right-wing groups, as well as possible impostures of some men who declare progressive positions without an authentic deconstruction of their gender privileges.

As it is possible to observe, these are very diverse positions according to which it is likely to establish positions of resistance against the traditionally established ways of manhood. In this paper we will use the term positive masculinities (Messerschmidt & Messner, 2018; Boscán, 2008) as a synthesis of all the above, to understand those

practices that contribute to the legitimacy of egalitarian and respectful relationships between men and women as well as people of other sexual identities (intergender level), and within the same masculinities (intragender).

On the other hand, regardless of how masculinities are expressed, as mentioned in the first sections, the relationship between this dimension and identity has to do with how the self is presented to otherness. As we have stated in previous works (Pérez, 2021), this identity is an operation of distinction that is manifested through any act that reveals what one is, in all its dimensions. Thus, masculine identity can be defined as how a person internalizes the beliefs and values that are associated with being male, as well as the actions and expressions that come with it and that characterize him in a particular way. It is a source of meaning that is revealed from a wide variety of communicative phenomena of being. In terms of Sartre (2002), our conceptual approach is based on a phenomenological ontology that, regarding masculinity, allows us to identify how this dimension is conceived and exercised in all social interactions.

## STATE OF THE ART

The subject of the study of masculinities has a large background. Based on the empirical approach that we have carried out, in this synthetic account we will present some of the most representative works, with the following structure: Initially, we will discuss the general study of masculinities in the digital world. Later, we will talk about some research around positive masculinities, first in general terms, as well as in the media, and then in their manifestations in digital spaces. Whenever relevant, in each case we will first mention studies carried out internationally and then works carried out in Latin America.

Some of the first studies of expressions of masculinity in cyberspace were conducted by Hunt (1986) and McLean and Schubert (1995). In these early approaches to digital spaces, the role played by the then-new technology as an additional source of meaning in the social construction of manliness is highlighted.

In this very same context, some of the most recurrent lines of work on masculinities have to do with the study of violent expressions of

misogyny (Martínez-Valerio, 2023; Pedraza, 2019; Versiani, 2022) and homophobia (Pascoe & Diefendorf, 2019). Most of these works discuss the prevalence of cultural norms associated with what is considered masculine that, in its traditional conception, often lead to various manifestations of aggression in digital spaces.

In more recent research from this field of interaction, the study of relationship structures in the virtual world that arise from the hegemonic exercise of what is masculine (Trott, 2022; Venäläinen & Virkki, 2019) and the discursive constructions around being a man that takes place in socio-digital media (García-Gómez, 2020; White, 2019) stand out.

Concerning positive masculinities, at the international level, although the term had begun to be used during the 1990s by authors such as MacInnes (1994) and Ray (1998), the first field works that explicitly address the study of positive masculinities date from the first decade of the 21st century, as can be found in Gore (2001) and Monaghan (2005).

In traditional media, the concept of positive masculinities has been the object of study in works such as those of Dyer (2018) and Morrell (2011), around the concept of *new men* and their representation in literature between the 18th and 19th centuries. In more recent approaches to traditional media undertaken from this same line, the works of Mustonen (2020) and Godfrey (2021) on cinema, as well as that of Lackey (2021) and Martín (2022) on television are worthy of note.

In Ibero-America, this is a line that has been studied at least since the beginning of this century by authors such as Carabí (2000) and Fraguas (2000). In these first approaches, specific cases are studied in which the manifestations of masculine identity begin to reveal aspects that are not entirely in line with some traditional conceptions of being a man, especially around the exercise of fatherhood and greater emotional expression.

In Mexico, the works of Gutmann (2000) and Gutmann and Viveros (2005) are particularly enlightening in revealing that, since the end of the 20th century, the exercise of masculinities began to show some transformations, around aspects such as a greater concern for self-care of health and the questioning of values such as stoicism and emotional repression; in addition to the reiteration of new forms of participatory parenting previously found in international studies.

Concerning our approach, some of the closest antecedents are given by works that have investigated the expression of positive masculinities on socio-digital platforms such as Instagram (Marshall et al., 2020), Facebook (Salam, 2021) and TikTok (Beyer, 2022; Foster & Baker, 2022). In summary, these investigations show that the manifestation of masculinity occurs from traits that, although at times may oppose patriarchal forms (such as the free emotional expression and the practice of activities traditionally considered unmasculine), at others reinforce aspects of what is traditionally considered masculine.

Internationally, other recent approaches to positive masculinities have been undertaken around physical and mental self-care (Gough & Novikova, 2020; Wilson, 2022), free emotional expression (Underwood & Olson, 2019; Lackey, 2021) and the exercise of responsible and participatory parenting (Scheibling, 2020; Hytti et al., 2023).

It is important to note that it was not possible to find any work done on positive masculinities in digital interaction spaces in Mexican contexts. Among the few antecedents located in Ibero-America carried out around this type of positive manifestations, the works of Ocampo (2015) and Espinar-Ruiz and Ocampo (2017) in Spain, Cruzalegui (2021) in Peru, and Vásquez (2020) in Ecuador, stand out. These investigations show that along with the majority of hegemonic expressions, it is possible to begin to recognize other alternative ways of exercising masculinities in the region, from the aforementioned parental and emotional dimensions, as well as on the self-representations of the being.

This gap represents one of the most outstanding premises regarding the academic relevance of this work. This is a glimpse of the cultural transformations on gender and masculinities that it is possible to begin to recognize in Mexican cyberspace, which as a communicative phenomenon in virtuality, are made visible in discourses contrary to the traditional values of machismo and hegemonic masculinity.

## METHOD

To identify how masculine identity is expressed in Mexican accounts in social networking sites, a content analysis was carried out based on Krippendorff's model (1990), according to the following procedure:

*Case selection*

According to Statista (2022), the two social networking sites with the largest number of users globally are Facebook and TikTok, with an estimated 2 606 and 1 719 million, respectively. The selection criteria were non-personal public profiles that had an active presence on these two platforms, and that also met the requirement of making publications that corresponded to the characteristics of positive masculinities, in Spanish, and whose administrators were in the Mexican Republic. The accounts that complied with the above were *De Machos a Hombres*[5] (DMAH) and *Voices of Brotherhood* (VOB).[6]

*Observation period*

Based on Connell's (1995) concept of hegemonic masculinity, we determined to establish the observation period around four dates that were considered phenomenologically relevant: Father's Day, LGBTQ+ Pride Day, Men's Day, and Women's Day; that is, the months of June and November 2022 and March 2023 (a total 91 days of observation). The assumption from which we started was that during these periods we were more likely to find expressions that referred to the units that we will describe next.

*Units of analysis*

The context units were given by the four accounts mentioned before, for the two profiles, two on Facebook and two on TikTok. There were two units of observation: 1) 100 % of the posts made by the administrators of the four accounts during the study period; and 2) a non-probabilistic and non-representative selection of comments. This second sample consisted of the total of the comments[7] made on the

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[5]  Account based in Mexico City that operates from: https://www.facebook.com/demachosaHOMBRES/ and https://www.tiktok.com/@demachosa-mujers

[6]  Account based in Mexicali, Baja California, that operates from: https://www.facebook.com/voicesofbrotherhood/ and https://www.tiktok.com/@voicesofbrotherhood

[7]  Due to the restrictions in the Facebook API (which only allows free access to the first 100 comments of any publication), it was necessary to purcha-

three publications with the highest number of responses by the users, in the four accounts, for each of the three observation periods. Regarding the recording units, these were established as follows:

a.  Indicators of hegemonic masculinity: These were constructed from a re-coding of the second-generation scales[8] identified by Briseño (2011), grouped according to Lagarde's (2005) mandates of masculinity: *Manliness* (consumption of toxic substances; chivalry; competitiveness; sports skills; repression of emotional expressions; physical strength; protector; homophobia; misogyny; leadership; the prevalence of reasoning; recklessness, bravery, courage or boldness and violence); *Virility* (initiative in establishing sexual relationships; having multiple sexual partners; having sexual relations frequently; demonstrating sexual potency or prowess; ability to father offspring; having a sexually attractive partner); and *Provider* (economic or professional success; family support or material provider and prevalence of work-life over family or domestic life).

b.  Indicators of positive masculinity: In order to record this type of expressions, a preliminary observation was made on the corpus of analysis that allowed an initial identification of ad hoc indicators. When compared with the GEM Scale (Gender Equitable Men), it was found that although they were mostly coincident,

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se the ExportComments.com service to be able to automatically download all the comments made in the units of observation. This platform warns that, depending on the privacy settings of the users, some comments may not be possible to download, which constitutes a probable measurement bias that must be taken into consideration.

8   The masculinity scales that we re-codified for this work were: the *Multicultural Masculinity Ideology Scale* (Doss and Hopkins, 1998), *Male Attitude Norms Inventory* (Luyt, 2005), *Adolescent Masculinity Ideology in Relationships Scale* (Chu et al., 2005), *Machismo Measure* (Arciniega et al., 2008), *Macho Scale* (Anderson, 2012), *Russian Male Norms Inventory* (Janey et al., 2013), *Measure of Men's Perceived Inexpressiveness Norms* (Wong et al., 2013).

our indicators were broader. It is important to note that the GEM Scale was constructed in Brazil (a country with similar conditions to Mexico) from the perspective of gender identity (Barker, 2000; Pulerwitz & Barker, 2008), so it has a high epistemic and cultural relationship with our approach. Thus, the indicators we used were: free emotional expression; physical and mental self-care; healthy/respectful/nurturing sexuality; participation in domestic work; respectful/loving/nurturing couple relationships; participatory parenthood; respect for sex-gender diversity; and solidarity with women/feminism.

## RESULTS

In the 298 publications and 1962 comments observed in total, it was possible to identify 377 references to various aspects of hegemonic masculinity (Table 1). Except for 54 comments (2.8% of the total), the rest of these allusions (97.2%) were in opposition or criticism of this type of masculinity.

Regarding positive masculinity (Table 2), a total of 546 occurrences were recorded from the same corpus. 100% of them were expressions in favor of the observed indicators.

## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The results obtained from the two profiles studied in their four accounts indicate that the construction of masculinities, during the observation period, is strongly related to the selected dates. As expected, the indicators of positive masculinity that on average appeared most frequently (physical and mental self-care, participatory fatherhood, free emotional expression, establishment of respectful relationships, as well as solidarity with women and feminism) were found around Men's Day, LGBTQ+ Pride Day, Father's Day, and Women's Day. In both profiles it was possible to observe publications that explicitly referred to these commemorations, and in which the aspects already mentioned were emphasized.

TABLE 1:

HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY

| | June 2022 | | | | November 2022 | | | | March 2023 | | | |
| | Publications | | Comments | | Publications | | Comments | | Publications | | Comments | |
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Traditional manliness* | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Violence | 6 | 13% | 12 | 13% | 27 | 25% | 27 | 31% | 15 | 38% | 0 | 0% |
| Misogyny | 4 | 9% | 14 | 15% | 20 | 18% | 20 | 23% | 3 | 8% | 0 | 0% |
| Consumption of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs | 1 | 2% | 24 | 26% | 6 | 6% | 6 | 7% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| Repression of emotional expressions | 2 | 4% | 16 | 17% | 8 | 7% | 8 | 9% | 2 | 5% | 0 | 0% |
| Physical or emotional strength | 6 | 13% | 5 | 5% | 7 | 6% | 7 | 8% | 1 | 3% | 0 | 0% |
| Homophobia | 5 | 11% | 5 | 5% | 6 | 6% | 6 | 7% | 3 | 8% | 0 | 0% |
| Protective | 1 | 2% | 1 | 1% | 2 | 2% | 2 | 2% | 1 | 3% | 0 | 0% |
| Sports skills | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 3% | 3 | 3% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| Leadership | 3 | 7% | 1 | 1% | 1 | 1% | 1 | 1% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| Temerity/bravery/courage/ boldness | 2 | 4% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 2% | 2 | 2% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| Prevalence of reasoning/ intellectuality | 0 | 0% | 1 | 1% | 2 | 2% | 2 | 2% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |

| | June 2022 | | | | November 2022 | | | | March 2023 | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Publications | | Comments | | Publications | | Comments | | Publications | | Comments | |
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % |
| Chivalry | 1 | 2% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 1% | 1 | 1% | 1 | 3% | 0 | 0% |
| Competitiveness | 0 | 0% | 1 | 1% | 1 | 1% | 1 | 1% | 1 | 3% | 0 | 0% |
| *Manhood and virility* | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Frequent sexual intercourse | 2 | 4% | 13 | 14% | 1 | 1% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 5% | 0 | 0% |
| Initiative in establishing sexual relations | 3 | 7% | 0 | 0% | 11 | 10% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 8% | 0 | 0% |
| Demonstrate sexual potency/ skill | 4 | 9% | 1 | 1% | 4 | 4% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 3% | 0 | 0% |
| Having multiple sexual partners | 1 | 2% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 3% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 3% | 0 | 0% |
| Ability to produce offspring | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 1% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| Have a sexually attractive partner | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 1% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| *Man as provider* | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Family support/material provider | 5 | 11% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 1% | 1 | 1% | 4 | 10% | 2 | 100% |
| Economic/professional success | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 1% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| Prevalence of work life over family/domestic life | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 3% | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 46 | 100% | 94 | 100% | 109 | 100% | 87 | 100% | 39 | 100% | 2 | 100% |

Source: Own elaboration.

TABLE 2

POSITIVE MASCULINITY

| Indicators | June 2022 | | | | November 2022 | | | | March 2023 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Publications | | Comments | | Publications | | Comments | | Publications | | Comments | |
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % |
| Physical and mental self-care | 38 | 32% | 82 | 54% | 25 | 27% | 25 | 27% | 38 | 43% | 2 | 29% |
| Responsible/loving/nurturing/ participatory parenting | 24 | 21% | 51 | 34% | 5 | 5% | 5 | 5% | 11 | 13% | 0 | 0% |
| Free emotional expression | 13 | 11% | 15 | 10% | 25 | 27% | 25 | 27% | 10 | 11% | 0 | 0% |
| Respectful/loving/nurturing couple relationships | 13 | 11% | 2 | 1% | 18 | 20% | 18 | 20% | 5 | 6% | 0 | 0% |
| Solidarity with women/feminism | 1 | 1% | 0 | 0% | 7 | 8% | 7 | 8% | 15 | 17% | 4 | 57% |
| Healthy/respectful/nurturing sexuality | 8 | 7% | 2 | 1% | 5 | 5% | 5 | 5% | 4 | 5% | 1 | 14% |
| Respect for sex-gender diversity | 13 | 11% | 0 | 0% | 4 | 4% | 4 | 4% | 2 | 2% | 0 | 0% |
| Domestic work | 7 | 6% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 2% | 2 | 2% | 3 | 3% | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 117 | 100% | 152 | 100% | 91 | 100% | 91 | 100% | 88 | 100% | 7 | 100% |

Source: Own elaboration.

Regarding hegemonic masculinity, as already noted, in most cases its appearance occurred as a criticism of this type of behavior which, in order of frequency of appearance, is given mainly by violence, misogyny, the consumption of toxic substances, and the repression of emotional expressions. In the data analyzed, these are the most reiterated aspects against traditional forms of masculinity, where the first two coincide with what was pointed out by Connell (1987) about hegemonic masculinity. According to García (2015), what was found in our results can be located as a *zone of resistance* against this type of masculinity.

Concerning the indicators of positive masculinity, our results coincide with the findings of Gough and Novikova (2020) on physical and mental self-care, Underwood and Olson (2019) on free emotional expression, and Scheibling (2020) on responsible and participatory parenthood.

Based on the contents and comments analyzed, we can say that the positive masculinity observed is more respectful of women and people in sexual-gender diversity and of men with themselves, in terms of their physical and mental health; in correspondence with what was found both in the conceptual background and in the empirical works of Gutmann and Viveros (2005).

On the other hand, during the analysis process, it was possible to identify two findings that were not part of the indicators directly proposed that, however, we considered relevant to discuss. The first is associated with one of the indicators of virility: the ability to have children. Although in the analysis this indicator had only one occurrence in total, in response to a reflection on the need to break with patterns learned from previous generations made on TikTok by Voices of Brotherhood on June 20, 2022, of the 609 comments made in response, 101 (14.7%) expressed a determination not to have offspring. We were unable to locate any precedents referring to this type of expression in the context of the study of masculinities, which opens a possible line of inquiry for the future.

The second finding was in relation to the expressions made on the DMAH Facebook account, about the importance of participation in domestic work. In the 11 posts made on this issue, the importance of

using products with low environmental impact, such as vinegar and baking soda, was emphasized. We highlight this because, according to Paulson and Boose (2019), there is a relationship between hegemonic masculinity models and environmental degradation. This can be located within the Theory of Care (Elliott, 2016) mentioned in the theoretical section.

These two findings allow us to discuss the construction of indicators of hegemonic masculinity described in the methodological section. As noted in the conceptual background referring to the ideas of Malti-Douglas (2007), social constructions about gender, in general, and around masculinity, in particular, are subject to specific cultural, geographical, and temporal contexts. Valuations of what is considered masculine can change. None of the recodified masculinity scales correspond to the case of Mexico. The closest references were the *Machismo Scale* (Arciniega et al., 2008) and the *Macho Scale* (Anderson, 2012), both applied in Latin American migrant communities in the United States. Likewise, these are measurement proposals made between 1998 and 2013; that is, the most recent one is more than a decade old. Despite the Brazilian GEM scale (Barker, 2000; Pulerwitz & Barker, 2008) that we reviewed, the development of instruments for measuring masculinities for people in the Mexican cultural context continues to be an important pending issue in this line of work.

CONCLUSIONS

Masculinities, as cultural devices, are reproduced through a wide variety of social mechanisms. As stated by Connell (1987), one of them takes place through the media. In addition to the traditional media representations of masculinity, there are those present on social networking sites, where the discussion and the construction of how a man should be take place.

In methodological terms, platforms such as Facebook and TikTok represent interaction environments in which the identity expressions that account for being a man are recorded publicly, from each post, reaction, and comment. Each user reveals their identity from this dimension based on their digital actions. The prescriptions on how a man

should look, feel, think and act are the essence of the communication phenomenon that we have addressed in this work.

As found in the state of the art, despite the numerous previous approaches on masculinities in the digital world, we could not locate sources that would give us clues on how such identity dimension is being expressed in any virtual space located in the Mexican context, particularly from the positive masculinities' perspective. An important part of the empirical work done in virtual spaces (Pascoe & Diefendorf, 2019; Pedraza, 2019; Versiani, 2022; Martínez-Valerio, 2023) has focused on the study of the manifestations of hegemonic masculinities.

This line of work allows us to place the two cases studied in a broader and more complex context. As we have pointed out, the discursive proposals of positive masculinity that we observe coexist with discourses of hate, misogyny, and homophobia, as well as with violent forms of relationships between men themselves, as suggested by Marshall et al. (2020), Salam (2021), Beyer (2022) and Foster and Baker (2022).

Beyond the theoretical considerations that were reviewed regarding positive masculinity, our work accounts for a very limited portion of the praxis with which this occurs today in the Mexican digital context. The results we have shown reveal specifically how other ways of being a man are proposed, contrary to traditional hegemonic forms. The eight indicators that were worked on are an indication of part of the current reconfiguration of masculine identities in such an environment.

Unlike what usually happens in the discourses on masculinities found in traditional media, in social networking sites we find much more participatory interactions where the meaning of manhood is built and negotiated. Thus, in a social context characterized by social movements such as #MeToo and #NiUnaMás, it is of the utmost relevance to study how, at least in part of cyberspace, a reconceptualization of masculinity is taking place toward the construction of more equitable social relationships.

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PROFILE

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