



## GENDER APPROACH: TOWARDS THE ERADICATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

### ENFOQUE DE GÉNERO: HACIA LA ERRADICACIÓN DE LA VIOLENCIA CONTRA LA MUJER EN LA EDUCACIÓN UNIVERSITARIA

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#### ABSTRACT:

This work has the purpose of socializing before the scientific community interested in the matter, the presentation of the partial results obtained, within the framework of the formulation of a broader project called: Gender study for the eradication of violence in the System of Higher Education: Case ULEAM. In this work, the results obtained from the partial diagnosis of the situation in gender relations that are developed in the ULEAM are presented to identify the existence or not of sexist practices. From this framework, the "Eloy Alfaro" Secular University of Manabí is part of the Gender Network, whose membership aims to contribute to the fulfillment of the objectives of the National Plan for Good Living. The research is quantitative, specialized bibliographic sources were consulted. Among the results, the following stand out: Regarding whether a teacher, student, or administrative officer (man) sexually harasses them, 96.56% do not answer the question, 1.15% express that they are a teacher, 2.06% point to male students and the 0.23% to an administrative. It is assumed that those who did not answer it is because the question does not apply or because they are afraid to answer it. The results show that there is sexual harassment of female students within ULEAM by male students, teachers, or administrators. It is concluded that the rights of women are inviolable, that they must be recognized and respected by the entire university community.

**Keywords:** gender approach, violence against women, university education.

#### RESUMEN:

Este trabajo tiene la finalidad de socializar ante la comunidad científica interesada en la materia, la presentación de los resultados parciales obtenidos, en el marco de la formulación de un proyecto más amplio denominado: Estudio de género para la erradicación de la violencia en el Sistema de Educación Superior: Caso ULEAM. En este trabajo, se presentan los resultados obtenidos del diagnóstico parcial de la situación en las relaciones de género que se desarrollan en la ULEAM para identificar la existencia o no de prácticas sexistas. Desde este marco, la Universidad Laica "Eloy Alfaro" de Manabí forma parte de la Red de Género, desde cuya membresía se aspira contribuir al cumplimiento de los objetivos del Plan Nacional del Buen Vivir. La investigación es de corte cuantitativa, se consultaron fuentes bibliográficas especializadas. Entre los resultados destaca: En lo que respecta a si algún docente, estudiante o administrativo (hombre) le acosa sexualmente, el 96.56% no responde la pregunta, el 1.15% expresa que es un docente, el 2.06% señala a estudiantes varones y el 0.23% a un administrativo. Se asume que los que no contestaron es porque no procede la pregunta o porque tienen temor contestarla. Los resultados demuestran que, si existe acoso sexual a las estudiantes mujeres dentro de la Uleam por parte de estudiantes, docentes o administrativos hombres. Se concluye que los derechos de las mujeres son inviolables, que deben ser reconocidos y respetados por toda la comunidad universitaria.

**Palabras Clave:** enfoque de género, violencia contra la mujer, educación universitaria.

**Recibido:** 28 de septiembre de 2020; **Aceptado:** 04 de enero de 2021; **Publicado:** 08 de enero de 2021.





## 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the purposes of the Higher Education and Gender Network of Ecuador is to achieve the articulation of a comprehensive work where equality is shown in the student, teaching, management, and administrative areas, but also in the content of the curriculum and in the generation of knowledge. Following its incorporation into the Gender Network, ULEAM considered the need to carry out a social diagnosis as one of the Network's initial actions, to have data that would illustrate the existing situation of inequality, as a tool for defining policies or actions that would make it possible to take concrete action to promote gender equality in conjunction with other types of inequalities: ethnic, generational, disability, gender diversity and mobility.

Higher education institutions are spaces for the creation and transmission of scientific knowledge, for the production and reproduction of values and behaviors, and for the coexistence of different social and generational sectors. They have a social responsibility to have equitable environments that favor equal academic, labor, and professional opportunities between the sexes. In this order, the

contribution of university institutions to national development has a socializing function and a multiplier effect that radiates its influence outside their communities; the achievements they reach in relation to gender equality will always have an impact on different areas of our societies. The measures taken by universities to understand gender relations and correct inequalities will be fundamental to the democratization and justice processes of society. "Overcoming inequality and exclusion as a strategy to reach the path towards sustainable development in societies, is perhaps the most pressing and important challenge of these times for countries and HEIs" (Aponte & Hernández, 2008).

Therefore, this investigation will be based on Article 11 of the Constitution, which states: "All persons are equal and shall enjoy the same rights, duties and opportunities. No one shall be discriminated against on the basis of ethnicity, birthplace, age, sex, gender identity, cultural identity, marital status, language, religion, ideology, political affiliation, judicial background, socio-economic status, immigration status, sexual



orientation, health status, HIV status, disability, physical difference; nor by any other personal or collective distinction, temporary or permanent, which has the purpose or result of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of rights, since the law will sanction any form of discrimination”.

The State shall adopt affirmative action measures that promote real equality in favor of rights holders who are in a situation of inequality. Hence, the objective of this research is to disseminate/socialize before the scientific community interested in the subject, the presentation of the partial results obtained, within the framework of the formulation of a broader project called: Gender Study for the Eradication of Violence in the Higher Education System: The ULEAM Case, in which teacher-researchers participate.

## **2. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The study was quantitative, since it was based on numerical information obtained through the application of surveys to eighth grade students in the periods already mentioned, with two variables: gender approach and violence against women.

The information used was obtained from the results of a group of students with the application of an online survey on the subject with the rigor, seriousness and ethics required by this type of study. The applied survey was directed to students of both sexes, for purposes of the results of the topic raised, the information of answers given only by female students was filtered.

Quantitative indicators have a numerical form and refer to the objective and material relations of the facts or phenomena that occur in natural or social reality (Tobalino, Dolorier, Villa y Menacho, 2017). They are expressed as coefficients, proportions, ranges, strata of an age structure and indices of behavior of a phenomenon over time. For this purpose, information will be collected from the different academic units and departments.

Two research techniques were applied, for the three strata that make up the population to be investigated:

**Quantitative technique:** surveys.

**Qualitative technique:** content analysis.



### 3. RESULTS

From the survey applied to 873 female students from various faculties of Uleam in 2019, the following results were obtained, summarized in 15 tables.

**Table 1.** Subjects and sample size.

	Population of reference	Sample	Error margin	Level of reliability
<b>Students</b>	19.000	377	5%	95%
<b>Professors</b>	800	260	5%	95%
<b>Employees</b>	800	260	5%	95%

**Prepared by:** Members of the Gender Research Project. (2020).

The study should cover the situation of the various strata of the University, disaggregated by sex, that is: students, teaching staff and administrative personnel. The size of the sample will be according to the following detail:

**Table 2.** Focal groups.

Year	Faculties	Type (teachers, students)
2018	Communication Sciences	Teachers and students' members of the project.
	Architecture	Teachers and students' members of the project.
	Social Work	Teachers and students' members of the project.

**Prepared by:** Members of the Gender Research Project. (2020).

**Table 3.** Means of communication

Internet	Newspaper
Social Networks	Locals
Digital media	Provincials
Television and radio	National

**Prepared by:** Members of the Gender Research Project. (2020).



**Table 4.** Age of the student.

No.	Age range	f	%
1	18-20	147	16.84%
2	20-22	107	12.26%
3	22-24	59	6.76%
4	24-26	26	2.98%
5	26-28	12	1.37%
6	28-30	7	0.80%
7	30 >	31	3.55%
8	No answer	484	55.44%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Prepared by:** Members of the Gender Research Project. (2020).

**Table 5.** Marital status of the student.

No.	Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
1	Married	32	3.67%
2	Separated	7	0.80%
3	Divorced	3	0.34%
4	Single	333	38.14%
5	Fact Union	5	0.57%
6	No answer	493	56.47%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Prepared by:** Members of the Gender Research Project. (2020).

**Table 6.** Current level of study.

No.	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
1	First Level	75	8.59%
2	Second Level	57	6.53%
3	Third Level	72	8.25%
4	Fourth Level	43	4.93%
5	Fifth Level	22	2.52%
6	Sixth Level	52	5.96%
7	Seventh Level	22	2.52%
8	Eighth Level	33	3.78%
9	Ninth Level	15	1.72%
10	Tenth Level	18	2.06%
11	No response	464	53.15%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Prepared by:** Members of the Gender Research Project. (2020).



**Table 7.** Sexual harassment by a teacher, student, or administrator (male).

No.	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
1	Teacher	10	1.15%
2	Student	18	2.06%
3	Administrative	2	0.23%
4	Not Answered/Not Applicable	843	96.56%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

*Prepared by: Members of the Gender Research Project. (2020).*

**Table 8.** Sexual harassment by a teacher, student, or administrator (female).

No.	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
1	Teacher	1	0.11%
2	Student	6	0.69%
3	Administrative	1	0.11%
4	Not Answered/Not Applicable	865	99.08%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

*Prepared by: Members of the Gender Research Project. (2020).*

**Table 9.** Exclusion from some activity for being a woman.

No.	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	76	8.71%
2	No	702	80.41%
3	No reply	95	10.88%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

*Prepared by: Members of the Gender Research Project. (2020).*

**Table 10.** Activity from which she was excluded because she was a woman.

No.	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
1	Cultural activities	2	0.23%
2	Social activities	7	0.80%
3	Scholarships	4	0.46%
4	Sports	6	0.69%
5	Awards	3	0.34%
6	No answer/not applicable	851	97.48%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

*Prepared by: Members of the Gender Research Project. (2020).*



**Table 11.** How often you hear or see the following behaviors in the classroom or on campus.

No.	Answer	Never	%	Rarely	%	Sometimes	%	Frequently	%	Very often	%	No answer	%
1	Teachers (men) make jokes and comments that stereotype and denigrate women	581	66.55%	168	19.24%	75	8.59%	12	1.37%	12	1.37%	25	2.86%
2	Teachers (women) make jokes and comments that stereotype and denigrate women	679	77.78%	114	13.06%	24	2.75%	9	1.03%	3	0.34%	44	5.04%
3	Male students defend their ideas and answers more than female students	255	29.21%	299	34.25%	191	21.88%	62	7.10%	11	1.26%	55	6.30%
4	The teachers (men) take the answers and suggestions of the students (women) as seriously as those of the students (men)	156	17.87%	108	12.37%	133	15.23%	204	23.37%	220	25.20%	52	5.96%
5	The teachers (women) take seriously the answers and suggestions of the students (women) as much as those of the students (men)	157	17.98%	94	10.77%	132	15.12%	214	24.51%	221	25.32%	55	6.30%

*Prepared by: Members of the Gender Research Project. (2020).*

**Table 12.** Experiences of some of the following situations in your faculty with respect to males.

No.	Answer	No	%	Yes	%	Male student	%	Male professor	%	Male staff	%	Male worker	%	No answer	%
1	Presence of posters, calendars, computer screens or other images of a sexual nature that make your uncomfortable.	797	91.29%	19	2.18%	19	2.18%	3	0.34%	1	0.11%	5	0.57%	29	3.32%



2	Unwanted compliments or comments about your appearance	660	75.60%	53	6.07%	82	9.39%	17	1.95%	1	0.11%	17	1.95%	43	4.93%
3	Unhealthy looks or suggestive gestures that annoy you	623	71.36%	60	6.87%	91	10.42%	29	3.32%	3	0.34%	22	2.52%	45	5.15%
4	Mocking, joking or suggestive gestures that annoy you	637	72.97%	58	6.64%	100	11.45%	19	2.18%	2	0.23%	6	0.69%	51	5.84%
5	Pressure to accept invitations to unwanted meetings or appointments outside the institution	778	89.12%	12	1.37%	21	2.41%	13	1.49%	2	0.23%	0	0.00%	47	5.38%
6	Unwanted letters, phone calls or messages of a sexual nature.	787	90.15%	13	1.49%	7	0.80%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	66	7.56%
7	Threats that will negatively affect your academic status, if you do not accept sexual invitations and proposals.	804	92.10%	7	0.80%	5	0.57%	5	0.57%	1	0.11%	0	0.00%	51	5.84%
8	Requirement to engage in activities that are not part of their academic or other disciplinary activities for refusing sexual advances	801	91.75%	10	1.15%	7	0.80%	4	0.46%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	51	5.84%



9	Rubbing, unwanted physical contact	767	87.86%	18	2.06%	26	2.98%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	3	0.34%	59	6.76%
10	Verbal pressure to have sex	798	91.41%	8	0.92%	8	0.92%	4	0.46%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	55	6.30%

*Prepared by: Members of the Gender Research Project. (2020).*

**Table 13.** Experiences of some of the following situations in your faculty with respect to females.

No.	Answer	No	%	Yes	%	Female student	%	Female professor	%	Female staff	%	Female worker	%	No answer	%
1	Presence of posters, calendars, computer screens or other images of a sexual nature that make you uncomfortable.	802	91.87%	12	1.37%	6	0.69%	1	0.11%	2	0.23%	2	0.23%	48	5.50%
2	Unwanted compliments or comments about your appearance.	735	84.19%	37	4.24%	30	3.44%	1	0.11%	0	0.00%	8	0.92%	62	7.10%
3	Unhealthy looks or suggestive gestures that annoy you.	731	83.73%	38	4.35%	23	2.63%	7	0.80%	1	0.11%	8	0.92%	65	7.45%
4	Mocking, joking or suggestive gestures that annoy you.	712	81.56%	36	4.12%	44	5.04%	4	0.46%	2	0.23%	6	0.69%	69	7.90%
5	Pressure to accept invitations to unwanted meetings or appointments outside the institution.	791	90.61%	9	1.03%	3	0.34%	3	0.34%	0	0.00%	1	0.11%	66	7.56%
6	Unwanted letters, phone calls or messages of a sexual nature.	783	89.69%	8	0.92%	7	0.80%	3	0.34%	1	0.11%	1	0.11%	70	8.02%



7	Threats that negatively affect your academic status if you do not accept sexual invitations and proposals.	789	90.38%	5	0.57%	3	0.34%	2	0.23%	0	0.00%	1	0.11%	73	8.36%
8	Requirement to engage in activities that are not part of their academic or other disciplinary activities for refusing sexual advances.	792	90.72%	6	0.69%	3	0.34%	1	0.11%	1	0.11%	1	0.11%	69	7.90%
9	Rubbing, unwanted physical contact.	765	87.63%	14	1.60%	12	1.37%	3	0.34%	0	0.00%	2	0.23%	77	8.82%
10	Verbal pressure to have sex.	780	89.35%	6	0.69%	4	0.46%	1	0.11%	0	0.00%	1	0.11%	81	9.28%

*Prepared by: Members of the Gender Research Project. (2020).*

**Table N° 14.** Actions taken by students when their rights are violated.

No.	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
1	I told a friend/family member	96	11.00%
2	I asked for a consultation with a teacher.	14	1.60%
3	I asked the University for advice	9	1.03%
4	Hired a lawyer	2	0.23%
5	Filed a complaint with my school authorities	23	2.63%
6	Other actions	48	5.50%
7	Nothing	259	29.67%
8	Not applicable	422	48.34%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

*Prepared by: Members of the Gender Research Project. (2020).*

**Table N° 15.** Reasons for not taking action.

No.	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
1	I didn't give it a second thought	113	12.94%
2	I didn't know what to do	18	2.06%
3	I didn't want to be considered a troublesome person	15	1.72%



4	I thought the authorities were not going to do anything	12	1.37%
5	I filed a complaint with my school authorities	23	2.63%
6	I thought they might retaliate	7	0.80%
7	I was afraid of the possible reaction of my aggressor	3	0.34%
8	I was afraid of damaging my own reputation	4	0.46%
9	There were no witnesses and I thought it was useless to make the complaint	11	1.26%
10	Others	116	13.29%
11	No answer/not applicable	551	63.12%
	Total	873	100.00%

*Prepared by: Members of the Gender Research Project. (2020).*

#### 4. DISCUSSION

Of the total number of students that placed their age in the ranges presented, 80% correspond to the ranges between 18 and 24 years, with a range of 2 years interval, implies that the students surveyed are in a young stage. As for the marital status of the students surveyed, of the total who answered this question, 87.63% are single and 8.42% are married, so it follows that the vast majority still have parental and maternal dependence.

In relation to the academic levels of the students, there is an average of 15.65% in the first, second, third and sixth levels, and an average of 5% in the remaining levels, these results are the product of a randomized response process given by students from all ULEAM careers.

Regarding whether a teacher, student, or administrator (male) sexually harasses him, 96.56% did not answer the question, 1.15% said a teacher, 2.06% pointed to male students, and 0.23% pointed to an administrator. The assumption is that those who did not answer is because the question is not appropriate or because they are afraid to answer. Despite this, the results show that there is sexual harassment of female students within ULEAM by male students, teachers, and administrators.

Regarding the question if any teacher, student, or administrator (female) sexually harasses him/her, 99.08% did not answer the question, 0.69% answered that a student, 0.11% indicated that she is a teacher and another 0.11% an administrator. It is likely that the vast majority who did not answer is because they



do not apply this question to their reality, however, we must consider that other percentage which, although less important, denotes that there is sexual harassment by women to female students within the university.

According to the answers given by the students surveyed, 80.41% said they had not been excluded from any activity because they were women, however, 8.71% said they had and 10.88% did not answer the question and, of those who answered yes, 0.23% said cultural activities, 0.80% social activities, 0.46% scholarships, 0.69% sports, 0.34% awards. No consistency is shown with the result of the previous question. Situations of exclusion can be seen in smaller portions, but they continue to be a reality in which university students live.

Regarding the frequency with which they hear or witness various behaviors in their classroom or on their faculty, students expressed themselves as follows: Teachers (men) make jokes and comments that stereotype and denigrate women, 19.24% say they rarely, 8.59% sometimes, 1.37% frequently and 1.37% very frequently.

The teachers (women) make jokes and comments that stereotype and denigrate women, responded: 13.06% rarely, 2.75% sometimes 1.03% frequently and 0.34% very frequently.

In the question: Male students defend their ideas and answers more than female students, female students conclude: 34.25% rarely, 21.88% sometimes, 7.10% frequently, and 1.26% very frequently. Regarding the question: The teachers (men) take seriously the answers and suggestions of the students (women) as much as those of the students (men), the students respond: 17.87% say never, 12.37% say rarely, 15.23% sometimes, 23.37% think frequently and 25.20% very frequently.

And in the last question of this section, if the teachers (women) take seriously the answers and suggestions of the students (women) as much as those of the students (men), they answer: 17.98% say never, 10.77% think rarely, 15.12% sometimes, 24.51% frequently and 25.32% very frequently.

The results obtained show that women students at ULEAM are discriminated against in one way or another because of their



gender, violating their rights to be considered at the same level of equality and equity by other members of the university community.

In the question related to what, if any, situations they had experienced in their academic units related to the presence of posters, calendars, computer screens or other images of a sexual nature that made them uncomfortable. Unwanted compliments or comments about their appearance. Unhealthy looks or suggestive gestures that annoy them. Mocking, jokes or suggestive gestures that annoy them. Pressure to accept invitations to unwanted meetings or appointments outside the institution. Unwanted letters, phone calls or messages of a sexual nature.

Threats that negatively affect their academic status if they do not accept sexual invitations and proposals. Requirement to engage in activities that are not part of their academic or other disciplinary activities for refusing sexual advances. Hitting, unwanted physical contact. Verbal pressure to have sex, the responses given by the students; there are indications, according to the results obtained, by teachers, students,

administrative staff, all both sexes, that they harass female students for sexual purposes.

It is necessary to know if the students who suffered violation of their rights acted, the results indicate the following: 29.67% did nothing, 11% told a friend or relative, 5.5% indicated that they took other actions, 2.63% presented a complaint to the authorities of their faculty, 1.60% asked for advice from a professor, 1.03% asked the University for advice and 0.23% hired a lawyer. It is evident than that, if there have been situations within the university, in which several students have suffered some type of gender violence and therefore a violation of their rights as human beings and women.

Those students who responded that they did not do anything were asked the reasons and these were their answers: 12.94% said that they did not give it any importance, 2.06% did not know what to do, 1.72% did not want to be considered a conflictive person, 1.37% thought that the authorities were not going to do anything, 0.92% thought that they might retaliate, 0.34% were afraid of the possible reaction of the aggressor, 0.46% were afraid of damaging their own reputation, 1.26% indicated that there were no witnesses and they thought it was useless



to make the report, and 13.29% of students took other actions. It is necessary to work harder in the diffusion of the protocol of action established for these cases, to generate more informative talks so that the students act soon and in a correct way in these cases of violation of rights.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

- The rights of female students at the Universidad Laica Eloy Alfaro de Manabí are inviolable and must be respected by all other members of the university community.
- The violation of rights by gender of female university students is cause for the immediate activation of the respective action protocols by the relevant authorities.
- There are indications of violation of students' rights by gender within ULEAM.

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