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Artículos Científicos

Juventudes, definición y autorreflexión

Youth, definition and self-reflection

Juventude, definição e autorreflexão

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Resumen

El objetivo fue conocer la definición y percepción que tanto un grupo de jóvenes como de adultos tienen en torno al concepto *juventud* (o *juventudes*) para luego establecer similitudes y diferencias entre ambas concepciones. Para ello, se efectuaron entrevistas a jóvenes (cuyas edades oscilaban entre los 18 y los 29 años) y a personas adultas (mayores de 40 años). La entrevista diseñada fue aplicada a 80 personas (40 mujeres y 40 hombres). La mitad de los informantes estuvo conformada por jóvenes de entre 18 y 29 años, y la otra mitad por mayores de 40 años. Los participantes en este estudio fueron personas residenciadas en zonas urbanas de la ciudad de México durante la primavera del año 2019, con diferentes niveles educativos, de ingreso y ocupaciones. Los resultados de muestran que para un alto porcentaje de los consultados —independientemente de si eran jóvenes o adultos, mujeres u hombres— la mayoría de la juventud actual está “perdida” y “desorientada”. Sin embargo, cuando se les consultó sobre la definición de ser joven aparecieron expresiones sobre las oportunidades ante la vida presente y futura. En este sentido, el grupo de jóvenes hizo hincapié en la posibilidad de hacer cosas y tener energía, mientras que el de los adultos agregó palabras vinculadas con los sueños, la alegría y lo bonito (adjetivo usado por las mujeres), lo que deja entrever cierto grado de recuerdo y una suerte de melancolía por esa época. En definitiva, se



pude decir que si bien algunas opiniones recabadas fueron contradictorias, todas representan una muestra de las ambivalencias que emergen en torno al concepto *juventud*.

Palabras clave: México, miradas, percepciones, problemas, reflexiones, ventajas.

Abstract

The objective was to know the definition and perception that both a group of young people and adults have regarding the concept of youth and then establish similarities and differences between both conceptions. To do this, interviews were conducted with young people (whose ages ranged from 18 to 29 years old) and adults (over 40 years old). The designed interview was applied to 80 people (40 women and 40 men). Half of the informants were made up of young people between 18 and 29 years old, and the other half were over 40 years old. The participants in this study were people residing in urban areas of Mexico City during the spring of 2019, with different levels of education, income and occupations. The results show that for a high percentage of those consulted — regardless of whether they were young or old, women or men — the majority of today's youth are “lost” and “disoriented”. However, when they were consulted about the definition of being young, expressions about the opportunities in the present and future life appeared. In this sense, the youth group emphasized the possibility of doing things and having energy, while the adult group added words related to dreams, joy and beauty (an adjective used by women), which suggests a certain degree of memory and a kind of melancholy at that time. In short, it can be said that although some opinions gathered were contradictory, they all represent a sample of the ambivalences that emerge around the concept of youth.

Keywords: Mexico, look, perceptions, problems, reflections, advantages.

Resumo

Muito se fala e se investiga sobre a juventude. Aqui é feita uma abordagem a eles de acordo com suas percepções, definições e reflexões, bem como, a partir da perspectiva dos adultos, a fim de contrastar visões. Em um primeiro momento, é feita uma revisão da literatura sobre o assunto, ou seja, da academia. Em segundo lugar, as entrevistas que expressam definições e autodefinições são apresentadas e analisadas. Trata-se de um estudo exploratório com



abordagem qualitativa que busca as vozes e visões das pessoas sobre como vêem os jovens, o que significa ser jovem, os problemas e vantagens da juventude.

Como resultado é possível afirmar que ser joven en abstracto es considerado algo positivo por toda a población consultada, sem embargo, existe uma mirada negativa hacia la juventud real, desde jóvenes e adultos, y además ser joven tiene sus aspectos ventajosos, y también sus cuestiones problemáticas.

Palabras-chave: percepções, pontos de vista, problemas, vantagens, reflexões, México.

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Introduction

In this text, basically, testimonies of young people are collected about the definition and implications of the concept of youth. To do this, we start from the conception that this word is a sociocultural construct with a heterogeneous composition located in a space-time context. Likewise, it is considered that at present we speak of youths (plural¹) historically constructed, which include different ways of being and different social power relationships, as a multiple and dynamic process that takes place between people, groups, sexes, generations, etc. (Duarte, 2000; Margulis and Urresti, 2008; Villa, 2011).

In recent decades, the study of youth has gained strength and interest, although in other times it was an area practically condemned to invisibility or devaluation. Being young, in fact, has become an identity that is in fashion, which is sought to preserve and project as an attitude towards life, although it is worth noting that, on the other hand, it is also associated with various problems that concern the humanity, such as unemployment, crisis of values, addiction to illegal drugs, citizen insecurity, violence, crime, etc. (Feixa, 1993; Passerini, 1996). In other words, it is a concept in which both the ideal and the negative of the same reality can underlie. It is a metaphor, a subculture or a subsystem where different perspectives converge, which are usually studied from multiple perspectives —p. eg, from biology, psychology, etc. (Reguillo, 2010; Valenzuela, 2009) -, which unfortunately tend to focus on a perception of victims of the current society of the capitalist and neoliberal system (Beck, 2006).

¹ Del concepto *joven* o *jóvenes* se pasó a *juventud*, y hoy a *juventudes* (Sepúlveda, 2011).



Broadly speaking, it can be said that both in the general cultural imaginary and in the particular intellectual framework, youth is identified as a stage of life generally located between the period of secondary education and higher education, that is, in an age range that would oscillate between 15 and 24 years (United Nations [UN], (2020), or between 12 and 29 years (Instituto Mexicano de la Juventud [IMJ], 2017). However, different authors maintain that the conception of this term includes other variables (in addition to the temporal one), especially if it is analyzed from a socio-historical and political-cultural perspective (Margulis and Urresti, 2008; Reguillo, 2010; Urteaga, 2011; Valenzuela, 2009), hence it can be said that there is no unanimity regarding the conception of that period.

For this reason, the objective of this research was to know the definition and perception that both a group of young people and adults have regarding the concept of youth (or youth) and then establish similarities and differences between both conceptions.

Method

This document offers a qualitative exploratory study that in anthropology is called emic, a perspective that is based on the analysis of a phenomenon according to the vision of the protagonists themselves. In the process, the semantic fields approach (Pérez, 2015) has been used, which is based on analyzing a set of words and expressions about a concept.

Specifically, interviews were conducted with young people (whose ages ranged from 18 to 29 years old) and adults (over 40 years old) to inquire into the meaning that youth has for them; then the answers were contrasted to form a holistic vision of the object of study.

The group of young people was chosen from the age of 18 (of legal age) to avoid having legal problems when conducting the interviews; the age limit of 29 years was considered as reported by various authors.

The designed interview was applied to 80 people (40 women and 40 men). Half of the informants were made up of young people between 18 and 29 years old, and the other half were over 40 years old. It is worth noting that studies are generally carried out with middle-class young people who live in the city, so those who live in more remote areas, without education and in disadvantaged conditions, are ignored. The participants in this study, however, were people residing in urban areas of Mexico City during the spring of 2019, with different levels of education, income and occupations.



Below are some of the main sociodemographic variables of the participants: among the youth group the mean age was 22 years and the mode was 21 years, while among the adults the mean was 54.25 years and the mode was 40 years. Regarding young people, 97.7% were single and 1 widower; 90% without children and 10% with children. Among the elderly, 40% were married, 7.5% widowed, 17% single, and 10% in common law; 35% had no children, while the rest had between one and eight children (two children was the most repeated number).

The educational level of the young people was as follows: 65% were attending or had completed high school, 17.5% were studying or had completed a degree, 17.5% reached high school. As for adults, 5% had a postgraduate degree, 25% undergraduate, 40% baccalaureate, 15% primary, 10% secondary, 2.5% a commercial career, and 2.5% without studies, which indicates a higher educational level for those of younger age.

Regarding the occupation of young people, 52.5% were students, 40% employees, 5.5% housewives, 2.5% social service, 2.5% musicians, while 42.5% of the elderly worked as employees, 22.5% as employees of the domestic area, 15% merchants, 10% retired, 2.5% independent employees, 2.5% law graduates, 2.5% in administrator and 2.5% in hospitality.

Regarding income, 82.5% of young people were located in the middle range, 12.5% in low and 2.5% in high (2.5% did not answer). On the other hand, 70% of adults were in the middle, 27.5% in low and 2.5% did not respond.

A definition from social researchers

As said, youth is a social construction and, mainly, a personal identity (Lozano, 1991). It is a socially constituted biographical stage that goes from childhood and physiological puberty to adulthood, according to current conceptions. For some authors, this constitutes a period of transition from the family to society. A kind of inversion -sometimes festive and other times dramatic-, where the person is situated while entering the world considered to be an adult: a kind of vestibule, interregnum or waiting room from which one only leaves with the passage of time (Cardús and Estruch, 1992; Martínez and Berney, 1991).

For various authors, young people, as social actors, make up a discontinuous and changing social universe; its characteristics are the result of a kind of negotiation-tension between the sociocultural category assigned by the particular society and the subjective updating that specific subjects carry out from the differentiated internalization of the current



culture schemes (Reguillo, 1997). Young people, on the other hand, perceive differences between them, similar to those that distinguish people of any age (Martín Serrano, 1991). In short, there are multiple definitions to try to understand this construct (all valid), and as time passes, new approaches based on the academic paradigm of each era are being refined and integrated.

Even so, it ultimately seems to be, on the one hand, the identity that young people have with themselves and the identity with adults (Martín Serrano, 1991). It is a process of observation, reflection, construction and affirmation of identity. For this reason, there is also talk of the painful crisis of normative identity, the necessary transit for access to adulthood, a crisis of intimacy, a feeling of isolation and confusion of the idea that adolescents have of themselves, and how society it does not accompany it by providing plausible models.

This in the context of western society (Mead, 1945), where adolescence and youth have been viewed as intermediate stages of change and, especially, of transit (Erikson, 1972, 1985). This vision, although it is considered classic and conservative (Duarte, 2000), is still correct and present, which also happens with the contemporary consideration of the cultural and social agency of youth, that is, their active role in the construction of their lives. In addition to the social studies of youth "on their own terms", as producers of speeches and practices, through their own gaze (Urteaga, 2011).

Youth, therefore, is a complex concept that deserves further reflection, hence the difficulty that underlies any attempt at theorizing (Erikson, 1972). Indeed, "the youth problem" is a young problem (worth the redundancy), since it is considered a modern and recent phenomenon (Cardús and Estruch, 1992). Youth - understood as it is today - is barely a couple of centuries old (Ariès, 1962), which also happens with childhood, adolescence and the formation of the modern family, with airs of liberalism and enlightenment.

It is true that in other historical periods the youth phenomenon was not ignored, although it was not taken into account as much as in recent history (Souto, 2007). In this sense, Rousseau (1972) is considered one of the forerunners of the analysis of these stages, while in the case of adolescence it is consolidated in the 20th century (Hall, 1904) as a stage of crisis prior to adulthood.

What is important to make clear is that there is no problem of youth per se. The so-called "youth problem" and the transition to adulthood must be analyzed from the perspective of the social conflicts that pervade institutions, including schools (Coleman and Husén,



1989), family, employment, politics, sexuality, the media, leisure and free time, for example. In this regard, Lechner (2004) points out: “Youth culture is part of social coexistence. Young people do not have a separate ‘subculture’, split off from society, but rather share — with specific modalities — the practical ways of living together ”(p. 25).

In short, youth could be the social counterpart of the psychological concept of adolescence, as well as the biological concept of puberty, although adolescence today is also considered an intermediate phase between childhood and youth. It is a biological condition in the sense that it responds to a process of individual maturation, as stated in the abundant bibliography on the matter. Furthermore, it is a psychological state because it defines a stage of life determined by endogenous processes that form the so-called adult personality. On the other hand, it is an age group, a set of individuals defined chronologically and who, therefore, share certain social aspects. This, although it has been criticized and relativized (Reguillo 2010; Urteaga, 2011), does not stop being part of the social reality for education or politics and for people in general, since youth is a stage of human psychobiological development , a moment of social integration, a sociodemographic fact, sometimes an agent of change and at other times a development problem. In short, a mental state, a cultural consumption style, a processual phenomenon (Fernández, 2003). A generation and representation of a set of individuals born on similar dates, who share similar historical experiences.

As a sociocultural construction, youth is the result of the interaction of social conditions and cultural images that each group or sector elaborates in each historical moment on an age group (understanding by social conditions the set of institutional practices, rights and obligations that configure the behaviors and opportunities of young people that make up the structural situation of youth, and by cultural images the complex of ideological attributes and values assigned to young people at all times and to the symbolic universe that constitutes their material and immaterial world, the result of elaborations subjective factors of the young people themselves) (Feixa, 1993; Passerini, 1996).

In the case of Mexico, research on youth has revolved in recent times around sectoral perspectives and on specific groups under the approach of styles and cultures, although regarding the topic that interests us in these pages, reflection has not been so lucky. Reguillo (2010) points out three stages around the emergence of the youth political actor in Mexico: the 1968 student body, the emergence of the urban popular youth (the gangs), and the emergence of youth cultures at the end of the eighties. This author also considers that there



are two youth groups in the country: a precarious majority, disconnected and disaffiliated, and a minority, connected, incorporated into social institutions.

To conclude this point, it is worth commenting in which age group the young people would be located. In this regard, and beyond the theoretical and academic discussion on the subject, there is a question of a social and practical nature: on the one hand, the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (Inegi) and the UN estimate that this age range is located between 15 and 29 years, while the IMJ establishes it at 12 and 29 years. To be more precise, the definition of the young population according to their age can be established in three age groups: from 14 to 19, from 19 to 24 and from 24 to 29 (Welti, 1996).

Today in Mexico young people constitute an important weight in the demographic pyramid of the country. In fact, the young Mexican population exceeds that of the rest of the Latin American countries and even that of the United States. According to the Inegi intercensal survey (2015), there were 119,530,743 million inhabitants in the country, and 37.5 million young people between 12 and 29 years old, which represents 31.4% of the Mexican population. From 20 to 29 there are 20 million people.

According to the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (Coneval) (2018) and the National Council to Prevent Discrimination (Conapred) (2018), half of the young population lives in conditions of poverty, which is discriminated against by a diversity of age, social, ethnic, educational, etc. factors (Salas and De Oliveira, 2014). In short, young people are not attributed total alienation or attributed innate transforming potential (Ulloa, 2016), as it is hoped to demonstrate throughout these pages.

Results and Discussion

Youth self-perception and adult perspective

In this section, the opinions of the interviewees are taught and analyzed, for which the frequency in which certain words and semantic fields appear is reviewed. Although this is considered a qualitative investigation, it was also decided to quantify the positive and negative expressions of some of the responses collected. Then he delved into the repertoire of lexical units linked in a semantic association. The expressions were reduced to a word or a minimal grouping with meaning, and were ordered from highest to lowest according to frequency.



How do you see youth?

In the first place, it can be affirmed that both young people and the adult population have a negative perception of youth (Table 1).

Tabla 1. Cómo ve a la juventud hoy

	18-29		+ 40	
	HOMBRES	MUJERES	HOMBRES	MUJERES
Negativa	13	13	15	16
Positiva	3	0	2	0
Negativa y positiva	4	3	3	2
Neutra	0	4	0	2
Totales	20	20	20	20
TOTAL		40		40

Fuente: Elaboración propia

As can be seen, a negative view prevails in those surveyed, which is a little more accentuated in older people. This pessimistic view has to do with words like the following: "lost" and "misplaced", "erratic" and "aimless", "disoriented" and "confused".

Specifically, some young people consider that they "do not know what they want". More specifically, a young man indicated that this group of people "are out of touch", and a young man indicated that it was a "not very dreamy" generation. Other words used are "disinterest", "unconcern", "indifference", "lousy", "wayward" and even "rotten", as well as "without values" and "without respect".

The adult population made up of men, for their part, points out that this generation is "lost", especially due to "technology", as it is "involved in the digital world", this position mainly by men. They also highlight their lack of "interest" and "confusion", "lack of awareness." Even that they are "lazy", "they don't want to do anything", "they feel they deserve everything and they don't make an effort". Adult women, on the other hand, underline the "lack of education" and "disrespect" for the elderly and values, since they

consider everything "pure game", "without commitment" or "responsibility". According to them, "they like the easy thing", "without doing anything". In short, "they neither study nor work", and some people are labeled "criminals" and "vandals".

Regarding positive or neutral perceptions, young people believe that youth is a stage of "knowledge" and "learning", where people are more interested in the environment and are more willing to act. A young woman adds that "there is everything" in this generation, which lives in "a difficult time", "limited by the environment."

A similar perspective is perceived by adults, who associate the words "learn", "freedom", "awareness in the environment" and "enthusiasm" with this group. In short, they believe that it is a "varied" group, which has "more challenges and fewer work and school opportunities", although everything "depends on the context", in which "parents" and "family" play a transcendent role. Several of these views are consistent with the reviewed and annotated bibliography.

What is it to you to be young?

In contrast to what was seen in the previous section, it can be said that a positive vision predominates, a little more accentuated in youth (table 2). In other words, youth is bad, but for me being young is good because it offers learning and fun.

Tabla 2. Qué es para usted ser joven

	18-29		+ 40	
	HOMBRES	MUJERES	HOMBRES	MUJERES
Negativa	0	2	2	0
Positiva	16	14	11	13
Negativa y positiva	0	0	3	7
Neutra	4	4	4	0
Totales	20	20	20	20
TOTAL		40		40

Fuente: Elaboración propia



If tables 1 and 2 are compared, it can be indicated that there is a difference between the general (seen from the outside) and personal (seen from the inside) vision of youth. In other words, the discourse of the perceived and the discourse of the lived is different. Indeed, in this second question it can be seen that being young is an opportunity to "learn", "study", "discover" and "form the direction you are going." The "experiences" are also pointed out by young men, as well as "growing", "preparing", "creating the future", "building", "projects", all in terms of training for the future. As some authors explain, it constitutes a stage of training at the psychological and school level (Erickson, 1972).

The importance of the "energy" and "vitality" available, as well as "freedom" is also highlighted - more for women. This is related to what Beck (2006) pointed out, who points out that today's youth are the "children of freedom" (saving the distance in relation to the more political meaning of the term). Both men and women highlight the "opportunity to do what you want", the "possibilities of doing various things" and "things that you like", although they seem more concerned with training and doing, and they with the capacities they have. . Where both sexes agree is in the possibility of "having fun" and "enjoying"; Some even add that "without obligations", since there is "free time" and you can "do things that you will not be able to do later", as Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2003) also indicate. Only a few people in this group responded referring to formal aspects or pointing out that it was a "normal stage", in which they all had "the same characteristics".

Turning to the positive view of the adult population regarding being young, they highlighted words such as "learn", "study", "train", which shows an intergenerational agreement. One man added that it is a stage to "learn from mistakes" and "grow up"; others pointed to "having dreams", "desire to get ahead", "desire to progress."

Adult women also refer to "dreams", "goals", "projects" and even "taking over the world." In general, both sexes associate youth with "joy" and "enjoying life", and they add that it is a "beautiful stage" and "the most beautiful thing". These last expressions are associated with a paradise built in the discourse of historical or biographical memory (Halbwachs, 2004). At this stage, "energy" and "strength" are also valued, since it is possible to carry out "countless activities" and "things that later can no longer be done".

Other responses were more related to a neutral or descriptive tone. Next, a broader panorama of what has been expressed is offered (Table 3).



Tabla 3. Cómo ve usted a la juventud hoy y qué es para usted ser joven

	Cómo ve usted a la juventud hoy		Qué es para usted ser joven	
18-29	HOMBRES	MUJERES	HOMBRES	MUJERES
POSITIVAS	Conocimiento, aprendizaje.	Interés en estudio	Aprender, estudiar	Enseñanzas, aprender, descubrimientos, formar el rumbo al que vas
	Más despiertas en cosas sociales, exige.	Papel importante en los problemas como medio ambiente.	Experiencias, crecer, prepararse para el futuro, crear el futuro, crearse como persona, te estás construyendo, proyectos, realizarte	Energía cuerpo y mente, vitalidad, vivir
	Más abierta, pensamientos liberales, experimentar, relaciones sexuales	Libertad.	Oportunidad para hacer lo que quieres, posibilidades de hacer varias cosas, hacer cosas que te gustan, emprender	Libre
	Presente, dispuesta, emprender, crecer	Deseosa de hacer muchas cosas, iniciativa.	Energía, disposición ante la vida, vivir al máximo, activo	Experiencias, nuevas, muchas experiencias
			Ayudar a cambiar lo que se pueda, generar cambios y nuevas ideas, rebelarse	Hacer muchas cosas, cosas que te gustan, tomar decisiones
			Libertades, ser libre	Divertirse, disfrutar, dejarse llevar, llevarla tranquila con amigos, salir
			Divertirse, disfrutar	Disfrutar la vida sin tantas obligaciones
			Tiempo libre	
			Hacer cosas que más adelante no vas a poder hacer	
MATIZADAS				



(neutras, definiciones, entorno)				
		Hay de todo.	Etapa normal que pasamos, una etapa	Una edad
		Limitada por el entorno, periodo complicado por el entorno.	La edad no es solo un número	Un grupo de personas con las mismas características
		Época más difícil que generaciones pasadas.		Más que edad, muchas formas de definir ser joven
		Falta de dinero y falta de empleo.		
NEGATIVAS				
	Perdida, sin rumbo, errática, desorientada, desubicada, distráida, dispersa, confundida	Desubicada, desenfocada, dispersa, confundida, no saben lo que quieren.		
	Indecisa, no saben qué quieren.	Poco soñadora, desilusionada, desmotivada		
	Fuera de la realidad, escape de la realidad.	Desinteresada, no les importa nada.		
	Sin motivación, sin ganas de salir adelante, no saben qué les espera.	Despreocupada, no piensan antes de actuar, no actúan hasta que algo les afecta.		
	No piensan consecuencias de sus actos.	La tecnología los desconecta de la familia.		
	Indiferente, les vale lo que hacen, desinteresada, despreocupada	Materialista.		
	Convenencieros.	Un poco mal.		
	Sin valores, sin respeto a la familia	Desesperada.		
	Rebelde.			
	Vicios, alcohol.			

	Pésima, descontrolada, descarriada, podrida			
+ 40	HOMBRES	MUJERES	HOMBRES	MUJERES
POSITIVAS	Ganas aprender, salir adelante.	Libertad.	Aprender, estudiar.	Aprender, formarte.
	Más liberales.	Desenvuelta.	Aprender errores, madurar, conocerse, crecer.	Fuerza, vitalidad, iniciativa, entusiasta.
	Más libertad (fumar, relaciones sexuales).	Conciencia del medio ambiente.	Tener sueños, deseos de progresar, ganas de salir adelante, enfrentar lo que se presente, entusiasmo.	Sueños, metas, oportunidades, ganas de hacer muchas cosas, proyectos, comerte el mundo.
	Despierta, entusiasta.	Bien.	Alegría, disfrutar de la vida, divertirse.	Hermoso, etapa hermosa, lo más bonito, época muy bonita
			Convivir, socializar, salir de fiesta.	Disfrutar, pasarla bien, lo bueno de la vida, vivir la vida.
			Pocas obligaciones, no importa nada.	Apoyo familiar.
			Energía, cuerpo fuerte	Nuevas experiencias, te vas independizando.
			Infinidad de actividades, aprovechar el tiempo	
			Hacer cosas que después ya no se pueden.	
MATIZADAS (neutras, definiciones, entorno)				

	Variada, más retos y menos oportunidades laborales y escolares, las cosas más complicadas.	De todo un poco, hay de todo, mitad y mitad.	Estado mental.	
	Simplemente son jóvenes, siempre ha sido lo mismo.	Depende del contexto	Etapa vida.	
		Si padres trabajan los descuidan.		
		Si familia enseñara valores serían educados.		
NEGATIVAS				
	Perdida en la tecnología, metida en el mundo digital, solo están en su celular, utilizan mal los medios, no ven el punto de vista real, solo de las redes, alejada de la realidad,	Falta de educación, mal educados, no hacen caso a autoridades, no respetan a los mayores, sin valores.	No consciente consecuencia de tus acciones, decisiones que impactan tu vida.	Hacer cosas sin pensar, no experiencia para actuar con madurez.
	Confundida, desordenada, distraída, siguen modas.	Falta interés, desgana.	Dudas, desafíos.	Problemas de adicciones.
	Falta de conciencia, falta de preocupación, todo se lo toman a la ligera, todo les parece fácil.	Todo es puro juego, pura diversión, sin compromiso, sin responsabilidad.	Descontrol.	
	Flojos, no quieren hacer nada, sienten que merecen todo y no hacen esfuerzo.	No aprovechan oportunidades, no ganas de superarse, lo quieren todo fácil, les gusta la vida fácil, sin hacer nada.	Falta de oportunidades.	
	Egoístas, yo y solo yo.	Desubicada, desorientada		
	Falta de valores, no respetan.	Mal, mal camino		



	Mal educada, sin educación, groseros, impertinentes.	Alterada, acelerada, desatada		
	Sin trabajo, sin estudio.	No estudian, no trabajan		
	Toman.	Descarriada, corrompida, pervertida, libertinaje		
	Mal, desenfrenada.	Delincuentes, vándalos, vagos, roban.		

Fuente: Elaboración propia

What problems does being young have?

After the self-definition and outline of what youth looks like and what it is to be young, below are the results around the problems and advantages of youth.

For the group of young men, the main problems are related to "doubts about the future" or "not knowing what to do", the "identity crisis" or "existential" and "uncertainty", which it is linked to present and future fears and insecurities. Likewise, they indicate being "inexperienced", not being "prepared" and "not being taken seriously", as well as "lack of money" and being "dependent" (the latter referred to equally in both sexes). They are also concerned with "thinking that life is easy" and "not knowing the limits", or "moving away from established ways of thinking."

Young women, on the other hand, place more emphasis on issues such as "you do not measure the consequences" and you "make mistakes" or make "mistakes", in addition to "little experience" and not being "taken seriously", issues associated with emotional factors and lived experiences. They also highlight the "lack of work" and not having "studies." Likewise, he is concerned about "risks" and "addictions" to "drugs", "alcohol" and even "toxic relationships"; likewise, "violence", "depression" and "suicide", issues that seem to be increasing in the daily reality of the country in recent years, so they must be taken into account.

Regarding the problems exposed by the adult population, men seem more concerned about the "lack of opportunities" for work and school, as well as the "lack of experience" in the sense of making "mistakes", feeling "insecure" and being "Tried". One issue that worries



them a lot is not having studies or a job, a fear that is linked to the role of provider. Likewise, they point out that young people spend a lot of time on the internet and on social networks, that they lack "limits" and "orientation", thus falling into problems such as "pregnancy", "drugs", "alcoholism", "vices" . They even point out that "I do not respect parents" and that "things are made easy", "they do not listen", "they think they know everything" and "they think that adults do not understand."

Older women report a lack of "experience", so they can be "vulnerable" and "let go". For them, this is because they "do not listen to their elders" and are "disobedient." They also refer to the lack of "employment opportunities", although they point out that "they do not take advantage of the opportunities", they are "lazy" and "everything makes them a problem", and they also indicate what refers to "addictions" and "drugs. They are even concerned that many problems of that generation come from dysfunctional families, which is why they are ignored at school and abused by the authorities. With this observation they frame the problem in the context and in today's society.

What are the advantages of being young?

In terms of advantages, young men refer to "learning", "knowing", "knowing", and then to "experiences". They also highlight the "ability to do many things" and the "thousands of opportunities", as well as "energy" and "interest" or "free time". Likewise, they highlight the "little responsibility", the "fun and enjoyment", the "work and school opportunities" and the power to transcend, in the sense of "leaving a mark, defending proposals, improving the conditions of their generation". They associate learning and experience as an advantage, which can impact on social improvement and on educational and employment opportunities. Young women address similar issues, but in a different order of priority. For them, the main advantage is "freedom" along with "no responsibility", having "time" and also "learning" (the latter, not the most important, which was pointed out by young men). They also refer to "doing many things", "vitality", having "experiences", "enjoying" and "socializing", an issue that, in other words, appeared on occasion and that is a playful form of exchange social (Urteaga, 2011). In the same way, they refer to "social work, new, fresh ideas, claiming things, moving the world, changing what is wrong", which is associated with leaving a mark. In this sense, for both sexes, changing the state of things to improve society is present in their stories about the advantages of being young.



On the other hand, and according to the adult population, for both men and women the “opportunities” that youth have is the most important and outstanding advantage. According to these people, the opportunities to “do many things”, “you can do everything”, “there are no limits”, “everything you want”, even study and work stand out. Then comes the assessment of "energy" and "strength", aspects related to "health". Adult men are struck by "motivation" and "desire to get ahead", which is associated with phrases about "expectations", "dreams" and "enthusiasm", as well as "enjoying" and not having "Responsibilities" or "commitments", while women emphasize being "free. Here is a more accurate overview of the problems and benefits of being young:

Tabla 4. Problemas y ventajas tiene el ser joven

	PROBLEMAS		VENTAJAS	
18-29	HOMBRES	MUJERES	HOMBRES	MUJERES
	Dudas futuro, no saber lo que se quiere hacer.	No mides las consecuencias, equivocas decisiones, errores generacionales, dejarse llevar.	Aprender, saber, conocer, información.	Libertad.
	Crisis identidad, existencial, autoaceptación, resiliencia.	No experiencia, poca experiencia, no te toman en serio, te critican.	Experiencias.	No responsabilidades.
	Incertidumbre en el trabajo y el estudio (exámenes, tareas).	Faltan oportunidades, no puedes hacer cosas.	Capacidad de hacer muchas cosas, miles de oportunidades, trabajar en cualquier cosa, lograr lo que te propongas, cumplir sueños.	Tiempo.
	Falta dinero, economía, ingreso, ser dependientes.	Falta dinero, economía, dependiente.	Energía, actitud, pasión, interés.	Aprender.
	Sin experiencia, inexpertos, no preparado, no toman en serio.	No estudios.	Libertad, tomas tus propias decisiones, alejarte de los padres.	Hacer muchas cosas, ganas hacer mucho.

	No saber límites, pensar que la vida es fácil.	Falta trabajo.	Tiempo libre.	Vitalidad, rendimiento físico e intelectual.
	Incomprendidos.	Existenciales, búsqueda.	Poca o ninguna responsabilidad.	Experiencias.
	Socializar.	Egoísmo.	Divertirse, disfrutar	Disfrutar.
	Alejarse de las formas de pensar establecidas.	Desinterés.	Oportunidades laborales y escolares.	Socializar.
		Libertinajes, riesgos.	Dejar huella, defender propuestas, mejorar condiciones de su generación.	Mente abierta.
		Adicciones, drogas, alcohol, relaciones tóxicas.		Labor social, nuevas ideas, frescas, reivindicar cosas, mover el mundo, cambiar lo que está mal.
		Violencia.		
		Falta presencia padres.		
		Depresión, suicidio.		
No	Ninguno, no hay, la mejor etapa, el poder hacer todo.			
+ 40	Falta de oportunidades laborales (salariales) y escolares.	Sin experiencia, se dejan llevar, vulnerables, falta madurez, no preparados.	Más oportunidades, sinnúmero de oportunidades, puedes hacer muchas cosas, todo lo puedes hacer, no límites, hacer lo que quieras.	Oportunidades en estudio y trabajo, becas, tecnologías, poder estudiar, prepararse para ser alguien.
	Falta de experiencia, madurez, errores, inseguridad, te juzgan.	No escuchan a los mayores, desobedientes.	Energía, fuerza, vitalidad, agilidad.	Salud.



	Mucho tiempo en las redes, provoca enfermedades y que no te comprendan.	No oportunidades de empleo.	Motivación, ganas de salir adelante trabajando o estudiando, expectativas, sueños, entusiasmo.	Energía, fuerza, agilidad, entusiasmo.
	No límites y no orientación: embarazo, droga, alcoholismo, vicios.	No aprovechan las oportunidades, no aprovechan la juventud.	Tiempo.	Tiempo.
	No respetan a los padres.	Flojos, se les hace un problema todo.	Conocer lugares y personas.	Hacer muchas cosas.
	Se les hacen fáciles las cosas, no objetivo de vida.	Adicciones, drogas.	Disfrutar.	Libres.
	No escuchan, creen saberlo todo, creen que adultos no entienden.	Adultos cierran puertas: Casa: no hacen caso, familias disfuncionales. Escuelas: no les ponen atención. Autoridades: abusan.	No responsabilidades.	No compromisos.
	Que los adultos los escuchen.		Ejercicio.	Ejercicio.
				Viajar.
No	No, ninguno, normal, no hay, depende de qué sector.	Más que problemas son experiencias para aprender		

Fuente: Elaboración propia

Conclusions

Youth is a time of idealized life to which, however, a diversity of problems related to drug addiction and crime are also associated, as well as some attitudes of disinterest, apathy, consumerism, radicalism, opposition, counterculture and marginality. This has caused young people to reproduce that social discourse, which paradoxically they do not associate with themselves, but with “the other” young people, whom they have wanted to help using policies



focused on distracting them and keeping them occupied through activities that seem to be related only with that stage of life, that is, sports, culture and recreation.

However, youth is a stage in which there are also advantages and problems, which are perceived by both young people and adults, as has been shown in this work. For example, and in the first place, it can be said that for a high percentage of those consulted — regardless of whether they are young or old, women or men — the majority of today's youth are lost and disoriented.

Even so, when consulting about the definition of being young, expressions about the opportunities in the present and future life appear, which is based on the possibility of learning and training. In this sense, the youth group emphasizes doing things and having energy, while the adult group adds words related to dreams, joy and beauty (an adjective used by women), which suggests a certain degree of memory and a kind of melancholy at that time.

The third element detected focuses on the problems of being young; These are related to personal-psychological and social-collective aspects (that is, the material, the mental and the emotional). The young group interviewed emphasizes fear and uncertainty (unsatisfactory emotions) and the lack of opportunities, mainly work and educational (realities of the social context). For their part, the older sector highlights the lack of experience and opportunities for school and employment (material social issues), as well as behavioral or behavioral issues, since they do not listen or have respect, which may be due to the absence of The parents.

When it comes to benefits, young people appreciate learning, experiences and doing many things, while older people value doing what you want and having more energy, as well as educational and employment opportunities, which seem contrast with current issues around occupational status, responsibilities and obligations.

Finally, the text is closed with the direct transcription of some participants in this research. Some opinions are contradictory, but they are an example of the ambivalences that emerge around the concept of youth. For example, a 40-year-old woman expressed what it means for her to be young: "It is a beautiful stage in life, where you can decide calmly and wisely what you want to dedicate to in the future and where you can responsibly enjoy almost everything". Another 68-year-old affirmed that it is "the fullness of life." On the other hand, an 18-year-old girl pointed out that she sees youth as "erratic, aimless" and another said that



she sees them "a little distracted and undecided about what she wants." Two different approaches, two visions of youth and of life itself that it is advisable to keep in mind. Likewise, a 22-year-old young man points out: "I think she is divided, a few have the desire to get ahead and really undertake and grow, but most are very disoriented and rotten", while a 21-year-old girl explains: "They are eager to do many things, but limited by its environment, lack of money ". Another 48-year-old woman said: "There are many young people, it depends on the context in which they develop", and also to some it seems "like a luminous state, the body and mind are full of energy" (21-year-old woman). A 76-year-old man considers that youth is "having joy, knowing how to listen, making the most of time, being better and living better" and for a 48-year-old woman it is a stage of "a lot of vitality, you want to do many things, you you want to eat the world".

Future lines of research

Add that, of course, it is not a closed investigation and that it is possible to continue expanding the information and delving into meaning. For example, the point of ambiguity in the very conception of youth, idealized and problematized, longed for and criticized, by the adults consulted and also by the youth age group that participated in this work. Not only that, the fact that phenomena are studied from the voice of the people beyond specialized reflection, is something that must be promoted to contribute to knowledge, and above all and in a special way, to sociocultural, personal and collective, of beliefs and practices, discourses and experiences, sorely lacking in vulnerable stages of life and in uncertain times of existence.



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