

¿Chisme o realidad?: A qualitative analysis of how sexually active Latinx emerging adults acquire and perceive sexual health information

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Introduction

- Sexual health education continues to be a hotly debated topic in the United States, including what topics to include, when to begin education, and who should provide sexual health information.
- Literature has focused on the importance of parent-child communication about sex and sexual health (Halpern-Felsher, Kropp, Boyer, Tschann, & Ellen, 2004), however only a little over one-third (38%) of Latinx individuals identify their parents as their primary source of sex information (Eversole, Berglas, Deardorff, Constantine, 2017).
- When Latinx individuals identify friends as their primary source of sexual health information, they are less likely to use condoms at their next sexual activity (Eversole, Berglas, Deardorff, Constantine, 2017).
- To date, information provided to youth varies by school district, with some youth receiving little to no sexual health information (Guttmacher Institute, 2017).
- Understanding how Latinx emerging adults acquire sexual health information may provide insight into the unique challenges these individuals face when navigating their initial sexual relationships.

Questions:

- Where did you receive messages about sexual health behaviors?
- What messages did you receive about sexual health?
- How do you feel now about the messages that you received?
- How have these messages impacted you today?

Methods:

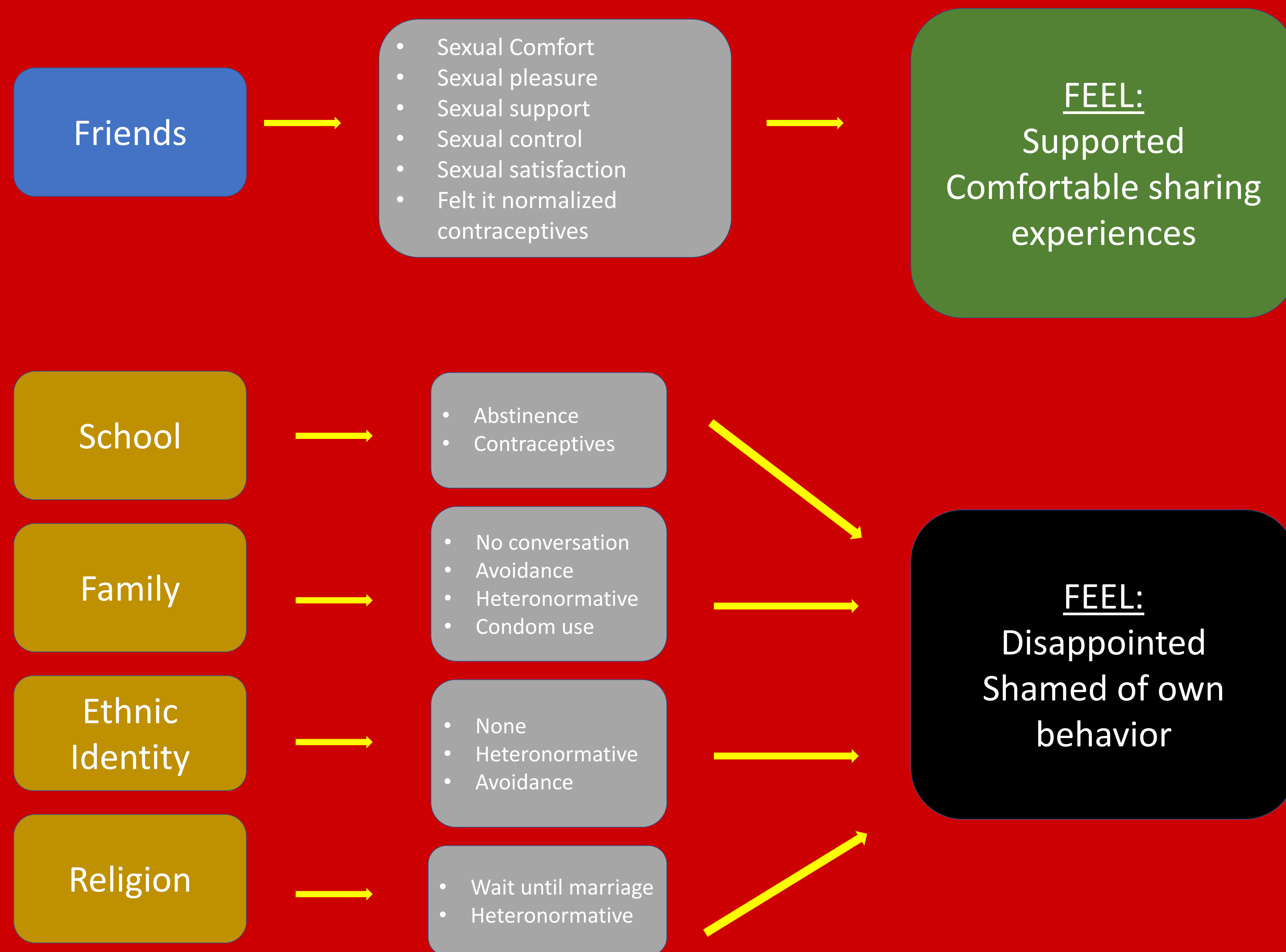
- 8 self-identified men (data analysis ongoing)
- Current participants:
 - All identified as a Hispanic cisgender men, sexually active, within the ages of 18-19 years
- Thematic analysis was used
- Coding by 3 members, fourth member was auditor

Discussion:

- Regardless of the message (good or bad, correct or incorrect) Latinx emerging adults appear to value the sexual messages they are receiving from their friends.
- It appears that these messages from friends are more comprehensive and extend beyond prevention of STIs and pregnancies. These statements seem to include aspects of sexual satisfaction which is important component for quality of life (Flynn, et al., 2016).
- Messages from friends, however, might not be factually accurate.
- Because individuals seem to be receiving comprehensive sex messages from their friends, sex education interventions may be most effective if they are focused on educating those who are most apt to share comprehensive sex education, in this case the participants' friends.
 - Using peers to educate students (in line with normative social influence)
 - Using mediums in which individuals of this age communicate to convey sexual health information (Facebook, Twitter, etc)

Main Takeaway:

It appears Latinx emerging adults receive more comprehensive sexual health information from friends, and selective messages from their family, school, religion, and ethnic identity. However, the accuracy of the messages from friends is unknown.



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Exemplar Quotes

Friends...

What types of messages did you receive from your friendship group regarding acceptable sexual behavior?

"I wouldn't say its messages--acceptable like for my friends would just be experiences. It is just kind of what we went off of. I've had some friends that would be--that have gotten girls pregnant and they just tell us what happened and how they happened. That's kind of how like we got informed, by our peers."

What kind of things did they share?

"I'd just say 'chisme' their gossip about what happened with a girl like what did they do, did she like it, was it fun. Like what would you rate it, stuff like that. That is just the kind of conversations we would have and yeah, that's about--kind of their experiences."

-Ignacio, 19

"With my friend group, anything goes. We were all having sex and doing whatever we were comfortable with. Whatever you're not comfortable with is where you draw the line. I felt like it was good because at the time it normalized safe sex. It has set me up being more comfortable to be adamant about safe sex and not having risky behaviors."

-Leo, 19

"They taught me kind of how to have sex and sense like my girl my female friends they taught me like what a girl likes some girl kind of needs for sex so I get them to that climax and the guys just get tell me like what to do when I'm in that position. I carry them with me all the time. sexually they made me who I am. like I do the things I do sexually because of what they have told me so. they've just kind of stuck with me."

-Alex, 18

Family...

What type of message did your family give you for acceptable sexual behavior?

"Really none, there's really nothing my family would talk about, they are kind of just awkward about it if someone brought it up. They would quickly try to change the subject. The only time my dad gave me the talk because my mom forced him to, all he said was use a condom. That's it and that's the only message I've gotten from my parents about safe sex or anything. I learned from them of what I didn't want to be because they are closed off and I am more open, and I want to talk about things like that. I didn't want to be awkward about it either with friends or when I have children, I don't want to be awkward about it. I want to teach them that its normal and its natural. It's going to happen."

-Leo, 19

"We don't really have like a safe sex conversation like I didn't my parents talked to my niece about it cause she's in high school and all that stuff she was the only one that had like a safe sex talk but other than that we didn't, I didn't get one."

-Leroy, 18

School...

How do you feel now about the messages that you received from your school regarding sexual behaviors?

"They were just annoying and unhelpful, because I felt like a would've became someone, I would've probably waited off a bit to having sex, and then probably the first time having sex would've been more pleasurable, I didn't know about lube, just not grow up thinking sex was bad or like sex is not normal, sex is normal and its okay to have sex just be cautious and now its appropriate time and I just wanted to be more informed about it and I wasn't being informed."

-Carlos, 19

"Disappointed, I would say. Cause you hear people talk about how they learned about safe sex in school and I didn't learn any of that in school."

-Edgar, 18

Ethnic Identity...

What type of message did your ethnic identity give you regarding acceptable sexual behavior?

"That's a tough one because sex is a topic that everyone avoided. It's very awkward for them and they try to change the subject to something else. The biggest message from that is to wait to have sex. That how I took it."

-Leo, 19

"Due to the lack of it I feel like, again, just to keep a dialogue of it, and to not look at it as something normal, not just for me, but for the whole community, just for them to like, for upcoming generations so they can know and be informed, educate and be educated about it and not just be going crazy and not know what they're doing. Due to the lack, I am now wanting to speak about it to the community and my Latino community just be open about it."

-Carlos, 19

Religion...

What type of messages did you receive about receive from your religion/spirituality regarding acceptable sexual behaviors?

"Uh to wait until marriage, to not, to wait to have sex with your partner until after marriage."

Antonio, 18

"Like being gay was just frowned upon. I didn't really get any messages there besides like being gay was just bad."

-Michael, 19

"Since my mom was like a big catholic, it was more like you had to had sex when got married. That's kind of how it was when we were little, not like super little, I would say like 12. Like if you're going to have sex, have sex--when you're married. That's kind of how it is supposed to be but really none of my friends or my parents followed that guideline. So, it really didn't have an influence, I'd just say, it didn't let me--well I'd say religion did have an influence in the way I treated my partners, but I would say it had an influence in safe sex."

-Ignacio, 19

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