

## **Abstract**

To this day the use of sex toys is still a taboo subject in our society and there are few studies in Spain related to this topic. In order to study the attitudes of the population towards sex toys, an online survey was carried out where different variables were measured. Thus, the aim of this research is to see if there are significant differences in attitudes towards sex toys between men and women depending on their sex at birth and their sexual orientation. The number of participants in the sample was 372 between 18 and 30 years old. The results showed mostly what the scientific literature predicted: both women compared to men and people who identified themselves as non-heterosexual compared to heterosexuals had a more favourable attitude towards sex toys. It was also corroborated that men have a higher frequency of masturbation than women. However, women have a higher frequency of sex toy use than men. Finally, it could not be confirmed that the participants perceived an improvement in their sexual relations thanks to the use of sex toys.

**Key words:** sex toys, born sex, sexual orientation, masturbation, attitude.

## **Resumen**

A día de hoy el uso de juguetes sexuales todavía sigue siendo un tema tabú en nuestra sociedad y hay pocos estudios en España relacionados con este tema. Con el fin de estudiar las actitudes de la población hacia los juguetes sexuales, se llevó a cabo una encuesta online donde se medían distintas variables. Así pues, el objetivo de esta investigación es ver si existen diferencias significativas en las actitudes hacia los juguetes sexuales entre hombres y mujeres dependiendo de su sexo al nacer y de su orientación sexual. El número de participantes de la muestra fue de 372 de entre 18 y 30 años. Los resultados mostraron en su mayoría lo que la literatura científica predecía: tanto las mujeres en comparación con los hombres como las personas que se identificaron como no heterosexuales en comparación con los heterosexuales, presentaron una actitud más favorable hacia los juguetes sexuales. Asimismo, se corroboró que los hombres tienen una mayor frecuencia de masturbación respecto a las mujeres. Sin embargo, las mujeres tienen una mayor frecuencia en el uso de juguetes sexuales respecto a los hombres. Por último, no se pudo confirmar que los participantes percibieran una mejora en sus relaciones sexuales gracias al uso de juguetes sexuales.

**Palabras clave:** juguetes sexuales, sexo al nacer, orientación sexual, masturbación, actitud.

# ATTITUDES TOWARD SEX TOYS – Virginia Selma Trilles (Tutor: Rafael Ballester Arnal)

## Introduction

The origin of sex toys dates back to the Paleolithic period, 30,000 years ago (Maines, 1999), and has therefore always been present in human sexuality. However, the origin of vibrators as we know them today was born with therapeutic purposes for "female hysteria" in the 19th century (Quitian, 2012).

Sex toys have always been a taboo subject for our society, but thanks to all the benefits they have been shown to possess, progress has been made in this field in an extraordinary way. The use of vibrators is associated with the improvement of sexual function (Guess et al., 2017), as well as the promotion of healthy behaviours (Herbenick, et al., 2010).

In the study by Robbins et al. (2011) shows gender differences in the frequency of masturbation and in the age of initiation, being earlier in male adolescents. Meanwhile, women report more frequent use of sex toys during masturbation (Driemeyer, et al. 2017). According to studies evaluating attitudes toward sex toys based on their orientation such as Rosenberger, et. al. (2011), gay and bisexual men find the use of sex toys more acceptable and enjoyable than heterosexuals.

**Objective:** Despite the great revolution they have caused and their widespread use, there is still not much research on people's attitudes towards sex toys. This is why this empirical work has been done with the objective of studying the attitudes that the population has towards the use of these toys and to see if significant differences exist between men and women.

**Hypothesis 1:** We hope to find a more favorable attitude towards the use of sex toys in women.

**Hypothesis 2:** We expect to find a more favourable attitude towards the use of sex toys in nonheterosexuals.

**Hypothesis 3:** We expect to find a higher frequency of masturbation in men.

**Hypothesis 4:** We expect to find a higher frequency of sex toy use in women.

**Hypothesis 5:** We hope to find that participants perceive an improvement in sexual relations after the use of sex toys

## Discussion and conclusions

This study found statistically significant differences between men and women in attitudes towards sex toys. As expected in H1, women had a more favourable attitude than men. This may be due to historical pressure, since the origin of vibrators as we know them today was born for therapeutic purposes for "female hysteria" (Quitian, 2012). In addition, as expected in H2, non-heterosexuals scored higher on the attitude scale towards sex toys similar to the study by Rosenberg, et. al. (2011).

On the other hand, there are gender differences in the frequency of masturbation and age of onset (Robbins, et. al. 2011). As expected in H3, men have a higher frequency of masturbation than women. This is consistent with the study by Driemeyer et al. (2017) reporting a higher percentage of masturbation in men and a younger age of onset (Robbins, et al. 2011). It also confirms that women are more likely to use sex toys to masturbate. This was also seen in the study by Driemeyer et al. (2017).

Finally, no statistically significant differences were found in the improvement in sexual relations after the use of sex toys. These results go against what we might expect since the literature indicates that the use of vibrators is associated with improved sexual function in addition to the promotion of healthy behaviors (Herbenick, et. al., 2009); and their use produces improvements in vaginal lubrication, satisfaction, sexual distress, genital sensation and orgasm (Guess et al., 2017). However, this does not mean that it does not produce improvements, but rather that some of the participants in this study did not perceive it to be so.

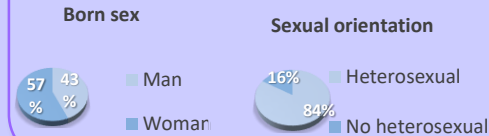
As a proposal for future intervention it would be convenient to act from the school with psychoeducation in the field of sexuality to promote an improvement in sexual health and prevent misinformation and misconceptions that are still present today. It is important to naturalise the use of sex toys, but it is also important not to consider them as the only or most important thing in a sexual relationship.

## Method

### Sample

N= 422 → 372  
(M=22,2: DT=2,24)

Age: 18 to 30



### Instruments

Scale of attitudes toward sex toys ad hoc.

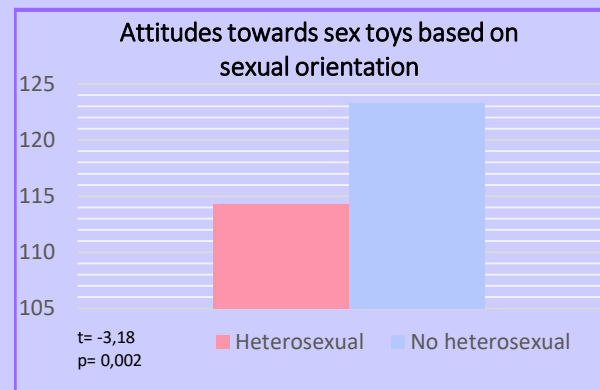
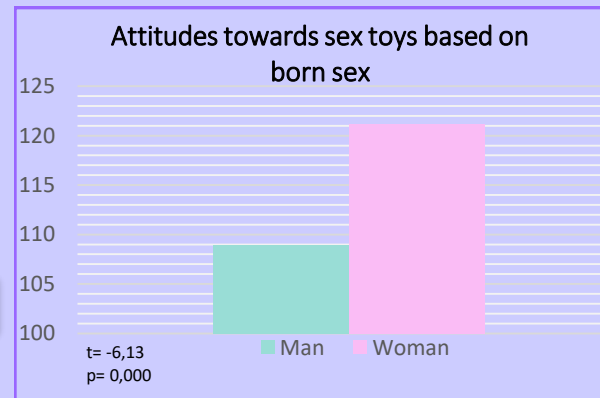
### Procedure

- Review of scientific articles
- Online survey with Qualtrics
- Analysis of data with SPSS v.25

### Statistical analysis

Kolmogorov-Smirnov  
Estadísticos descriptivos  
Alpha de Cronbach= 0,887  
T de student  
Chi-cuadrado

## Results



### Frequency of masturbation, frequency of sex toy use and improvement due to their use

|   | Man   | Woman | X <sup>2</sup> | p     |
|---|-------|-------|----------------|-------|
| <b>Frequency of masturbation</b>                      |       |       |                |       |
| More than once a day                                  | 11,2% | 3,3%  |                |       |
| Four to seven times a week                            | 45,5% | 20,7% |                |       |
| Two or three times a week                             | 32,9% | 38,6% |                |       |
| Once a week   | 5,6%  | 15,8% | 48,151         | 0,000 |
| Two or three times a month                            | 2,8%  | 15,2% |                |       |
| Five or six times a year                              | 1,4%  | 2,2%  |                |       |
| Less than six times a year                            | 0,7%  | 4,3%  |                |       |
| <b>Frequency of use of sex toys</b>                   |       |       |                |       |
| Sometime  | 95,0% | 44,3% |                |       |
| Quite often   | 0%    | 28,3% | 17,499         | 0,001 |
| Many times  | 5,0%  | 21,7% |                |       |
| Always  | 0%    | 5,7%  |                |       |
| <b>Improving relationships sex thanks to sex toys</b> |       |       |                |       |
| Nothing   | 13,3% | 10,4% |                |       |
| A little bit  | 60,0% | 47,8% | 1,951          | 0,583 |
| Quite a lot   | 26,7% | 32,8% |                |       |
| A lot   | 0%    | 9,0%  |                |       |

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