

ABSTRACT

Over the years, the studying of human sexuality has evolved from being strictly within the biological field, to being an area of interest within the social sciences. Looking at sexuality through a sociological lens in particular allows one to form a platform on which the relationships between culture, opinions about sexuality, sexual activity and good health can be understood.

This study set out to explore the impact of gender socialization on sexual norms and behaviours, and the construction of sexuality amongst Shona speaking youth in Harare. Of particular interest was the level of sexual freedom that young women experience in modern times. Seven group discussions were held from a sample population which included urban, Shona speaking individuals between the ages of 19 and 25.

The results showed that even though the norms passed to the youth through gender socialization sometimes have a limited effect, gender socialization still influences youth sexuality, thus failing to support the researcher's initial assumption that sexual norms and behaviours are no longer influenced by Shona gender roles and norms which are passed to the youth through the socialization process.