



# *Socioemotional construction of retirement in female university teachers, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua, Managua. 2020*

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## **ABSTRACT**

When a woman retires, changes occur in all areas, leaving her working life behind, now she has to organize herself with her new status as a retiree. The study investigates how retired university teachers live and construct the social reality around their retirement, and how their

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expectations about retirement and old age are intertwined. These results will allow discovering the elements that intervene in the socioemotional construction, from their experience and around their expectations and evaluations regarding retirement. The qualitative paradigm was used, through the phenomenological method; creating categories through the data collected through in-depth interviews.

The results indicate that the retirees conceptualize old age as a process associated with their mental faculties that can be natural or pathological. They identify experiences related to freedom and the need to fulfill projects during their retirement; they also present diverse emotions and feelings such as joy, satisfaction, sadness, uncertainty, and fear of the new change of life.

Retirement has a great impact on retired teachers, suffering a situation of grief; therefore, it is necessary to plan workshops and intergenerational meetings aimed at retirees and pre-retirees where the scenario is the University; promoting reflection on the social representations of aging, old age, and retirement.

## **INTRODUCTION**

It is estimated that between 2025 and 2030, life expectancy in Latin America and the Caribbean will increase to 80.7 years for women and 74.9 years for men; this is because during the last 50 years the decrease in birth rate and world mortality, have progressively led to the aging of old people; thanks to factors such as technological discoveries, decrease in the mortality rate at advanced ages, increase in life expectancy and the role of industrialization in society. (PAHO, 2017). This situation produces an increase in retired older adults, which poses a social, cultural, and health challenges that imply an evolutionary change in the case of retirement

Referring to the woman, when she retires changes occur being left with her working life lagging, now she organizes herself through her free time. In this regard Velazco (2015), in the teaching sector, refers that a need for social support was observed in these retired women; the author suggests that to overcome inequalities, marginalization and dependence, retired women should think and act differently in the face of the same situations, in favor of maintaining their well-being and state of health. Thus, each woman, depending on her profession and the combination of intervening factors, presents specific patterns and characteristics, and therefore, particular experiences. (Madrid & Garcés 2000).

Hence, the interest of conducting this research is to make visible the experiences of retired university teachers; to explore how they carry out the socioemotional construction around their retirement. These results will make it possible to identify support needs of different kinds, obtaining valuable information for the implementation of short and medium-term plans

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that favor the quality of life and the physical and psychological well-being of retired and soon-to-be-retired teachers.

## RESEARCH PERSPECTIVE

The methodology in this research was framed within the qualitative paradigm. According to Estrella (2011), qualitative research is gaining more and more preferably in social and educational research, because it allows rescuing the meanings of the phenomena and maintains the expressions and conceptions of the population studied.

The phenomenological method was used from the hermeneutic perspective of Heidegger, who proposes an interpretative phenomenology or understanding from the first evidence, it is the question of what is the meaning in the world (Mendieta, Ramirez & Fuerte, 2015); the experience is personal, the social facts are constructed through the intersubjectivity between the researcher and the retired women, generating concepts regarding the experience of women in their retirement stage. (Alvarez,2004).

The context in which the research was conducted was the Instituto Politécnico de la Salud UNAN Managua. The total number of informants was 15 retired female teachers who taught in the careers of Nursing, Nutrition, Clinical Bioanalysis, and Physiotherapy. Purposive-intentional sampling was used, according to Ortiz (2015), Mendieta, Ramírez & Fuerte (2015), propose that the participants meet the criteria established for accessing and providing information; which are chosen according to the type of activity to be investigated. According to Ortiz (2015) and Patton (1990), both authors refer that the samples in qualitative research should be sufficient to ensure the discovery and cover all existing perceptions about the object of study, selecting the retirees' understudy for presenting homogeneous characteristics, geographical accessibility, personal availability and finally reaching theoretical saturation,

The regulatory criteria used were: approval of the research protocol by the Ethics Committee -CIES UNAN Managua; informed consent signed by the retirees; in-depth audio-recorded interviews, ethical behavior by assigning a code to each retiree; respecting the textual expressions and the meanings they attribute to the questions according to the type of study. Castillo & Vásquez. (2003). Transferability or applicability refers to the possibility of extending the results of the study to other populations; therefore, the degree of transferability is a direct function of the similarity between the contexts. (Salgado 2007).

As a technique for the collection of information, the semi-structured in-depth qualitative interview was used, Robles (2011) refers to a "step-by-step and meticulous construction of the experience of the other" (p. 3).

The data were processed by focusing the analysis on the subjects, with the conviction of understanding people, rather than analyzing the relationship of descriptors. (Corbetta, 2007). According to Schwandt (1990) cited in Guba (1990), the researcher uses procedures that allow the collection of reality as it occurs and is the phenomenological method characterized by describing the reality lived and felt by the retirees in a particular context.

The processing of the interviews is done manually, being positive for making it more handmade, being able to “touch the data” (Patton, 2002), affirms that the principles of the analytical process are the same, whether it is done manually or with the help of a computerized program. Subsequently, reduction and simplification were carried out, selecting the most relevant texts, regrouping them into homogeneous fragments, and ordering them through the categorization of the different themes; the thematic blocks emerged, which were derived into more specific sub-themes.

These blocks are the backbone that structures all the information (Izcara 2009); this information is presented in categorical trees and grouping matrices (Funk 2008: p. 86), completing the framework for the development of the theme; from this point on, the drafting of the analysis of each thematic axis begins.

To ensure a framework of objectivity, Izcara, (2009, p. 130); proposes to perform triangulation, which contributes to solidifying the rigor of qualitative research, obtaining an additional enrichment and improvement of knowledge (Flick 2013); thus, triangulation is performed with the textual responses and constant comparison of the results according to the thematic axis, presented in categorical trees; to contrast the data and interpretations that allow the analysis to be performed.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The analysis and discussion of the results are presented below. The first part presents the textual expressions and the meanings that retired teachers attribute to their retirement, how they live and construct the social reality, and how their expectations about retirement and old age are intertwined.

**Descriptive Matrix No. 1**

Socio-demographic and labor characteristics

| Code  | Current age | Retirement time | Seniority |
|-------|-------------|-----------------|-----------|
| BAC01 | 58 years    | 3 years         | 25 years  |
| BAC02 | 59 years    | 1 year          | 34 years  |
| BAC03 | 57 years    | 2 years         | 25 years  |
| BAC04 | 58 years    | 1 year          | 35 years  |
| ENF05 | 64 years    | 9 years         | 32 years  |
| ENF06 | 72 years    | 9 years         | 40 years  |
| ENF07 | 64 years    | 9 years         | 38 years  |
| ENF08 | 69 years    | 7 years         | 36 years  |
| ENF09 | 64 years    | 6 years         | 30 years  |
| FIS10 | 64 years    | 2 years         | 37 years  |
| FIS11 | 65 years    | 1 year          | 35 years  |
| FIS12 | 62 years    | 1 year          | 35 years  |
| NUT13 | 66 years    | 4 years         | 40 years  |
| NUT14 | 58 years    | 3 years         | 30 years  |
| NUT15 | 62 years    | 3 years         | 8 years   |

**Source:** Interview with retired women. Own elaboration

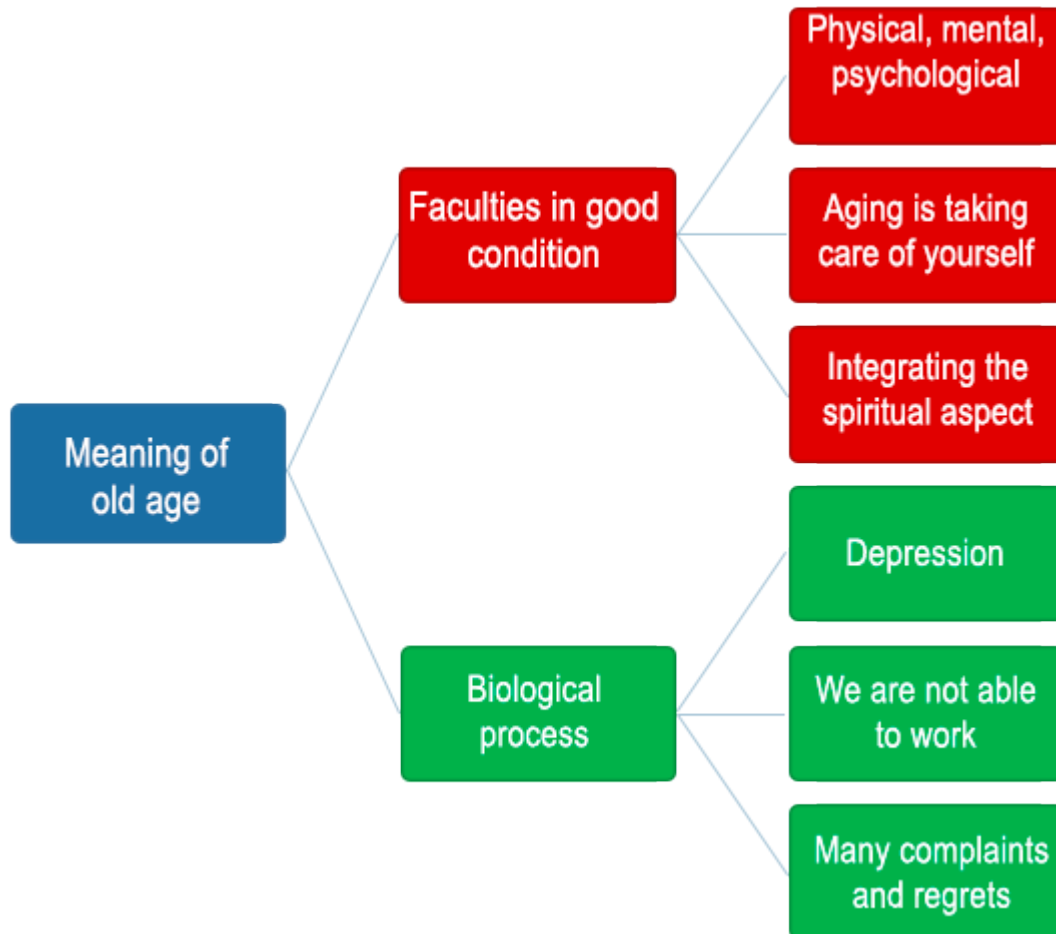
According to sociodemographic and labor data, of the 15 retired women studied. In terms of years of seniority in teaching, they vary between 25 and 40 years; the majority (60%) retired before the age of 60. Regarding female retirement, 42% of the female retirees are between 55 and 64 years of age; 27% of them worked for the institution for 30 years or more and 68% retired after 25 years of service.

Currently, the term age is the most controversial element of the index of aging and old age, given that it is the socially established legal mark, since, along with this concept, others such as “old” or “elderly person” arise. WHO (2015) refers to the term old as a social construct that defines the norms, roles, and responsibilities to be expected of an older person, which is often used in a pejorative sense. (p. 252)

In this regard, Roque (2015) states that there are more women than men and this “feminization” becomes more noticeable after the age of 60, when women “arrive in worse conditions to old age” That situation is evidenced through a multiplicity of factors, such as poverty, suffering from chronic diseases, living with some disability, overcrowding, loneliness, depression, among others. The reasons why women outlive men of their generation are

fundamentally cultural, explained Roque: “We live longer because in principle we are more accustomed to going to the doctor for the reproductive cycle, and so we can prevent pathologies or treat others that become chronic or cause us some disability but do not kill us”.

**“I don’t feel old”.**



**Categorical tree No 1**

Concept of old age.

**Source:** Interview with retired women. Own elaboration

When we hear the word old age, what definition comes to our mind? It is possible that the concept comes to mind of a person with a biological process in decline and who, upon retirement, is unable to carry out any other type of activities. When we asked retired teachers what is old age, we identified two opposing groups of opinions. Here is one group that conceptualizes old age with a positive vision

It is a process that begins at the age of majority, initiates the aging process, and ends with death; this process also includes all the physical, mental, and psychological aspects because it is a natural process (FIS10).

These retirees conceptualize old age as a process associated with the mental faculties and that, depending on the preparation of each one, it can be accepted as a natural or pathological process. It is important to make it clear that old age is associated with aging when the body gradually loses functions; with deterioration of one or more of the biological systems of the organism, which causes a deterioration of physical strength, mobility, balance, and resistance, with a decrease in basic activities of daily living.

Another group of retired women, regardless of their profession, consider old age a negative perception, associating it with a biological process with negative feelings and poor health.

Several coworkers have experienced these reactions of getting sick after retirement; I think that there should be a special type of medical care for early retirees and refer them to different medical specialists, giving them a recreation to relieve stress. (ENF09)

According to the opinion of Garcia (2016), the stage of old age does not imply a catastrophic deterioration, but on the contrary, it becomes valuable and important for the experience and learning that it brings to the life of the elderly; hence, old age, represents the last stage of the life cycle, with its positive and negative aspects, its satisfactions and its difficulties.

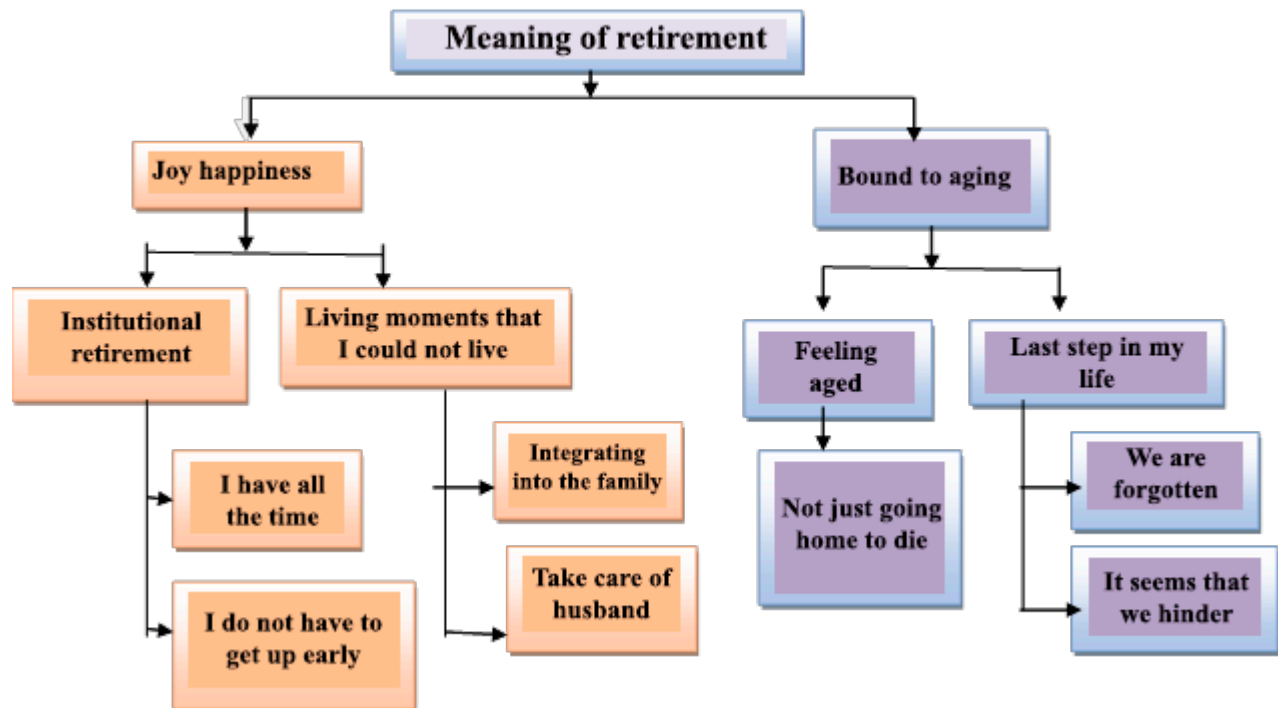
For a retired nutritionist, old age means

Loss of a part of my faculties, we long for the moment when we will no longer work, that is the beautiful part (NUT13).

It is evident that being old is more than just reaching a certain age; the border between middle age and old age is only a matter of social definition, and any attempt to delimit it in strictly chronological terms is fraught with difficulties (Esquivel, et al 2009). Thus, the concept of old age varies according to the religious, philosophical, psychological, economic, social, and cultural conditioning that surrounds the older individual.



**“Retirement does not mean going home to die”.**



**Categorical tree No. 2**

Meaning of retirement.

**Source:** Interview with retired women. Own elaboration.

Regarding the meaning of retirement, from the experience of retired teachers; they see the opportunity to integrate into their family group, suggesting that work “stole” that time that should be devoted to their family, and now is the time to repay it

Well, to integrate into their home, to the family, to integrate the spiritual aspect, that is what is important, also to pay attention to the parents, who, during the work, we did not do it properly (ENF07).

I wanted to retire and retirement is a break from teaching and I want to enjoy that retirement, with my family, and dedicate myself to other types of activities, either in a physical or spiritual sense. (BAC01)

The above expressions are of joy because the person feels liberated from a workload, now there is an opportunity for physical rest and to meet with his family or plan recreation with friends. There is a certain age to stop working, and it is retirement that marks the time established for rest. In developed countries, retirees have the opportunity to engage in other types of activities such as: visiting other countries, learning another language, learning art, etc.

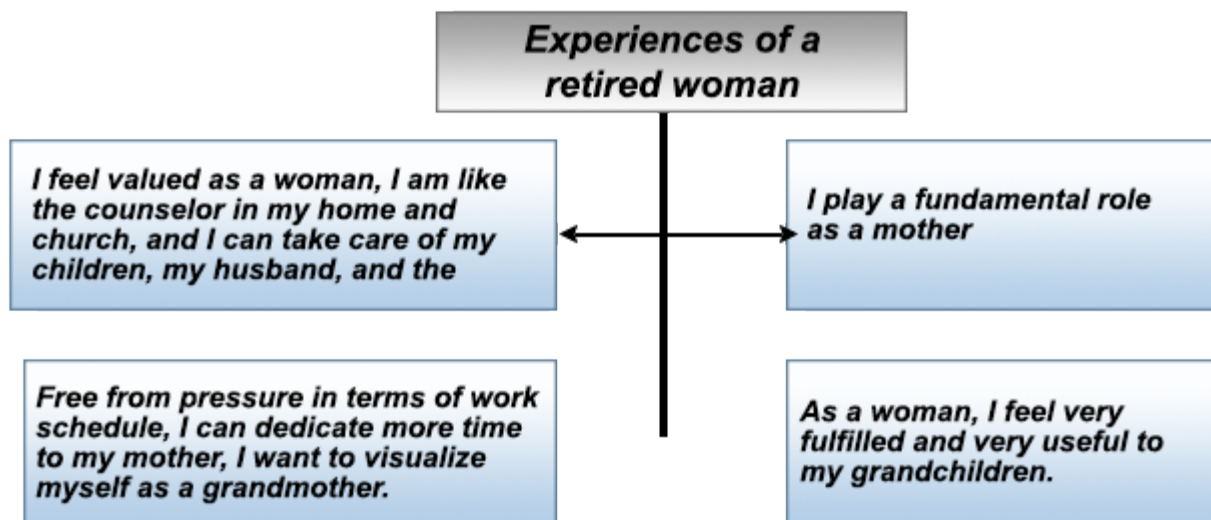


Retirement does not mean going home to die, it means being at peace, in tranquility. Retirement tells me that I don't have a schedule and that I can get up late. I feel that I am enjoying my retirement, but I am also combining it with teaching because as long as I have a clear mind, I want to continue teaching. (ENF08)

This teacher wants to explain that retirement is associated with negative aspects, the main one being death. Depending on the factors associated with her lifestyle, each retiree can live 20 or 30 years longer, so they want to live longer to enjoy the freedom denied by work, to live longer to devote more time to their children, spouse and elderly parents, living a life with dignity, without inspiring pity or being a burden to the family, much less retiring to die soon after.

Retirement and all the factors associated with it have been studied mostly from the positivist paradigm, classifying retirees and their manifestations within micro-level theories, seeking to verify the cause-effect relationship; without taking into account the perspective of those affected in their daily context, so it is necessary to identify their health problems and adaptation to their new role related to the profession or trade they played during most of their life (Aguilera, 2016).

**“Teaching does not have a schedule, I had to work at night reviewing assignments”.**



**Categorical tree No. 3**

Experiences of retired women.

**Source:** Interview with retired women. Own elaboration.

Thus, these retired women, when questioned about their experiences as retired women, express their enjoyment in the role of grandmother, and according to their opinion is the role or profile that society has given them.

“I would like to visualize myself as a grandmother, I would like to be left more time for my grandchildren, as in the role of grandmother” (FIS11).

“I feel useful for my grandchildren, enjoy them, although sometimes I get tired, I do not have so much energy availability(...) but it is love that makes you do that role of caring for and supporting the grandchildren” (NUT13)

A retired teacher, widowed for a long time, remembers her father as the caregiver of her children, being a seal of guarantee that allowed her to go to work with peace of mind. This situation now has repercussions on her vision of commitment to continue her father’s legacy, and so she decides to take on her role as grandmother, to take care of the grandchildren, under the premise that it is maternal love. This situation suggests that women must learn to be older women of this era, recognize that being an older woman is much more than being a grandmother, and learn to build and defend their own spaces and projects.

Retirement has helped me to take care of my children and to a certain extent also my husband (ENF08).

As a woman I played a fundamental role as a mother when my children were young; and although now they are in another stage of their lives, I am always supporting them (BAC01).

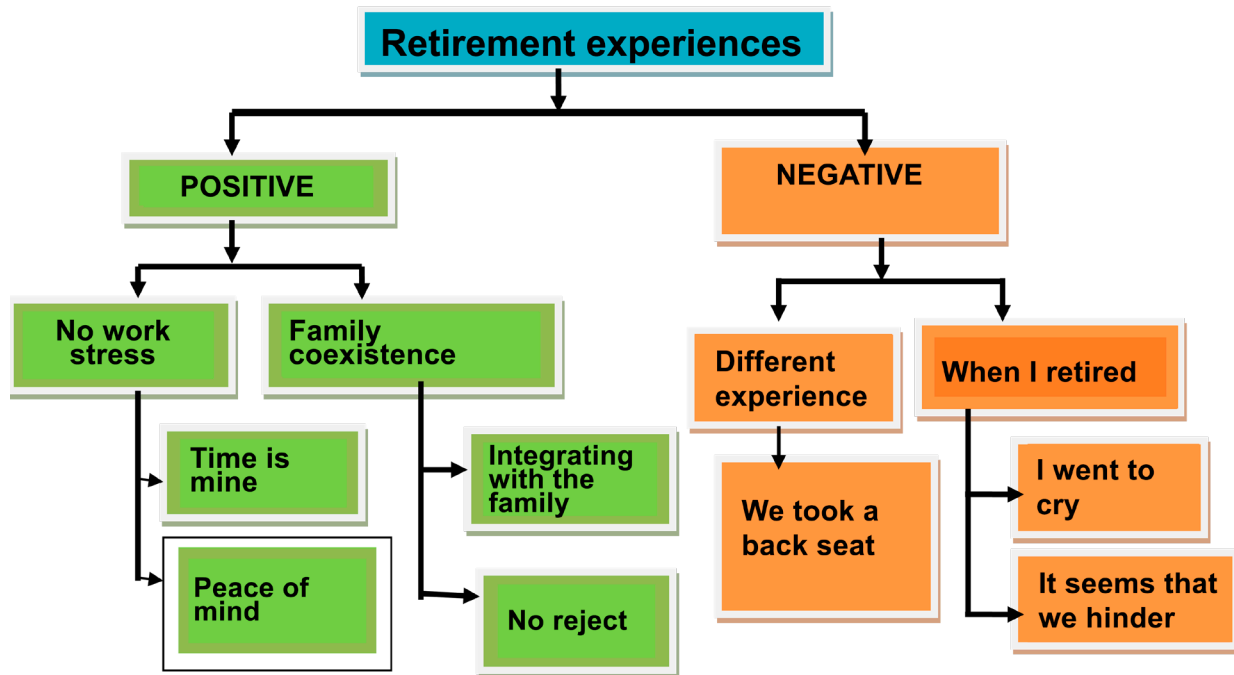
According to what is expressed by retired teachers: A premise arises:

Does it mean that the work of the woman teacher is antagonistic to her role as a woman in the family? That the children, husbands, and mothers “were neglected” for being responsible for her work?

I used to be fully integrated with the job. You neglect the family as well as the children’s formation, the formation of your home, you neglect everything. You kind of spent some time without them, because work consumed more of your time because I had to do my job (FIS10).

The retired woman, when asked about her experience as a woman, refers to her children, her husband, and her family. She does not allude to her experiences in her old age and retirement, she does not think about it. She was a young woman, she was an adult woman and now she is living in the stage of old age and we are facing an older woman, who does not allude to her old age. As stated by Osorio, (2007), when thinking about the feminine, old age is rarely mentioned. Therefore, the fact that women are living longer makes it imperative to redefine the traditional stages known as old age and that, by associating it with longevity, a period of life of approximately 20 years post-retirement awaits women; in which they can experience significant experiences and numerous vital changes during their aging process.

**“We leave feeling as if we are alone, during retirement”.**



**Categorical Tree No. 4**

Positive and negative experiences associated with being a retired woman.

**Source:** Interview with retired women. Own elaboration

There is a concern among some retired women regarding their retirement, which, although it is a step from a productive stage to one of rest, is sometimes perceived negatively, due to the discouraging experience known by former colleagues; this is experienced as a disappointment, since the effort of a whole working life translates into a stressor, upon retiring. Other retirees on the other hand feel retirement as a liberation, translated as highly positive by most of them, independent of the profession

I feel liberated, de-stressed both emotionally and in other aspects of my life, living experiences that I could not do because of my job, for example, going for a walk without any worries. I like this experience because I am not under any pressure of time or professional performance (BAC01).

I have freedom of schedule. I have no work stress, work always causes stress. I feel good being like this (FIS12).

I do not have work pressure, I no longer have any responsibility and I no longer answer to anyone, I no longer have the stress of preparing a lesson plan, the theoretical and practical preparation, and I am no longer subject to this activity (ENF09).

Work stress is one of the main problems for the health of workers, which can be translated into a reaction that the person has to the activities derived from his/her work as a teacher. It should be clarified that the terms stress and pressure are not synonymous. Due to the demands of the work environment, there is inevitably a certain level of pressure and the worker considers it acceptable, remains alert, motivated, and able to work. When work pressure is excessive or difficult to control, stress is produced, which is detrimental both for the workers and to the productivity of the institution where he/she works.

The experience of retirement has been one of tranquility and joy, of happiness, of feeling that I worked a lot because I worked since I was a child, and then when I look back, I see my contribution to the nursing career, I loved my nursing life and when I look back at so many professionals, I feel fulfilled. (ENF08)

These experiences in retired teachers are related to the freedom they now have and the need to experience their goals and emotions in different ways. Lombardo & Pantusa (2013), express those emotions, their expression, and regulation, are currently considered as aspects of psychic functioning throughout the life cycle, specifically, in old age. He affirms that these feelings produce an increase in the levels of affective well-being in the elderly; because during old age there is greater control over emotional regulation, for example, through the way one has to evaluate the time available and using more effective strategies, thus allowing a healthier adaptation.

The positive thing is that I no longer have to adjust to a strict schedule, I have had the opportunity to do other activities, both spiritual and interpersonal relationships with my friends, with my family, and also something positive is also the family life that one rarely has because of the difference in schedules. (BAC01)

I have found all of them positive because I prepared myself before and when I made up my mind, I said enough and I continue with my project, my project is waiting for me The family integration has been tremendous, I have felt good with the economic part, if we look at it from the university it has complied with what the law mandates. (FIS10)

It is not that I have come home only to die sick, of not being able to walk or to die as many retired women have done, because they did not even enjoy their retirement. After all, they died (ENF06).

I have heard that they retire, they go to their house as housewives, the fattening begins, the feeding begins, and there is chaos (BAC04).

Likewise, Echeverri (1994), found an outstanding criterion of old age, thinking in a negative sense: the chronological criterion of “being older”.



I think that I have time, sometimes I had to go to work when I was sick, and after 50 years of age you start to feel the aches of age because I suffer from migraine since I was working, I have also suffered from anxiety at certain times (BAC03).

The same author affirms that bad health conditions can occur, such as “feeling sick and ailing”.

The body receives so much stress during working life, it is the sum of stress, stress plus stress that results in pre-diabetic or hypertension; I never realized I had hypothyroidism, I was detected after retirement (BAC02).

Depression and loneliness can also be present, which can be described as feeling sad, melancholic, depressed, or down; these feelings can occur in all people in general, but for short periods; become a clinical depression, when the mood interferes with daily life for long periods.

I am a woman who learned to fight alone and feel useful when many retired women feel discarded. But we leave feeling lonely, that feeling that comes out of retirement. We spend all day teaching, we arrive home at night and without realizing it, our children have grown up. So, each retiree has her own experience, to think that retirement causes depression; I felt that way at the time. (NUT13)

This teacher referred to the impact suffered by the decision to retire, as being in a situation of mourning, since she feels that she has lost her source of motivation and personal satisfaction, something like a sense of belonging.

When I handed in my retirement letter in human resources, I felt like they had cut my navel, all the years I have worked made me feel attached to my institution, I went to cry because I felt like someone had died, it is a painful experience, and I know that my other colleagues felt it too, although they do not say it. (ENF07)

Other retired women expressed dissatisfaction in the economic aspect, related to the percentage assigned by the INSS; which may also be related to the “rupture” with their work environment, which leads to a grieving process that must be resolved to avoid effective or psychophysiological disorders.

I honestly decided to retire, because if I continue to develop as a worker I may have a financial loss, so retirement is nothing philosophical for me (FIS11).

The UNAN agreement says that when you retire, they complete your salary, so when I leave and bring the letter from the INSS, my salary is 68%, it doesn't even reach 70%, and before they gave 80%. (BAC02)

Jélvez (2013) affirms that this feeling of rejection generates resistance to retirement; Guevara (2013), refers that, since there is no preparation for retirement, it is often seen as a

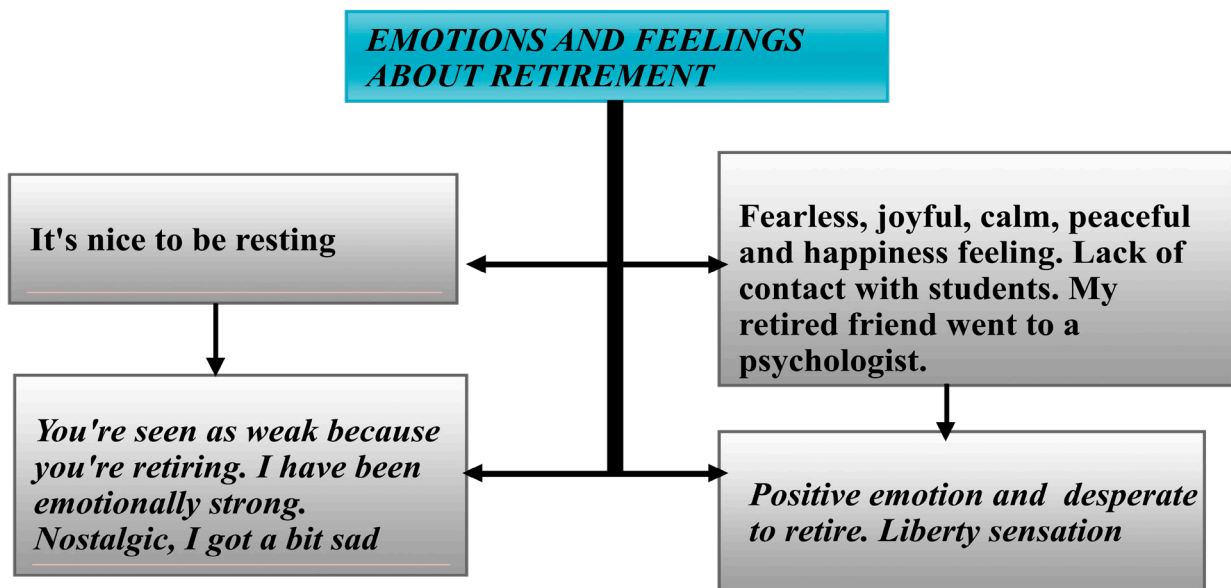
stage that should be avoided, not only because of the economic effect but also because of the loss of support networks, leaving the teaching role and returning home without any planned project.

In the beginning, I felt uncomfortable leaving my space, especially when they took away my desk to put in a new teacher. Then we retired women were given another space when we came to teach and suddenly, in the space, all our belongings were taken away. It affected me, but I am not the type of person to let them take away the peace in my heart (ENF08).

Carstensen and Charles (1998), state that happiness in older people is more predominant than in young people, with this statement arises the paradox that, although old age is associated with physical and cognitive deficits, as a person ages, emotional well-being increases with age.

The objective of the Law on Older Adults (2010) is to guarantee older persons the full exercise of their rights through the comprehensive protection that the State, society, and the family should provide them, to promote a better quality of life and full integration into social, economic, political and cultural development.

**“When we talk about emotions, they see you as weak because you retire”.**



**Categorical tree No. 5**

Emotions and feelings experienced around retirement.

**Source:** Interview with retired women. Own elaboration

Emotions can be identified in facial expressions, these emotions being found in all human beings. In this regard, Izard (1991) mentions pleasure, interest, surprise, sadness, anger, disgust, fear, and contempt as emotions, mentioning happiness, sadness, fear, anger, surprise, and aversion/disgust as primary emotions. According to this author, in older people, there is an



association between the frequency of positive emotions and social activity; this means that the greater the frequency of positive emotions experienced, the greater the social activity.

Positive emotion, I was desperate to go out. I conclude in November, in December the next day, I no longer had to go to work and I felt free, with the feeling of freedom. (NUT15)

These activities provoke a greater experience of positive emotions, with a greater desire to maintain a social life with other people and have a more positive perception of other people's behavior, generating confidence and optimism.

I felt cheerful, and calm with a feeling of happiness, I was rather waiting for this stage to arrive, I felt good, and I did not feel attached to continue working as a teacher. (BAC03)

Positive emotions expressed by retirees, such as: *retiring without fear*, also have healthy effects on the cardiovascular and immune systems, related to greater longevity.

I have positive feelings, I recommend to people who have not yet decided to retire, to retire without fear, it is one more opportunity that our Heavenly Father is giving us (BAC01).

They are positive feelings, it is nice to be able to rest, now I can solve some situations, sometimes we neglect the house to go to work. (ENF06)

When we talk about emotions, they see you as weak because you are leaving, they are pressuring you to retire. So, the emotions that limited me to the fact that I don't want to leave the institution or I am going to cry. What am I going to do next? In that, I have been emotionally strong because I stayed supportive, and when I decided I said: no more, that's enough, that's enough. (FIS10)

On the contrary, it has been shown that when people have negative emotions they also have a negative perception of their health; whereas, the more positive affect, the more they tend to underestimate their symptoms of illness.

I did not feel so much the fact of leaving the institution, I am leaving and I am not useful, I am discarded, I felt sad; but I feel part of POLISAL, my colleagues welcomed me and I have no feelings of sadness, and the people who once hurt me, I have already forgiven them. (ENF08)

Likewise, the increase in negative emotional activation favors the appearance of harmful effects in older people, in their immune and cardiovascular systems, compared to younger people.

Nostalgia, sadness, and at the same time satisfaction for the work done, uncertainty, and fear of a new change of life (FIS12).

Continuing with the adverse effects, it should be noted that the relationship between aging and negative emotions such as depression increases the risk of mortality in older people.



I have a friend who is already retired and she told me that she had to go to a psychologist. (BAC04)

What I feel is the lack of contact with the students. I feel that I am no longer immersed, sometimes I see that my colleagues go to some activity and I am not part of the team. (BAC02)

Regarding the emotions experienced in retirement, mixed feelings were identified, which for the retirees were to feel at the same time emotions of joy and sadness.

Nostalgia made me sad and at the same time I felt satisfaction for the work done, I also felt uncertainty and fear of a new life change. But within all that I also felt joy because I could dedicate more time to my mother and my grandson (FIS12).

Another type of emotion experienced was integrated by those who only distinguished feelings of joy or relief

Retirement is not going home to die, there are retired women who did not even achieve their retirement because they died; I feel that my retirement has been wonderful. (ENF07)

A group of retirees said that negative emotions prevailed in them and finally they think, what am I going to do at home?

Retirement is a somewhat difficult process, there should be a pre-retirement, a preparation stage to be able to adapt to the changes generated in this new stage. Even when I am still retired, many students write to me and consult me, and I am happy to support them. (FIS12)

During the interviews, some of the retirees cry when recalling their working life. The trigger is the memory of situations that transport them back to the scenario they lived through. This trip awakens emotions similar to those felt.

When I handed in my retirement letter to human resources, I went to cry because I felt as if someone had died, it is a painful experience, and I know that my other colleagues felt it too, although they do not say so. (ENF05)

Feelings and emotions have transcendence that goes beyond the academic merit that can be enjoyed, it has to do with an important affective factor, which is the retribution of seeing the achievements of the teaching career, since as soon as this feeling of well-being is perceived, the transcendence of the role as a teacher who transmits knowledge is experienced, but also gives tools to face life to their students and to be able to overcome adverse realities from the psychosocial point of view.

Antagonistic experiences are identified regarding the experiences associated with retirement. One group relates it to the freedom they now have and the need to fulfill their objectives and emotions differently. Another group expressed that maintaining the link with teaching is what has allowed them to live their retirement without problems. However, several

teachers express that they have experienced the impact of the decision to retire as being in a situation of mourning, since they feel that they have lost their source of motivation, belonging, and personal satisfaction.

## CONCLUSIONS

The teachers conceptualize old age as a process associated with the mental faculties and that depending on the preparation of each retired woman it can be accepted as a natural or pathological process. Regarding the meaning of retirement, they see it as an opportunity to integrate into their family group, suggesting that work “robbed” them of time that should be devoted to their family, as a mother, grandmother, and wife, and to social and community activities.

Also, antagonistic experiences associated with retirement are identified; one group relates retirement with the freedom they now have and the need to fulfill their objectives and goals. Others express that maintaining the link with teaching is what has allowed them to live their retirement without problems. However, they express that they have experienced the impact of the decision to retire as being in a situation of mourning; they feel that they have lost their source of motivation, belonging, and personal satisfaction.

Regarding the emotions and feelings experienced during retirement, “ambivalent” results were also identified, with emotions of joy and satisfaction for the work done; but also sadness, uncertainty, and fear of the new change of life; because they do not know what they are going to do at home, or because of the history of retired colleagues who died shortly before retirement, and others who did not have a plan or life project prepared.

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