



Men Fermented And Squeezed. Psychosocial Risks In Informal Jobs And Sustainable Economies: From Tepache In Mexico And Guarapo In Colombia.¹

Viviana Castellanos Suárez^{1*}, Carlos Arturo Olarte Ramos², Wilmar Reyes Sevillano³, Carolina Victoria Oramas⁴

¹PhD in Conflict Resolution Methods and Human Rights, Universidad Juárez Autónoma de Tabasco, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2506-8207>, vivihermosa_70@hotmail.com

²PhD in Psychology, Universidad Juárez Autónoma de Tabasco, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9534-5153>, olarte4@hotmail.com

³PhD in Sociology, Cooperative University of Colombia, Cali campus, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7255-696X>

⁴Dean of the Faculty of Psychology, Cooperative University of Colombia, Cali Campus

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ABSTRACT

The socialization of men involves the internalization of gender mandates to build masculine identity, with which they demonstrate strength, ability to provide, and risk management. Work represents one of the means for them to comply with social gender prescriptions, regardless of the conditions of the activity and the workspace. Many men generate their economic resources from informal entrepreneurship, where they face a series of dangers that threaten their physical and mental health; such is the case of the producers and sellers of tepache, in Mexico, and guarapo, in Colombia, where the preparation of these ancestral drinks represents their daily sustenance and a sustainable economic practice, but places them on the margins of vulnerability. This document presents a qualitative investigation, where through structured interviews the ailments of a group of male tepache and guarapo producers in informal settings and their connection with the economic context are explored. The results indicate that the sale of the drink gives them the security to comply with the mandate of the supplier, regardless of the risks to which they are exposed given that they consider that the male body is strong and resistant. The need to carry out public policies aimed at caring for informal workers and raising awareness among men regarding health care is concluded.

Keywords: traditional drinks, health risks, men, gender mandates.

SUMMARY

The socialization of men implies the internalization of gender mandates to construct masculine identity, with which they demonstrate strength, capacity for provision and risk management. Work represents one of the means to comply with social gender prescriptions, regardless of the conditions of the activity and the workplace. Many men generate their economic resources from informal entrepreneurship, where they face a series of dangers that threaten their physical and mental health; such is the case of the producers and sellers of tepache, in Mexico, and guarapo, in Colombia, where the preparation of these ancestral beverages represents their daily sustenance and a practice of sustainable economy, but places them on the margins of vulnerability.

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² Correspondence Author

This paper presents a qualitative research, where structured interviews explore the ailments of a group of male producers of tepache and guarapo in informal scenarios and their link with the economic context. The results indicate that the sale of the beverage gives them the security to comply with the mandate of the supplier, regardless of the risks to which they are exposed since they consider that the man's body is strong and resistant. It is concluded that there is a need to carry out public policies aimed at caring for informal workers and raising awareness among men about health care.

Between the fermented, the squeezed and the provision of men

Touching on the issue of work in men implies immediately confronting a masculine mandate, that of the supplier, which refers to functions and roles that imply generating economic sustenance, along with a life and occupational project that delineates their masculine identity; it is also associated with the mandate of protection and of being a real man when pregnant. provide and protect. In the words of Guerrero and Anaya (2008), the failure to comply with these duties calls masculinity into question.

Work is undoubtedly a fundamental element of men's identity, since it gives it existence and builds their masculinity through supply, as well as with skills of courage and courage (Salinas, 2021). Apparently, it is not an option not to work because it would imply being helpless, incomplete and unprotected, at the expense of social accusation and the accusation of not demonstrating manhood; therefore, they seek to comply with the generation of economic income, even from an early age, to feel and see themselves as men, unless they are modifying this mandate from being a male provider to being, as Figueroa and Franzoni (2011) mention, an emotional man, with whom, due to different circumstances, they take care of family members, and with this, assume a role other than being an economic provider.

This document analyzes the role of men as providers, of those whose work activity confronts them with physical work that involves wear and tear on their bodies, in which they compromise physical health -including mental health-, overcoming and making corporality resist informal employment, defined by the International Labor Organization (ILO, 2023, p.1) as:

... all paid work, whether self-employment or salaried employment, which is not registered, regulated or protected by legal or regulatory frameworks, as well as unpaid work carried out in an income-generating enterprise. Informal workers do not have secure employment contracts, employment benefits, social protection or worker representation.

This implies that man's body is unprotected despite generating economic income, because there is no one to support or help him in a complicated situation during the work activity he performs or during his particular activities, so, in case of being exposed to risks such as accidents and diseases, he will only have himself to solve himself. It is more complicated when men with informal work activity have economic dependents, since, in addition to facing the physical risk of work, they have emotional vulnerability due to the social pressure they feel on themselves regarding monetary income to satisfy their own demands and those of their dependents.

The informal sector also has some characteristics that are described below:

... a set of units dedicated to the production of goods or the provision of services with the primary purpose of creating jobs and generating income for the people who participate in that activity. These units typically function on a small scale, with rudimentary organization, in which there is little or no distinction between labor and capital as factors of production. Employment relationships - where they exist - are based rather on casual employment, kinship or personal and social relationships, rather than on contractual arrangements that involve formal guarantees. (ILO, 1993, p2)

Informal employment is also known, according to De Souza and Bustos (2017), as an underground, popular, informal, informal sector, residual, self-employed, conceptualized as a precarious and risky activity, since workers, in addition to being excluded from the labor protections of the law, are exposed to the elements and unhealthiness. There are some who have permission to work on the street, considered legal informal workers, and others who do not, being illegal informal workers; Likewise, the authors comment that they have an appropriation of the space in the street, of the everyday street, and are even part of public life, where they coexist between vulnerability, individuality and in coexistence of the group with other workers and with street users. It is added in the analysis that the day is hard, hours of standing, without a bathroom, shade, shelter or protection, in addition to the transfer of heavy and bulky goods that involve physical effort; they are stigmatized and even nicknamed; they survive on the street intuiting and transmitting practices acquired through experience; they adapt to geography, architectural design and the ups and downs of people.

These labor vulnerabilities imply for men to be squeezed by the sum of masculine mandates: they have to work, endure, endure and forge a hard-working, leathery body; as Sarricolea Torres (2017) mentions, a male body is forged influenced by sociocultural processes based on gender relations and activities and also on ages, classifying them into morros or apprentices, new bodies, old bodies, old bodies, which include different activities, movements, interactions and thoughts.

These informal jobs are governed by the seasons and seasons of the year, selling seasonal merchandise, but not ensuring a large income since the marginal economic subsistence, in which they are considered as sub-proletarians, have subsistence income and unstable jobs (Cortes 2002) or precarious conditions, without benefits or social security, also explained as those activities that they live on the margins of the traditional wage statute and labor regulation systems (Calle, 2019), which prevents them from a constant income, since if they do not work they do not generate and do not take out the account of the day of sale.

Undoubtedly, men's bodies are oppressed by long working hours, on the physical and psychosocial burdens to which they are exposed. The conditions of noise, sun, water, fire; what they inhale, what they carry, among many other stressors, take a toll on their physical and psychosocial health. Apparently, men have to continue to be the labor force, and it is not enough, according to Ayala Mira et al. (2020), to be a man-worker, but it is necessary to pass a competition of how much one earns; other qualities of gender are required, such as the capacity for control, autonomy, rationality, recklessness, heterosexuality, identification and competition, as the main signifiers of the masculine; they add that homosociality is linked to these masculine pedimentos, referring to the social ties that become a priority between people of the same sex; they add that in productive work geography, geography, gender and its mandates, in addition to the economy to determine labor forces. In this way, the economies in which this man-work dyad is inserted are appreciated; in the case that needs to be investigated, the men who sell artisanal beverages on the street such as guarapo in Colombia and tepache in southeastern Mexico, apparently are in the informal economy, given their ambulant conditions, but they could also be inserted in the sustainable economy that includes the orange economy and the circular economy or also in the solidarity economy. or in all of them that could be encompassed by the social economy.

Sustainable economy, Sferrazza (2023) argues, is one that seeks to harmonize both economic growth and social well-being and environmental protection, distinguishing three approaches. The first of these, the green economy, which refers to an economic approach in which sustainable development is intended to be achieved by protecting the natural environment; the second, the orange economy, which refers to the set of economic activities that generate value from creativity, knowledge and culture; and the third, the circular economy, which refers to an economic model that minimizes both the consumption of natural resources and the generation of waste, through the maximum use of products, materials and services. Sferrazza (2023) adds that the three approaches also have their differences, since while the green economy focuses on environmental impact, the orange economy focuses on cultural and social impact and the circular economy focuses on the life cycle of products and services; he adds that the green economy requires public investment and environmental regulation; the orange economy requires greater protection of intellectual property rights and promotion of cultural diversity; and the circular economy requires greater collaboration between economic and social actors. The orange or creative economy is made up of three activities (Benavente & Grazzi, 2018): the traditional and artistic ones, focused on generating and maintaining cultural heritage; the creative industry, which is closely related to commercial activity such as publishing, audiovisual, including video games and fashion; and those that offer support to the traditional ones. using creativity to promote the production process of a good or service that is not creative in itself. In this regard, UNESCO (2006) mentions that:

Cultural expressions are perhaps what best reflects, in a tangible or intangible way, the identity of a given community. Today, a good part of these expressions materialize in the cultural and creative industries, which translate into words, music, colors or shapes those privileged dimensions of the human being and place them within the reach of as many people as possible. (p.12)

As for the solidarity economy or solidarity economy, Razeto (2010) mentions, it is a search for alternative ways of doing economy, based on solidarity and work, the foundation of the economy being the union, support or backing of economic activities, organizations and institutions, both at the level of companies and in markets and public policies. increasing micro and macroeconomic efficiency, in addition to generating a set of social and cultural benefits that favor society as a whole.

With reference to the social economy, it arises in the face of economic and emerging paradigms and includes, according to Chaves Ávila and Monzón Campos (2018, p. 11), "various legal forms, new and emerging, as a broad, dynamic and constantly changing reality that is the social economy as a third sector". Their common identity core is, therefore, that of being microeconomic entities of a free and voluntary nature, with democratic decision-making processes, created by civil society to satisfy and solve the needs of individuals, households or families and not to remunerate or provide cover to investors or capitalist companies.

In this sense, there are organizations that obtain their resources through being dedicated to the production, preparation and sale of the so-called ambulatory drinks and have been installed in social practices, which, according to Cruzado Ortiz (2020), use carts to offer and move the sale, which occurs under the characteristics of street vendors; Likewise, the preparation of the drink is with resources from the region, under the artisanal technique and procedure, generating income from what are considered marginal enterprises, since they are given with a minimum organization and training and there is a family group that benefits from this economic activity.

In addition to these economic bases, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that there are other studies (González Carvajal et al., 2019; Almanzar Henao and Jurado Casallas, 2016), on street sale of energy drinks that have been aimed at highlighting industrial hygiene and occupational health in this type of activity, studying physical, chemical, biological, ergonomic and psychosocial risk factors that can trigger environmental pollutants such as solar radiation and other occupational hygiene risk factors such as ergonomic and accident risks associated with safety.

In this order of ideas and addressing health and emotional risks, there are the psychosocial factors at work specifically exposed by the Official Mexican Standard NOM-35 (DOF, 2018) which, although it is aimed at the identification, analysis and prevention of these risks to determine minimum vital conditions of safety, health and the environment, in order to prevent accidents and occupational diseases, as well as influencing physical and emotional health in productivity and job satisfaction, this only refers to formal workplaces, not those of

the informal economy, leaving a large gap in care and in a state of defenselessness and vulnerability in these forms of work in the informal economy, a dimension used by the ILO (2002, p.4) to refer to the increasingly numerous and diverse group of workers and enterprises, both rural and urban, operating in the informal and remote spheres with a deficit of decent work, considered as such due to poor conditions, lack of remuneration, recognition, absence of rights and representation.

Thus, both the drink called tepache, in Mexico, and Guarapo, in Colombia, are traditional, cultural and identity products, with meanings and justification for their intake. In the case of tepache, which is considered an intoxicating beverage of pre-Hispanic origin, it is considered among the indigenous non-distilled alcoholic beverages of Mexico along with pulque, tuba and colonche; the purposes for which these beverages are ingested are related to religion, medicine, prophylactic purposes and ensuring human longevity (Godoy et al., 2003), in addition to recreation and endurance for long working hours, according to Sandoval and Angulo (n.d., p.1)

Tepache is a traditional Mexican fermented drink, made with pineapple and piloncillo. As it is a beverage that is obtained through the process of alcoholic fermentation in an anaerobic way, in which different microorganisms act such as bacteria (lactic: *Lactobacillus lactis* ssp; acetic: acetobacteria and enterobacteriaceae) and yeasts (*Saccharomyces Cerevisiae*) so it gives it a biotechnological interest. A good tepache should have a pH of 4-6, with a low alcohol content (less than 1%), a sweet smell and also a dark brown color.

In the case of Guarapo, Valdés (2013) recapitulates the identity and preparation characteristics of this drink prepared from cane or panela honey by dissolving them in water and then fermenting it using a type of yeast; it has meanings and justifications to be taken, since it is a good energy, takes away hunger and is an obligatory companion of the work of the field; it is also consumed as a refreshing drink and is promoted as part of folklore and as part of the tourist attraction; in some places its consumption is rejected, so it remains in the marginalized sectors of the community.

Regardless of the composition of the drink, the biotechnological interest of its production process or the historical, ethnic, socioeconomic and cultural importance, this work aims to analyze the well-being of men who make craft beverages, to know the characteristics of the product and the elements of identity, the risks and cares, as well as the link with masculinity and the work of these men under the sun. in which masculine mandates of supply, endurance, strength, risk are combined and how this is carried out from the gender difference, from tradition, the elaboration of the product and its commercialization, to the exclusivity of the male sex to be able to deal with the activity of being a tepachero and being a guaranero. The above analysis allows us to know the experiences and meanings of the product, of the daily work work, thus making visible the psychosocial risks they face when carrying out their activity; In this regard, it is worth asking: are they in a sustainable, green, orange or circular economy?, Do the production and sale of such beverages respond to a tradition or is it just a solidarity work?, How does the work place them on the margins of some vulnerability? All this to reflect on and contribute to the study of masculinities, the economy, psychosocial violations, but above all to the well-being of these men fermented and squeezed by their work that transits between subsistence and resistance, in order to contribute to the development of economic, urban, regulatory and public policy projects that benefit the worker on the street, to public space and cultural tradition.

Method

To answer these questions, a qualitative, descriptive, comparative study was carried out; the technique for collecting information was interviews with primary sources, in this case 8 people selling tepache (TEP),³ in the city of Villahermosa, in Mexico, and 8 people selling guarapo (GUA), in the city of Cali, in Colombia. The invitation was made based on the approach in their workplace, explaining the objective of the project and informing them about the voluntary nature to share experiences about the work activities they carry out; those who accepted signed a consent form to participate and then proceed to carry out the interview at the workplace; The data collection was carried out during the months of March to May 2023.

For purposes of anonymity and confidentiality, the informants were assigned a code composed of letters that identify the drink they make and a number that represents the order of participation, as well as the age in parentheses: TEP1 (18 years old), TEP2 (27 years old), TEP3 (30 years old), TEP4 (35 years old), TEP5 (39 years old), TEP6 (42 years old), TEP7(55 years), TEP8(60 years), GUA1(78 years), GUA2(56 years), GUA3(29 years), GUA4(38 years), GUA5(37 years), GUA6(26 years), GUA7(34 years) and GUA8(56 years).

The construction of the data involved the investigation of three areas:

The first is about the PRODUCT AND IDENTITY, that is, the daily activities from the preparation to the marketing of the product, as well as the exploration of the cultural identity of the product.

³ Although the ancestral drink in the Mexican state of Tabasco is chorote (pozol with cocoa), which is even part of the gastronomic identity of the place, it was decided to explore the preparation and sale of tepache because it is a product of the fermentation of the pineapple peel, and that it can be compared to guarapo. which is fermented from sugar cane, produced in Cali, Colombia. In addition, the full use of the fruit is appreciated in the tepache, which means a sustainable circular economy practice.

The second about the RISKS AND CARE related to their activity; It included asking about their daily activities and how they cover everything from their basic needs of hunger, excretory, to the diseases or risk factors they suffer and the associated care.

The third on aspects related to MASCULINITY AND WORK, in order to explain how men comply with the mandate of providing in a context of informality.

The information was given in clear and precise language, to ask questions and obtain information in their own way of expressing themselves. After obtaining the answers, a horizontal tabulation of all the responses by area was carried out and the responses were analyzed, finding similarities and differences between both groups: then the needs for attention or prompt intervention in the individual, in the environment and in the activity, as well as in the states of risk and self-care identified, were identified. as well as the vulnerabilities of street vendors in both countries.

Results

The experience that the men shared about the production of artisanal beverages gives a glimpse of the organization they have to take advantage of natural resources in their environment, a work occupation that, in addition to generating economic income, allows them to feel strong and useful, contributing to the conservation of traditions related to the fermentation of fruits in tropical areas. This exercise represented a space of listening for men, so accustomed to silencing their ailments caused by male mandates, since they evidenced concerns in health care, working conditions and the security they could have for themselves and their families, considering that they work in the informal sector.

The results are presented below based on the established categories:

(a) Product and identity

In the case of tepache, the men interviewed associate the drink both with artisanal production practices, with which they preserve traditions in the fermentation of tropical fruits, and with the culture of sale and consumption, since they take advantage of the warm climate that prevails in the locality by increasing the demand for liquid intake. It is appreciated that even when they recognize that the manual preparation of the drink implies a product with better flavor and more nutrients, they do not know the ancestral value of tepache, because the acquisition of knowledge to prepare the fermented has been transformed over time: before it was rustic material in the elaboration, now some machines are included for greater speed in the preparation, which contributes to the loss of identity of the product, becoming a commodity where commercial value prevails. They assign a work identity to the drink, leaving aside, due to ignorance, the historical and cultural legacy of the tepache.

There is a marked family dynamic in the preparation of this drink, since it represents a job where the man relies on his female partner to produce more drink. The dynamics of production consists of organizing themselves into groups for production and others for sale, being the interviewees who market it, and although they know the artisanal process of elaboration, they are not immersed in it, that is, men and women produce it, but only they market it.

It's a process that I learned from my work, from my boss. Apart from me, my cousins make it and the people where I live do it. (TEP6)

I am only in charge of preparing and selling the tepache. I have my wife who helps me buy the sugar, pineapple and water and make the drink. The first tepachero who came here was from Toluca, that man brought the drink, showed it to his chalán and consecutively they showed it among tepacheros and chalanés to sell it. (TEP7)

They know the origin of the drink in broad strokes and do not place it as belonging to the state; despite the fact that in Tabasco -where the city of Villahermosa is located- pineapple is produced -fruit from whose peel tepache is made-, such a drink is not a cultural reference of the community because there is greater consumption of bottled beverages or pozol -a drink prepared with corn-; in addition, The fruit is harvested in specific regions of the state⁴, which makes the pineapple a particular identity and not a general one. Therefore, tepache is produced and marketed as a work heritage, but not as a cultural heritage, that is, the identity with the product is due to the fact that the production or commercialization of tepache gives them the opportunity to enter the world of work.

Yes, he is from here, but also from other states; it is a drink that is many years old and is native to Mexico. Tepache is from the central states of the country, such as the State of Mexico, but also from Chiapas, Oaxaca and Tabasco. (TEP7)

A man from Michoacán taught me 20 years ago and it is not traditional because it is not produced in our state; it comes from Michoacán, I sell the product in my community and transport it on my tricycle and in the barrel. (TEP8)

⁴ Pineapple production in Tabasco is located in the municipality of Huimanguillo, where this fruit is part of the gastronomic and territorial identity; Its inhabitants know that the pineapple is an agricultural icon of space.

I don't know whose idea it was to prepare the drink to sell it or its history because I am new to this job that is nice and quiet, because I don't work many hours and my family benefits from this work, and the community benefits by consuming a rich and fresh drink. (TEP3)

I have been practicing tepache and its sale since I was very young, from my paternal grandfather to my father and me and they have taught it to the whole family. (TEP 2)

In the case of guarapo, in general the men interviewed refer to culture, associating it with the traditional, the historical, and even the ancestral appears in some stories. All tied to knowledge and everyday life. More than the drink itself, what is recognized as identity is the main input for its production: sugar cane. Even those who know little or are unaware of the origin of guarapo recognize the existence of a cultural and, above all, identity dimension that gives rise to what we could call "Valle del Cauca and/or Cali identity⁵".

This drink is considered traditional and cultural because it is based on the customs, traditions and celebrations of Cali, because by enjoying this drink we are not only savoring the sweetness of this juice but also the history and tradition of this juice. (GUA6)

It is a process rooted in the culture or it can be said that this process has always been taken for a long time. Yes, that's like, let's say culture because since long before the sugar mills, people have liked to consume guarapo, even if it's without additives, oranges, or anything. (GUA8)

As a good Valle del Cauca, we bring those descendants of our ancestors who have always had sugar mills and so we always follow the tradition, part of the tradition. It gives identity (the guarapo) because we are Valle and Valle is cane, now! So, as the good vallunos that we are, they will always identify us as the sugarcane growers, because the best sugar cane is produced. (GUA5)

It is common for the sale of guarapo to become a family legacy. It is a source of income and a cultural practice that is transmitted between generations; This transmission entails the worldview of life, family and work that the most experienced want to teach young people.

Our ancestors have always had sugar mills. We follow tradition. Our ancestors... Grandparents, uncles. At the time I trained my son to learn and see what the movement is like to work with sugarcane guarapo, which is a good way to sustain himself. So it is important, so that they have something to drink a soda, so that they have (for) their expenses and that they help each other... So that they learn the value of work from a young age, also so that that culture is not lost and so that the culture that is Valle del Cauca, our Cali, is not lost. We remind ourselves that this is the sugarcane fair⁶. (GUA5)

In my family many people have made it such as uncles, grandparents, father, not counting all the people we teach to give them support. It comes from generations to sell cane juice, first it was my grandparents, then my uncles and it was reaching my father who was the one who taught me this activity and that's how I started in this work. (GUA6)

A difference is identified, then, in terms of the identity of the product: while tepache is associated with the culture of sale and consumption, guarapo is associated with family and culture. Both give identity to the male vendors, who are proud to be tepacheros and guaraperos because they know that they sell a natural product that quenches thirst, refreshes the body and sweetens the palate.

b) Risks and care

Producing tepache and guarapo becomes dangerous due to many factors, including the use of cutting and grinding equipment; the risk is that, due to carelessness, they will get hurt. Selling tepache and guarapo is also dangerous: suffice it to mention the environmental conditions that increase the risk of contracting a disease.

Regarding physical and psychological health care, risks to their person and self-care, it is appreciated that there is a habit or endurance before work, leaving self-care in the hands of another, in this case the wife, and with the use of home remedies.

The tepacheros do not consider their work as stressful or with greater risks for their person; they are aware of both the inclemency of the environment and the absence of social security⁷, in the face of which they have taken actions and qualify their work as a quiet job, to which they have adapted and become accustomed. It is appreciated that the body is a machine that produces, that in the face of any disease they take quick measures, even improvised, to heal it; The obligation is to stay strong and not minimize yourself in the face of a physical ailment, much less an emotional one.

Among the occupational health risks that men admit to having during the informal work activity they carry out are: cuts, chafings and burns, to which they are exposed during the preparation of the drink; Meanwhile, when they market it, they can suffer from sunstroke, heat stroke, physical fatigue and pain in the extremities, since

⁵ It refers to the sense of belonging and identity rootedness for the city (Cali) and the department (Valle del Cauca)

⁶ Feria de la caña is one of the names given to the Cali fair, a very popular festival in Colombia that is celebrated every year between December 25 and 30.

⁷ In Tabasco, the economically active population with formal work in private organizations receives, as part of their labor benefits, medical service at the Mexican Institute of Social Security (IMSS); if he works for the State, he is treated at the Social Security Institute of the State of Tabasco (ISSET) or at the Institute of Security and Social Services of State Workers (ISSSTE). Those who do not have this benefit go to Community Health Centers, or resort to home practices.

to offer the product they go out in the morning to the public road to push or pedal a tricycle, under the conditions of the day, generally sunny, because there is greater demand in the hot season.

They also face the danger of an assault or accident when selling on the street, or any act of violence by customers. In the event of an accident, it may be that they carelessly contaminate the product they offer, they may hit a car while they are driving, or they may be the ones who are harmed by a motorist's driving.

They also face unhealthy conditions in the open space where they travel and limited personal hygiene conditions, not because they are careless in their appearance, but because they are on the street and absorb pollutants from the environment, their clothes get stained and their movement generates sweating. Another risk is the pressure of the body because exposure to high temperature, an environmental characteristic of tropical cities such as Villahermosa, raises the heart rate and blood pumping, this in addition to the tension of not having a private space - or at least, public - to assist in physiological needs.

I've gotten used to the work, I've been there for 12 years. I don't have a specific day to rest, I do it when I want. (TEP6)

It's not heavy work, I'm used to it; when I started, it was from riding the tricycle and being in the sun, or cuts on your fingers or getting burned by sugar and sunburn. Only once did I have an accident: because I was drunk I collided with a combi, I scraped my arm and leg, but I didn't go to the doctor because I don't have insurance, I went with a *bone carving* and with my wife's home remedies. They don't ask me for payment because the cart is mine and I don't have a boss; I get along well with other vendors, the pozoleros and the venteros. (TEP7)

I wear long-sleeved shirts to avoid sunburn; I have diabetes, but it doesn't stop me from working, and I earn enough to support my family. (TEP8)

No danger has happened to me in preparation or in selling; I like my work because it is only a few hours. (TEP2)

In the hot season I suffer from sunstroke, but I have not had another serious accident. I have friendships with other vendors and we support each other. If I get sick, pure home remedy. (TEP3)

I don't have diseases or health problems; the strongest are heat stroke and sunstroke. The tepacheros of this area are family and we take care of each other, it is a work that will never end. (TEP1)

In the case of guaraperos, considering risks and care refers again to the experience of the body and the bond that is established with it by these workers. Some feel exposed to all kinds of risks: cuts, sunstroke, swelling, blows. Risk is part of everyday work logic

Although physical risk, in general and in different ways, is ubiquitous in everyday work, these men concentrate their fear on the possibility of amputation, since the mutilation of the fingers is the greatest danger; Concentration, practice and consequent expertise are the main protectors against possible damage. The fear of losing part of the limbs, beyond all its psychological and physical implications, is also associated, in these cases, with the impossibility of work that would result in this injury. We have already stated the relevance of the body as a representative of strength, endurance and physical power in general. Thus, for these men, considering a mutilated and, consequently, limited body has an impact on the productivity – and masculinity – of the one they try to take care of.

According to the Colombian occupational health and safety system, guarapo sellers are classified as risk level III, medium level. Most of the occupational risks of guaraperos coincide with the so-called "*safety*" ones, which include cuts, fires and blows, among others.

Regarding prevention and care, only one of the interviewees stated that they had insurance from the occupational risk insurer (ARL), the others are not affiliated to the general system of occupational risks; one of them also stated that he was not a contributor to health and the rest said that they were linked to the system under the figure of Sisbén⁸. so they have EPS (Health Promoting Entities) affiliation.

Under these conditions, in the daily work dynamics of these men, prevention is essential, since, in the event of an accident at work, they must attend the health service under a different figure so that it is possible to receive the service.

The ways of taking care of health refer to the consistency of the historical-cultural link of these men with guarapo, hence they consume it in order to take care of their health, they are self-consumers.

As we mentioned, these men operate under the logic of disease prevention, a particular issue, given that they live in a culture of cure, in which the disease is generally attacked when it is already a problem. On the other hand, some of the reports show how these workers recognize their work environment and, although they do not state it directly in their description, they experience it as risky, as unhealthy

Well, the truth is that sometimes there are cuts. There are some windmills that, if you are absent-minded, take your fingers and apart from that it can leave you literally, a lot. Clearly over time one learns to get the practice and you know that you should not put your fingers there. The point is to be very careful when grinding the cane and putting it in the sugar mill as such: the truth, because that is one of the dangers that one can have there. Another danger is with fires, since you have to put gasoline on the engine and if the cane is nearby, since it is a wood as such, you may try to ignite it and cause a fire. (GUA3)

⁸ System for the Identification of Potential Beneficiaries of Social Programs

One of the dangers I face is the possibility of my fingers getting caught in the trapiche. Luckily, in the sale, no danger has occurred so far. Although I have had many cuts due to the preparation of guarapo juice. As for my health, every day I consume a guarapo juice. WOW4

Well, in this sense, when we have to go out to an event we hire ARL and the government, the law. As for the fair, we should have ARL, the EPS, which is what the government gives us, but we are also thinking about having all our ARL, EPS, pension, because we are a risk, we are at risk to the public, we are out here in the public and you know that it is a risk that would be a risk three, I mean, it would really be a risk three. (GUA5) How do I take care of my health? It's the most important thing... take care of our health. Second, when we have rainy weather, cover up well. already! with our respective elements, eh not to suffer from, well to take care of diseases... and drink a lot of sugarcane guarapo because it raises our defenses. (GUA5)

It is clear, then, that the absence of medical service makes them a vulnerable sector; informality itself is a risk factor because there is a lack of support from someone or something to solve a contingency. In the face of this, the men of the tepache and the guarapo must show themselves more men to withstand the pain, the infection, the famine and other situations that hit the body. And if we refer to emotions, affective silence is present: it is not worth crying, much less complaining; Men become immune to loss, theft, danger, and risk.

c) Masculinity and work

It is possible to identify that there is a relationship between the social construction of masculinity and the production and commercialization of the drink, which gives it personal identity and cohesion and group belonging, that is, the men produce the drink and have allowed the wife or women to be included in this production work only in cleaning, and in some cases, in preparation, not at points of sale, perpetuating the traditional heteronormative roles of supplier. As for sales, it can be seen that the youngest men are the ones who operate the tricycles or the men have made their own territory of production and sale being their own bosses and promoting self-employment; The process of socialization and mutual support among them and with other groups is identified, that is, they establish a marketing network with which they cover more territory without invading the one that is already occupied, which reflects respect between them as a collective of informal workers. The condition of vulnerability they face is likely to provoke understanding of the other: everyone needs to produce and sell because everyone has to provide.

I make the drink together with my cousins; Women do not sell the drink, they only participate in the production. I work from 10 in the morning and finish when the drink is finished, about 4 in the afternoon. (TEP6)

There are no women who sell tepache because it is not customary, pozoleras yes, but tepacheras no, because of the weight of the cart and the barrel, in addition to the fact that the tepache does not come out the same, each one is taught it differently. I like my job and I don't plan to change, I am my own boss, with my own schedule; if it rains I don't go out to sell. Sometimes I recruit tepacheros. (TEP7)

In Tabasco I have only seen men selling tepache, I like my work, I am the breadwinner of my house. (TEP8)

I benefit from my work and support my house; we live like any working family, without shortages; The payment is daily. (TEP2)

It is a work of persistence, effort and patience since you concentrate on the heat both when you make the tepache and also go out to sell it; mostly in this area I spend alone, so I have more profit and fewer problems with others; between vendors we know each other, I have my routes and schedules, it is a family job (TEP1)

In the sale of tepache, the way to enter to work is from being in solidarity with each other, that is, one calls the other, usually with a relationship of kinship and they accompany each other on their journey from the time they take their tricycle full of tepache from the warehouse, until they divide in their place of work. and they know each other's routes.

It is a tradition in my family, to do it carefully to deliver a fresh drink; when the preparation is made there are only two people who do it, either children or wife and no one else can touch it more than those two, so we are better organized and we do not lose control of who is doing the process because if it is overdone or neglected it is loss. We use tricycles and accompany each other, although I live near the areas where I work, and it is sold in areas that we already know is going to be sold. (TEP 11)

Regarding the preparation of guarapo, there is a marked difference in the activities carried out by men and women in case they participate in the production and/or sale process. Three of the interviewees categorically stated that theirs is a man's job.

Yes, (it is a man's job) because the truth is that the rest is very heavy, even if they can do it. (GUA6)

In a similar position, another participant maintains:

Well, I say that those women are warriors, but I'll tell you something, women often can't move a cart like this alone, now! So they always have to ask a street dweller or if it is in our hands, we will help them, we do not leave them alone, now! (GUA5)

The sale of guarapo is a job that is usually associated with physical power, the demonstrations of resistance, strength and energy largely define the identity of the guarapero.

One (man) has to wash the sugarcane, be aware of putting the oil in the engine of the sugar mill, wash the car, wash the sugarcane, push it to the sugar mill so that it grinds and the sumo comes out. Oh, and also from time

to time, you have to paint and make some repairs to the cart, since it is the workplace, as well as tighten nuts and many other things. That is why I believe that this work cannot be done by women; it is a man's job. Since it is very heavy, it is very strong. (GUA8)

Well, what role does man play? The man is in charge of cutting the cane in half, cleaning the cane, transporting the heavy elements, our cane is very heavy, it weighs a lot so they are in charge of moving the cart from the point to the warehouse, that's it! So men are in charge of strength. (GUA5)

It's a very complicated and heavy job, especially because of the time we spend here and the intense heat. (GUA4)

The "uses of the body" in the relationship between man and work follow a logic of sacrifice and gratification. However, this gratification transcends the economic, alluding to the subjective pleasure resulting from help and service. There is a body tied to the satisfactory of feeling useful and productive.

It is hard work, but at the same time it encourages you because we are active all the time, we are active all the time, we are not sad. It fascinates me because I am serving my clients all the time, I am interacting with people all the time, we also help our society, our homeless, street dwellers; we are always kind of supporting that part, it also helps us a lot, it is a very nice therapy. (GUA5)

Well, you feel good when you have enough customers, there are times when you don't even have enough hands to serve people. (GUA8)

Thus, the role assigned to women is mainly associated with service and cleaning activities, only to a lesser extent with other tasks, defined as masculine.

To attend to the point, nothing more. (GUA4)

Clean the guarapo, store refrigerated. (GUA1)

I have a girl, who helps me sell, and the issue of receiving the money and giving it back, and she also helps me in the departure of the lemons and in the cleaning of the cart. Since I do the rest, because there are things that are too heavy or complex for her. (GUA8)

The idea of the male provider is tied to social expectations about masculinity, they constitute a demand that is sometimes sought to be fulfilled with a certain stoicism.

Well, what I earn helps us a lot, and my wife and my daughter collaborate a lot with me and that's what the three of us live on. It's not much, but it helps, now that life is getting more and more expensive. (GUA1)

Yes, I earn enough for the whole family. It meets our needs. (GUA6)

Well, the truth is, thank God. We do the day-to-day thing. Yes, enough to survive, as things are very expensive; everything in general, but you have the business and there is talk to live, with dignity. The truth is that I make an average of 150 thousand to 250 (Colombian pesos, daily), and with that I support my family, clearly also saving from what is done. (GUA8)

It is clear that gender mandates permeate the activity of tepacheros and guaraperos, since they are obliged to overcome the dangers and risks of the production and sale of the beverage to provide; if they do not meet the expectations that their relatives place on them, they will be judged by social and personal criticism, provoking feelings of uselessness and inferiority.

Discussion

Undoubtedly, the type of economy they develop is informal, which according to the ILO (2022, p.4) is seen as a large and diverse group of workers and companies that operate in the informal sphere, however the people interviewed do not perceive the deficit in their jobs, such as poor conditions, lack of remuneration, absence of rights or representation; It seems that they have learned the routes of improvisation both in the preparation and in the sale of their product, when some eventuality or risk arises.

The fact of working, even in informal conditions, allows them to generate economic income, and with it, comply with the social mandate of supply, and ultimately, the demonstration of masculinity. Although they are under the gaze of otherness, where their actions are monitored and channeled to perpetuate the patriarchal system, these men minimize the economic amount obtained by work, since they are not interested in how much is earned, rather, they focus on earning whatever amount, as long as they provide.

Exposure to risk is identified as a trigger for masculinity, since informality in itself is a danger to health since they do not have security of any kind, only that which they can offer themselves; but they do not measure the danger, they are not afraid of unhealthy conditions, they are not obfuscated by being under the sun, rather, it is a demonstrative form of the strength of the human body, as de Keijzer (2006) states: as long as the body endures, man is a work machine.

The dynamics of production are group organization, mainly in the family line, and they are supportive of each other, seeking or caring for the kinship relationship; they also accompany each other on their journey, which suggests that the type of economy they have in more towards the social economy, according to Chaves Ávila and Monzón Campos (2018), as they are free and voluntary microeconomic entities, with democratic decision-making processes, created by civil society to satisfy and solve the needs of individuals, households or families and not to remunerate or provide cover to investors or capitalist companies.

A circular economy dynamic is also appreciated by making the most of the resource, since the peel of the fruit (pineapple and cane) is used to make the drink, which implies zero waste in the handling of the fruit; In

addition, when there is a surplus of product, there is no waste because it is refrigerated or frozen, using it in later days.

In this sense, the possible notion that tepache and guarapo are strong elements for a cultural identity is diluted, not a social identity of work, that is, the inheritance of preparation and sale of the artisanal drink is not cultural but labor, since the form of work was passed from one man to another. to prove themselves to be strong and risk-taking men, who produce, sell and supply; In addition, women are allowed to be included only in the role of caring for or preparing the drink, thereby perpetuating a dominance of the work scenario.

Conclusions

The fact that the tepacheros and guaraperos do not perceive a risk in their type of economy does not imply that they should not be provided with the establishment of a protection floor, the promotion of ways out of the informality that is sometimes achieved through cooperative work.

It is hoped that this study will be a contribution of information and visibility of these men accustomed to getting sunburned, to being squeezed by the conditions of informality – where they decided to be because they had no other option to be – promoting work environments where improvement and integrated regulatory support are encouraged to get out of informality; In addition, it is necessary to recover the traditional elements of both tepache and guarapo, ancestral drinks sold and produced until our time, which in its barrel also contains stories of men burned and fermented in their work without even perceiving it.

The mental and social health of vendors in the informal sector also requires attention, because, although the body can resist, emotions and interpersonal bonds can weaken, causing a collapse of the body turned into a machine. It is necessary, therefore, psychosocial intervention programs for men whose work dynamics are developed in conditions that are not favorable for personal well-being.

In this regard, it is necessary to propose public policies aimed at caring for workers in the informal sector and raising men's awareness of the social construction of masculinity. There is also the invitation to explore the men who sell artisanal beverages and their contribution to the conservation of an ancestral practice where, although the production process has been transformed and the form of marketing has been modernized, the product they sell is an element of cultural identity of the open public space.

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