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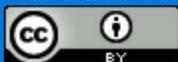
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Gender and relations of oppression in the social context: a look at the university

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify the gender oppressions experienced by the students of a degree in Physical Education at a public university in the North of Minas Gerais. In order to contribute to the perception of gender relations (in the view of the students) in the scope of that course, this work aims to collaborate in the understanding of the different types of behaviors, regarding gender relations, within the university environment. The methodology used was based on a qualitative, exploratory research, based on an online questionnaire. In this sense, we encounter a great influence of the patriarchal ideal on the thoughts, emotions, feelings and actions of the interviewees, and we observe how this influences human relations within the university. We conclude, given this fact, how much more clarification and information about the concepts of gender (and gender oppression) are necessary for the woman to have more space and voice.

KEYWORDS

Gender. Gender oppression. University.

Gênero e as relações de opressão no contexto social: um olhar para a universidade

RESUMO

O presente estudo tem como objetivo identificar as opressões de gênero vivenciadas pelas alunas de um curso de Licenciatura em Educação Física numa universidade pública no Norte de Minas Gerais. Com o intuito de contribuir para a percepção sobre as relações de gênero (na visão das alunas) no âmbito daquele curso, este trabalho objetiva colaborar no entendimento dos diferentes tipos de comportamentos, no que se refere às relações de gênero, dentro do ambiente universitário. A metodologia usada tomou como base a pesquisa qualitativa, de caráter exploratório, a partir de um questionário on-line. Nesse sentido, nos deparamos com uma grande influência do ideal patriarcal nos pensamentos, emoções, sentimentos e ações das entrevistadas, e observamos como isso influencia as relações humanas dentro da universidade. Concluímos, diante desse fato, o quanto são necessários maiores esclarecimentos e informações acerca dos conceitos de gênero (e opressão de gênero) para que a mulher tenha mais espaço e voz.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Gênero. Opressão de gênero. Universidade.

Género y las relaciones de opresión em el contexto social: una mirada a La universidad

RESUMEN

El presente estudio tiene como objetivo identificar las opresiones de género vividas por las alumnas de un curso de Licenciatura en Educación Física en una universidad pública en el Norte de Minas Gerais. Con el fin de contribuir a la percepción sobre las relaciones de género (en la visión de las alumnas) en el ámbito de aquel curso, este trabajo tiene como objetivo colaborar en la comprensión de los diferentes tipos de comportamientos, en lo que se refiere a las relaciones de género, dentro del ambiente universitario. La metodología utilizada tomó como base la investigación cualitativa, de carácter exploratorio, a partir de un cuestionario online. En ese sentido, nos encontramos con una gran influencia del ideal patriarcal en los pensamientos, emociones, sentimientos y acciones de las entrevistadas, y observamos cómo eso influye en las relaciones humanas dentro de la universidad. Concluimos, ante ese hecho, cuánto son necesarios mayores esclarecimientos e informaciones acerca de los conceptos de género (y opresión de género) para que la mujer tenga más espacio y voz.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Género. Opresión de género. Universidad.

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1 Introduction

Women's inferiority in the current capitalist system is a problem that is recurrent and naturalized. Although the growing social ascension of many women, the social context in which women are inserted hides countless challenges, present in everyday life, and which, even in the 21st century, reveals to us women are seen in an inferior way. The scenario of hostile conjuncture in which the woman finds herself is notorious. Faced with this socio-historical-cultural context, the existing oppressive relationships, based on gender issues, become a truth when they reach a significant number of women, and a opposite movement is needed - social and personal - for a change in / of the society in which we live (FERREIRA; SANTOS; SILVA, 2015).

In this project, we will highlight the sex-gender interface, and its relations of oppression in the social sphere, in order to contribute and assist the different ways of confrontation to different oppressive situations, in view of the statements of sensations, feelings and perceptions of the responders. We consider this study is relevant, since it has relevant statements to situations of discrimination, submission and domination of women in the academic environment. Therefore, we introduce a discussion about the historical characteristics of a patriarchal system and bring forward how it is still reproduced and reflected in current times (FERREIRA; SANTOS; SILVA, 2015).

With our analyses, we seek to stimulate reflections related to the maintenance of female oppression and submission within the university, which favors male domination. We will address sundry behaviors of discrimination, which are perpetuated nowadays, in the historical-cultural condition in our society, even with inheritances of feminist achievements, struggles, and several other advances.

The study aims to identify oppressive relationships that exist in a university in the North of Minas Gerais. For this purpose, we ground on qualitative research, of an exploratory nature, Where upon we used questionnaire as instrument (GIL, 2008) with objective and discursive questions, in order to analyze how the historical construction is rooted in social behavior.

The questionnaires were sent through an online platform to the last year's students of undergraduate on Physical Education, Licentiate, day and night shifts, of a public university in the North of Minas Gerais. We analyzed collected data out the categorization of responses. According to Minayo (1994), category is the way from which we can relate the resources' characteristics of that are common to each other.

We justify this work, considering that, in the course of the historical construction of our society, the cultural separation of men and women happened in a so-called natural mold, the way some people still insist on seeing this process. We can name this order of socialization, separation and male superiority, as patriarchy. This social construction has been

consolidated for years, is renewed in different civilizations and is also reformed in capitalism (MACHADO; MACHADO, 2012 cited by FERREIRA; SANTOS; SILVA, 2015). Within this perspective, Faury (2003) relates that such construction also impacts behavior, thoughts and feelings about how men and women should behave and relate to each other (and in society).

2 Conceptualizing genders

In this work, we use the materialist-historical perspective to approach and work with the concept of gender. Thus, we brought male and female authors who share this perspective, disregarding some others who turn themselves to post-structuralism and its concepts. We prioritize conceptual coherence, and we do not enter into the conflict that aims to explain each one in front of their theoretical process.

Therefore, we start our explanation with the dictionary, which defines gender as the distinction of sex and culturally defined differences. In Other words, characteristics that make you recognize a person as a woman or a man. In some languages, such as English, terms usually do not have a gender: the feminine word is used for some objectification situations; and the masculine terms are more targeted to the rights of men. In our society, patterns were (and still are) created over time. As we know, in some situations, there was a need for a person of each gender (male and female) for a process to exist, such as marriage and mixed games. At other occasions, only one type of genre was considered, and it also happened with some sports, such as football, and in certain works and other events (CONNELL, 2015).

We need to relate gender to sex for a better understanding and, therefore, we appropriate the sex-gender interface, brought by Izquierdo (1990, p. 1)

The sex/gender interface, which is the framework under which society is organized, the expectations it has about individuals, the unequal distribution of power, aspirations, the occupied social spaces and prohibitions based on sex, is grounded on a double basis: biology and the sexual division of labor. (IZQUIERDO, 1990, p.01)

Therewith, we have the understanding that sex is seen as the biological characteristics that divide us into male and female; the gender, as the feminine and masculine characteristics; and the psychosexual identity, separated between heterosexual, bisexual and homosexual (IZQUIERDO, 1990). Therefore, we cannot dismember the gender of sex, nor its inverse, nowadays, as the mark of one defines the demands of the other. This rigid division seeks to define the psychological differences of each individual and creates standards that delimit the definition of gender (CONNELL, 2015).

Each society, with its specific cultural characteristics, presents a range of behavioral expectations for both sexes, transmitted to the children in a process of socialization, through parents and also through the culture in general. Sexual identity includes learned conceptions - of

how to behave, think, feel, as a man or woman -; ideals of masculinity and femininity; and the relationship between both sexes (FAURY, 2003, p. 114).

Cultural patterns cannot be specifically focused on bodies and its biological differences. “Gender concerns the way in which human societies deal with human bodies and their continuity and with the consequences of dealing for our personal lives and our collective destiny” (CONNELL, 2015, p. 48). So, we can observe that gender arrangements are always changing (CONNELL, 2015).

Gender can be understood by the sexual differences that involve social, cultural and historical relationships. Given this concept, it is necessary to realize that there is an invisible agreement on how each gender has its role to play within society, considering that this maybe modified according to the process of historical continuity and the period in which studies on this topic are explored (FOLLADOR, 2009).

3 Patriarchy and the historical construction of gender

When we understand the sex/gender interface as something intrinsic to social relations of oppression within the capitalist system, the demand for social justice in its breadth comes up. “Social justice is a claim to repair inequality, which ends up bringing both advantages and disadvantages, as institutionalized characteristics of social life.” (CONNELL, 2014, p.14). These gender-driven differences go beyond wage value and appear in various sectors, such as economic participation rates, wealth accumulation, ownership of vehicles, buildings, and other assets.

Men have privileges, which are granted to a lesser or greater extent, with regard to race, social class, among others, which make us realize the hierarchies of power related to gender. The representation of women in some positions of power, for example, in politics, economics and security is still small (or almost nil). When comparing the number of women to men in these positions, we can say that there is an imbalance regarding this proportion. An example of this scenario was verified in 2013, when at a meeting of government leaders, only four women were present among the twenty leaders (CONNELL, 2015).

The capitalist system has appropriated the subjugation and inferiorization of women vis-à-vis men in different social contexts. Therefore, we have recurring images, advertisements, songs, speeches, programs, etc., which continue to foster an ideology that places women as the weaker sex, which needs a male figure be cared by, to guide and instruct them. And this concept is transmitted from old generations to the current ones as values and naturalized beliefs (CASTRO; SANTOS; SANTOS, 2018).

From this observation, we reinforce the concept of patriarchy defined by Saffioti (1987) in which the author explains about this patriarchal domination-exploitation:

[...] it can be concluded that patriarchy is not limited to a system of domination, shaped by sexist ideology. More than that, it is also an exploitation system. While domination can, for analysis purpose, be situated essentially in political and ideological fields, exploitation directly concerns the economic scope (SAFFIOTI, 1987, p. 50).

From this perspective, patriarchy is observed in all spheres, sometimes perceived as something individual, in the way of thinking and/or behavior of women and men, sometimes verified collectively, within the various social classes. Thus, we can observe the existence of at least two occurrences of gender oppression that intersect: one, which ranks people with an apology for patriarchal thinking; and another that demeans women and is reinforced by patriarchal actions.

4 Oppressions in gender relations

To argue about existing oppressive relationships is to make a study that encompasses (almost) the entire historical threshold of female submission, which is present in our society. It is also to visualize that it was in this way that social bonds were constituted. It is in everyday life, and within these personal - and class relationships, that we can observe the discriminatory action towards women, how this is rooted in our culture and how it has been influencing the behavior of humanity (FERREIRA; SANTOS; SILVA, 2015).

The relational issues between men and women, which are reproduced today, have existed since ancient times: the deep-rooted prejudice that women suffer is, in their theory, something common to those who practice it. It is clear that countless achievements by women, within different social realities, have become a pseudo-freedom, since this freedom was conquered by the female gender over the course of several years. However, they are victories that have several limitations, which are faced, daily, in a rigid and, also, unpleasant way. The incessant search for freedom, equality, respect and citizenship came from struggles, which opened space for the female universe and, although small, has been noticeable (FERREIRA; SANTOS; SILVA, 2012).

All this analysis allows us to observe that women have, in different sociocultural (and historical) contexts, a role of submission, domination and oppression, for multiple reasons: since they have, in their historical construction, less power than men; for belonging to a non-dominant class; because it is on the margins of society, absent from the wealth of capital; and because she belongs to a group that, in historical constructions, was oppressed. We can also characterize issues of sexual orientation as relationships of oppression and violation of rights (SANTOS; OLIVEIRA, 2010).

According to Santos and Oliveira (2010), another shape of gender oppression is when we notice the sexual division of labor, in which women, to exercise a function in the professional market, would have to occupy spaces that had the action of caring and, among the professions that were possible to exercise would be: teacher, nurse, social worker or

household chores. When we bring this view to Education, we can observe that “schools and other educational institutions continue to guide issues related to women in the field of reproduction of male chauvinism, giving more freedom to boys than to girls” (SANTOS; OLIVEIRA, 2010, p. 13).

Directing this discussion to the affective-sexual aspect, the shapes of oppression and violation of rights are incalculable. This is seen not only in the number of cases of violence that occur in women's private life, but also in social life, when their rights are limited with the permission of the State, especially regarding biological reproduction and sexual aspects. Capitalism, thus, benefits from the oppression experienced by women, by using it in an ideological way and by reproducing the conservative vision of the so-called traditional family, from the moment we observe the image that women carry and bring to the environment employment, through precariousness and the subaltern contour of treatment directed to it.

Struggles are needed to expand and change the social, economic and political conditions of women and society. These conditions must bring possibilities of gender equality within the current dominant system, which has many contradictions and which, for this reason, opens space for many clashes and for many changes, which must aim at the creation of new forms of social relations (SANTOS; OLIVEIRA, 2010).

5 Results and discussions

In this research, we used questionnaires, with open questions, to discuss the presented topic. And, given the answers, aiming the results of the study, we used fictitious names in order to preserve the identity of the interviewees. Below we can find the table with the names given to the interviewees and their respective ages. It is important to emphasize that, at the beginning of this questionnaire, there was an explanation of what gender oppression is, based on the authors we used in this study, as we can observe: gender oppression is the condition that evidences the discrimination and domination suffered by the female gender (FERREIRA; SANTOS; SILVA, 2015). Therefore, it is possible to have helped in the understanding of the interviewees about the oppression they experienced or witnessed.

The categories of this work were divided into two, namely: Women who ignore the concept of gender oppression; Women who know about gender oppression, but don't take a stand.

Table 1. Ressarce list

Students	Age
Daldite	22
Nazidí	28
Eva	23
Jade	24
Gilda	25
Arianne	--
Lena	23
Jocia	23
Sol	22
Nala	22

Source: the authors.

5.1 Women who ignore the concept of gender oppression

In this status, we will analyze how the historical construction of our society influences the thinking, behavior and perception of women and men about the concept of gender and gender oppression. In the midst of this construction, we have patriarchy, a system of behavior that is perpetuated to the present day, which dictates norms and ways of acting, for women and men, such as: the way of talking, dressing and as each one has its role described of what is allowed/accepted – or not – to both (FERREIRA; SANTOS; SILVA, 2015).

For this purpose, we brought fragments of this research, which help us to understand how female oppression is still neglected in the university space. We can observe an institutional violence that happens through actions and omission by the university itself. Grounded on the analysis of these categories, we can realize that students are often unable to distinguish abuse relationships, do not perceive inequalities among students and do not understand that these attitudes are harmful to the physical space and the profession they occupy. (SCHMITT, 2016).

When analyzing the speech of the student Daldite, we understand how we still face confusion, naturalization and lack of knowledge about the theme: “[...] I found it difficult to answer the questionnaire when trying to associate everyday academic situations with supposed oppressions.” (DALDITE). At another point, she emphasizes: “I have never suffered gender oppression in the academic field, perhaps it makes my perception difficult, but I believe it does exist.” (DALDITE).

We observe the difficulty in understanding what it is and what kind of oppression is occurring, whether with you or another woman. And the naturalization of patriarchal domination-exploitation (SAFFIOTI, 1987) often reinforces the fear of denunciation and the fear of seeing oneself in this place. This fact, taking place inside a university, in a of future teachers' class, without a debate and a reprimand, only reinforces the consent and the idea that women serve to be exploited and oppressed and it is up to her to accept.

This issue can be visualized from the researched Jocia, when recognizing the importance of this debate in a Physical Education degree class: “Yes, because dealing with this issue is difficult as academic; as an education professional is even more complicated and knowing more about the subject is essential to change this scenario.” (JOCIA)

According to data from a survey by the Women's Observatory Against Violence made in 2021¹, we noticed that 68% of women recognize that they have suffered physical violence. In other words, they point out how this is the most socially visible type of violence, since it can be proven through marks on the victim body and is more difficult to naturalize as something that occurred “unintentionally” or “as part of a joke”. Therefore, physical aggression becomes less difficult to report, which turns out not to happening with reports of other types of violence, since it is one word against the other, and the victim's testimony is often relativized. In some environments, these occurrences are accentuated when the oppressor is someone who has a higher hierarchical status than the oppressed (as in the educational environment), which reveals cases of harassment between teachers and students.

In this sense, Daldite's answer takes us into a reflection on a large quota of women in our society, which is influenced by patriarchy. In other words, one must question how women can be taken to perceive and/or identify the situations of male chauvinism and submission to which they are exposed, whether cases experienced by themselves or those experienced by other women. Understanding the concepts, both of patriarchy and of gender, not only on the women's portion, but also the men's one, would make everyone understand its meaning and be able to observe behaviors, actions and thoughts that are inserted in everyday life, when women are treated as persons who is always subject to obey the male sex.

With this result, we emphasize that the subject of “oppression” must be discussed more, in order to be recognized and fought, not only in the university environment, but in any other place, in order to reduce these situations of abuse.

5.2 Women who know about gender oppression but do not take a stand

Often, women are seen as the weaker sex, through a behavioral point of view, which should value modesty, with the need of a man's protection (CASTRO; SANTOS; SANTOS, 2018). Within this concept, we realize how this stereotype is still perpetuated and very often is praised by people. Therefore, we believe that this can inhibit a reaction to oppressions experienced by female sex/gender. The history of women in struggle, combatants and revolutionaries is often omitted and neglected. And it is not in vain. The imaginary of dependence on men for them to achieve their goals and desires is one of the most praised and fundamental in reinforcing the exploratory inequality in the sex/gender system.

¹ Available on the website https://www.senado.leg.br/institucional/datasenado/paineis_dados/#/?pesquisa=violencia_domestica_familiar Accessed on June 7, 2022.

From the analyzed answers, we noticed some women understand the subject of our study and also understand that, even so, they have difficulty in taking a stand against the oppressive gender relations suffered by themselves or by other women around them. We can recognize this behavior through the answers to the question: “Within the academic field, can you perceive the oppressive relationships in your class? Justify”. “Yes. We still hear jokes even from teachers who abash us” (ARIANNE).

In order to reinforce our analysis of the understanding that oppression exists, but that indignation does not go beyond the personal scope, we present interesting answers, in view of the following questions:

“Have you ever witnessed (saw, observed or witnessed) any case of oppression in the academic environment? Report.”

Yes. It happened to me in a practical class, where I had difficulties when it comes to the practices and I was repressed by a teacher in front of the entire class, because he judged my difficulty as charm or freshness, which greatly discouraged me from taking the classes. (JADE)

“Have you ever suffered from gender oppression in the academic environment? Which?”

Yes. I cannot say it happens in all practical classes, because it is not always like that. There are great teachers and colleagues who seek equality. However, there were occasions when I was trying to carry out some activity in practical classes, I felt unable to finish or perform the tasks due to the way the class was taught, affecting my performance. (NALA)

It is important to remember the questionnaire was presented at a public university in the North of Minas Gerais, a fairly new institution that has had the Physical Education studies for less than 20 years (PEREIRA; SILVA, 2002). It is a conservative region and it should be noted that, since 2019, the university’s dean is a priest: “Ordained as a priest for 23 years now, the new rector is from Montes Claros and is 51 years old. [MY EMPHASYS].

Therefore, in this work, we reinforce the conservative base of this zone from what the statements brought. As we have emphasized, the student Nala's fear of giving names and specifying that she could not do so, which, in our analysis, reflects the fear of reprisal. We believe that, thereupon, none of the students denounced such oppression, either out of fear or apprehension, or because of the lack of collective positioning facing a castrating and patriarchal structure like ours.

Ergo, it is possible to observe how the mores of our historical construction, grounded on patriarchy, reflect on the behavior of men and women who, even knowing of the concepts

addressed in the questionnaire, and the different shapes of oppression over women, turn out reinforcing the maintenance prejudices and the oppressive attitudes of/in everyday life. The continuity of this hierarchical organization of power, of the male (dominant) class over the female (subaltern) class, shows us how individual behaviors will foster a collective naturalization of exploitation and hierarchy of people, making it even more difficult to break this dynamic of discrimination (RESENDE, 2017).

According to Wollstonecraft (2016), it is astonished to see that there is still the disqualification of women who seek their rights, who, among many pejorative characteristics, are seen as people who want to be “macho” or are labeled as “unloved”. Given this, it seems to us that women have a certain fear of speaking out as feminists, in view of such labels and stereotypes.

According to Wollstonecraft (2016), it is astonished to verify there is still the disqualification of women who seek their rights, who, among many pejorative characteristics, are perceived as they were people who want to be “masculine” or are labeled as “unloved”. Facing this scenario, it seems to us that women have a certain fear of speaking out as feminists, in view of such labels and stereotypes.

Considering this, we can notice the existence (today) of groups of women who discuss this subject, who consider it important to take a stand facing situations of oppression that they (and others) experience in different social contexts. These are women who become aware of the regimes of oppression and exploitation which they are subjected to and start to have an active voice against the processes of historical construction, at different times. It is a struggle that has been going on for decades and has already broken down barriers. However, there is still a long way to go through to disrupt the aforementioned oppressions, as we can see:

The Popular Society of Women publishes, in 1791, the Declaration of Women and Citizen Rights, basically a counterproposal to the Declaration of Man and Citizen Rights, in which “man” was not used as a synonym for “humanity”, but as the male sex, which guaranteed them the right to citizenship. In some points, the text is even more radical than the Claim, since it advocates not only the equality of women's rights to education, but to the vote and to private property, to public office, to the recognition of children born out of wedlock and to heritage. (WOLLSTONECRAFT, 2016, p. 10).

Given the above, we realized that, from our questionnaire, some answers brought this discomfort, which we believe that women should position themselves ahead of, during the moments when they themselves (or another woman) experience, have experienced (or will experience) a situation of oppression within the academic universe.

We recognize, from the answers obtained in this research, some students who demonstrate this eagerness and this desire to talk about the problems addressed, in order to break with the oppression experienced by women: “Talking about [gender oppression] makes

that students in general become aware of the subject. (NAZIDÍ); "Very much. We need to take a stand in the face of these oppressions." (EVE).

I think studies in this area are extremely important, after all we will be education professionals and we will have to deal with situations that will require an intervention in this regard, we also need to inform ourselves more and more, so we will not perpetuate this type of culture. (JOCIA).

According to all the statements, we can analyze as the interviewees consider the importance of taking a stand in situations involving gender oppression. Through this action, we can envision a new logic for society, in which the hierarchies of people are not praised.

However, despite the combative posture of the students surveyed, we did not observe, from the statements, references to occasions when they directly opposed oppression. Only one of the answers brings us a manifestation against episodes of subjugation to teachers during classes. Most of the time, we read statements of coercion, oppression, academic persecution and disqualification of university students, without any direct act that was contrary to such occurrences, as we can see in the reports below:

"[...] in terms of separating groups for practical classes. Men's practice time is usually longer than women's." "It is totally demotivating, since you feel that your potential is not good enough or that you don't belong there." (JOCIA); "When it comes to women, often seen as incapable of performing well in practical classes, underestimated most of the time." (NALA); "It happened to me in a practical class, where I had difficulties when it comes to the practices and I was repressed by a teacher in front of the entire class, because he judged my difficulty as charm or freshness, which greatly discouraged me from taking the classes." (JADE); "Men [keeps] "hitting on", bothering a lot! Students often give up doing something for this reason." (GILDA).

Student Lena brings us the moment when she witnessed the most forceful positioning of a student:

it was in the third period, at a Handball class, where a teacher said some strong things to one of the students, but she demanded respect. The student dropped out... she dropped out of the discipline twice because of the verbal harassment and the way he oppressed her in front of everyone. But she managed to graduate. However, during classes she was always mistreated by the teacher, always as if it were jokes coming from him.

Through what was reported above, we draw attention to the fact that the student's experience, who manifested herself contrary to the teacher's "jokes", left, not only for her, but for the other women in the class, the following example: if you do not accept teacher's

oppression, you will suffer more to achieve your goal of coursing the disciplines, which will make the process lonely, more painful and more exhausting.

Reading about feminism, as well as studying/researching on this subject, allows women to create in themselves a nuisance about the topic, which permeates our entire historical construction. It is from historical materialism that we understand how actions, in principle, isolated from discrimination, male chauvinism and sexism are originated in collective demands, which seek to repress one group in the light of other. Recognizing that there are still gender differences and inequalities, and transforming it into social struggles, is extremely relevant for studies and for the changes that surround the theme (ESTACHESKI; MEDEIROS, 2017).

6 Conclusion

This study was carried out aiming to analyze how students of an undergraduate on Physical Education, from a public university in the north of Minas Gerais, take position on gender concepts and gender oppression, in addition to recognizing these relationships within the academic universe. We justify this research as a way of trying to understand how oppressions occur in this university space and how the students surveyed observe them. We consider it important, since they will be Physical Education teachers, who can, in their professional practice, fight (or perpetuate) such inequalities.

Therefore, we intend to emphasize the understanding of men and women, within a given social context, with regard to thoughts, behaviors and feelings that are socially and historically constructed. These are social rules rooted in the logic of patriarchy, which include situations of marked male domination, despite all the advances in feminist social struggles.

We used questionnaires in our study and, based on it, we were able to notice how this socio-historical construction is perpetuated today. We realized how important it is for women to know how to conceptualize the term gender, and the relations of gender oppression, grounded on the answers obtained in this questionnaire. We also understood the researched women who have knowledge about the concepts presented here, despite demonstrating clarity regarding existing gender relations, are still victims of oppression and have difficulties in finding manners to position themselves, presenting a posture of submission in relation to men. We emphasize this is a characteristic that should not be seen individually, to the point of blaming the victim, but as an oppressive/exploiting system that constantly silences women.

Thus, we evaluated the importance of discussing this theme of our work and bringing information, lectures, and knowledge about gender relations in society into the university. It becomes important to identify situations in which there is gender oppression and so that these situations may be minimized and/or avoided, not only for the social advancement of the university but also for the improvement of bonds between students, between teachers and between all of them. From this perspective, it is worth highlighting the difficulty, which we

observed, that the researched women have in understanding the topic and in taking a stand on it, with a tendency to remain silent and to accept the role of submission towards men. This highlights the existing obstacle for breaking down social barriers within the university.

Gender inequalities affect not only the relationships between men and women, in general, but also the self-esteem of those who were investigated within this course, a fact that generates discouragement and lack of encouragement in/for the continuity of the course. In this direction, it is necessary to bring awareness about the subject to our daily lives, by everyone within the university, so that situations of gender oppression can be reduced and/or extinguished and women can feel included, with the visibility they deserve, for being capable professionals, with their rights and spaces preserved, full of respect and gender equality.

The university environment needs to rethink its practices (and its logics) in order to stop being a space made by men – and for them. Finally, with this work, we wish to strengthen conflicting ideas in order to generate egalitarian spaces for women, including the modification of the place that produces so-called elitist knowledge: the university.

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