The (in) visibility on gender perceptions of young students about the role of men and women in the family

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1 Abstract / Introduction

Since the mid-twentieth century, feminist and women’s movements in opposition to the dominant ideology, have begun to hold the State responsible for the definition of policies directed to Education, aiming to accelerate and deepen cultural changes.

The woman was no longer confined to her role as a traditional caregiver, dividing her time between out-of-home employment and family responsibilities and child-rearing (Bailey & Graves, 2016). However, the continuity of beliefs, stereotypes and values is a non-deconstructed reality that still exists today. Its causes are based on the subordination position that the woman occupies in a patriarchal social structure, being seen as a cultural legacy, inserted in the traditional family structure. The difference in power between the sexes, particularly in the space of intimate relationships, is manifested and reinforced in the context of domestic violence, through conjugal violence, based on the exercise of control over the victim (Santamarina, Ayerdi & Odriozola, 2015; Taylor & Jasinski, 2011).

2 Methodological procedures

In this research, we seek to know how the perceptions of the young students about the roles of men and women in the family, reveal (in) visibilities of gender and possible changes in the relationships between social roles.

This study intends to analyze the comments written by 45 students, 30 girls and 15 boys, between 15 and 17 years of secondary school and different curricular areas, a school in the district of Porto. The corpus consists of 45 texts, ranging from 180 to 300 words, individually written in a classroom situation, in 2018, with the theme "The Role of Man and Woman in the Family of the 21st Century." Data collection was authorized by the school management.

The texts were subjected to content analysis, with the help of webQDA ® software (Costa, Moreira & de Souza, 2019), coding the sources distinguished between the family and gender dimensions. Throughout the discussion of results, we will use the term unit of reference as units of record, which may be the phrase or set of words that make sense and have meaning.

From the data analysis, two categories were considered: (1) gender stereotypes in family relationships and (2) paradigm shifts in family relationships.
3 Analysis and discussion of results

Table 1 shows the result of the triangulation matrix between gender stereotypes in family relations and the boys and girls, with four subcategories.

![Table 1. Gender stereotypes in family relations](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Subcategories</th>
<th>Items. of reference (Girls)</th>
<th>Items. of reference (boys)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender stereotypes in family relations</td>
<td>Coexistence of gender stereotyping with the stereotype of the tasks</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family as traditional women’s fate</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Traditional roles of man and woman</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Domestic violence against women</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In descending order of reference units, as the first subcategory, emerges the **coexistence of the gender stereotype with the stereotype of the tasks** (56 units of ref.), as referred in the literature review on the division of tasks, perceived as female or male, with more reference by girls (35 units of ref.).

In the subcategory **traditional roles of men and women** (20 units. of ref.), with enumeration of well-defined tasks, both boys and girls (11 and 9 units of ref.) referred to the traditional role of women. Thus, the sub- **family as traditional women’s destination** registers a significant number of instances (28 units of ref.), confirming a limited view of woman housewife and caretaker of the children, with more units in the vision of the boys.

Finally, although less significantly, it should be noted that the boys stand out **domestic violence against women** (8 units of ref.), showing a reality associated with gender roles and the exercise of male power.

Table 2 shows the result of the triangulation matrix between the paradigm shift in family relationships and boys and girls, with 3 subcategories.

![Table 2. A paradigm shift in family relationships](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Subcategories</th>
<th>Items. of reference (Girls)</th>
<th>Items. of reference (boys)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A paradigm shift in family relationships</td>
<td>New ways of living the family</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equitable division of household chores and caring for children</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reversal of traditional roles</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As for the second category, **paradigm shift in family relations**, three subcategories were defined. About the first subcategory, it is evident the perception of **new ways of living the family** (94 units of ref.). This is an emerging subcategory, expressed in the texts of the students, proving a new way of looking at the family, justified due to new family reorganizations and as a result of the implementation of the "Health Education Project", in a school context. Students mentioned "single parents", "shared custody" and "homosexual couples", in coexistence with the nuclear family, predominantly in girls (60 units of ref.). Accordingly, the students refer to **equitable division of household chores** (20 units of ref.) And other indicate a **reversal of traditional roles** (8 units of ref.), where appropriate, particularly for girls (5 units of ref.).

**4 Conclusions**

The identity of women in the family, as well as the concept of the family itself, is still under construction, accompanying the social-historical evolution of a globalized world (Wall, et al., 2016). Even so, the patriarchal social structure still supports the scourge of domestic violence, evidencing values of women's subordination and the role of the man as head of the family (Paulino, 2016).

The analysis allows us to conclude that gender patterns in the division of tasks reveal an accumulation of roles and responsibilities on the part of women, which explains, unlike some studies (OECD, 2016; Bianchi, Sayer, Milkie & Robinson, 2012; Wagner, Predebon, Mosmann & Verza, 2005; Fleck & Wagner, 2003), the perception of some young students of non-coexistence of the gender stereotype with the stereotype of tasks, in a partition not perceived as feminine.

**References**


