

Gender Relations and EaD: The School Memories of the female public on Computer Degree Course at Instituto Federal do Espírito Santo.

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ABSTRACT

This article represents a clipping of the ongoing studies about the school trajectory of the female public at Instituto Federal do Espírito Santo – Ifes. The goal is to bring out the school memories of the teacher-students of the Computer Degree course at Instituto Federal do Espírito Santo – Polo São Mateus to discuss the training process of the teachers in the distance learning modality. The theoretical basis for research support lists three discussion axes – gender and female schooling, training of teachers and Distance Education. It's a bibliographic/documental research with a qualitative approach. The subjects of this research are the teacher-students of the course in Polo São Mateus. To the construction of data it was used information of the academic system and the student's post about her school memories of the activities developed on the pedagogical disciplines in the Moodle environment. The Distance Education is pointed as one of the many alternatives to face the challenge of teacher training, on the moment that Brazilian public politics search to amplify the training programs – initially and continued – of teachers. With this work, we consider that the discussions brought up, may contribute to the rewriting of the curriculum proposals for the Distance Degree Courses at the institution.

Key Words: **Gender Relations; female schooling; Teacher's training; Distance Education.**

1 INTRODUCTION

The Distance Education (EaD) shows itself as one of the expansion alternative for Higher Education, which stands out from the Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação – LDB – Lei nº 9.394/96. Over the last years, it was verified an increase of offer and an expansion of distance education on the Higher Education, in terms of free courses, in the extension, in the ongoing education and Postgraduate Lato Sensu (INEP, 2011).

Nowadays, the development of advanced technologies of information drives the EaD growth, reducing the prejudices towards it. From this perspective, the modality has been identified as an alternative to face the challenge of teacher training, in a time in which one of the federal government aspire is to expand professional training programs, aiming to improve the quality of the Brazilian education.

Oliveira (2008) highlights EaD's relevance in teacher training and is based on two main reasons. On the one hand, it aims to alleviate the difficulties that students face in attending training programs as a result of the territorial extension and population density in the country and on the other hand, meets the right of teachers and students to access and control the technological resources that mark the contemporary world, providing opportunities and imposing new demands on the formation of the citizen.

The data released by the Censo da Educação Superior in relation this type, caught our attention due to the high proportion of female students above 21 years old. In distance learning courses, most of the audience is female, with an age average of 28 years and who opts for degree courses (INEP, 2011).

The participation of females in the labor market and educational institutions is growing in Brazil. Recent studies released by the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística – IBGE (2009) and by the Departamento Intersindical de Estatística e Estudos Sócio-Econômicos – DIEESE (2009), shows the existence of disparities between men and women in the labor market, either in setting up as a

labor power, in the difficulties in obtaining an occupation or in the characteristics of the exercised work (BRUSCHINI, 2000).

Particularly, since the early days of colonization, the sexual gender roles for men and women were prescribed very rigidly. In this sense, the literature points out that, by historical tradition, the woman always had her life linked with the family. And thus, cannot participate in an education capable of preparing her to manage her own life and have access to more prestigious professions.

2 GENDER DISCUSSION AND FEMALE EDUCATION IN BRAZIL

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, there are growing questions about the female gender role on society. Since then, in the Social Sciences, the term “woman” has been replaced by “gender”, to the extent that these questions were issues related to women. Gender was then taken as a category of analysis of men and women identities, culturally throughout human history (SCOTT, 1992).

Historically, women’s presence in Brazil is bound up on the family institution, which has restricted its role within an ideological subordination practice to the patriarchal power and male speech. This mindset continued (and still remains) in the Brazilian social imaginary.

The Companhia de Jesus, responsible for implementing the Brazilian education on the colonization period, considered female schooling not only useless, but also dangerous. However, the perception of the importance of family has led this Institution to focus its efforts in the female education. With this purpose, in the beginning on the seventeenth century were created gatherings at the convents, whose teaching projects were turned to female education. And even after the implementation of the Reforma Pombalina da Educação in Portugal and its colonies, female literacy changed very little, despite the educational secularization process by sending the royal teachers (RIBEIRO, 1998; VEIGA, 2007).

With the setting up of the Portuguese court, there were significant changes in the Colony. The measures relating to education mainly refer to its higher level, with the aim of training staff that would support the “State machine” that was implanted here. The guidelines concerning the poor quality elementary education organization are shy and secondary schools were out of reach for young women (VILELA, 2000).

After the political independency process and its consequential national state formation, throughout the nineteenth century, there is still not a systematic and planned educational policy. The constitution, enacted in 1824, posed as a free primary education for all citizens. And it was recognized, in this context, the need for female education.

From this perspective, the first decrees of normal schools creation are in the 30s and 40s, as a consequence of the expected reforms by the Additional Act of 1834. In this context, the first normal schools are installed in various provinces. In Espírito Santo, the implementations are dated on the 70s of the nineteenth century and were offered in two schools: at Ateneu Provincial for the male population and at Colégio Nossa Senhora da Penha for the female public. According to Simões e Schwartz (2008), there were differences in the curricula of these institutions, which “sets out clearly unfavorable to the formation of women” (SIMÕES; SCHWARTZ, 2008, p.10).

Nader (2005), states that as was the case throughout the country, the women from Vitória have had their lives prepared to undertake marriage related activities. Therefore, the strict training of the capixaba population characterized the female education under a conservative doctrinal basis, hampered whenever possible, women’s participation in school, at play, and especially in the job market, instead specifically preparing them for marriage.

The studies about the female population schooling in the Espírito Santo corroborate the discussion about the difficulty of women integration into formal education in the history of our country. However, the same studies show that

through these schooling spaces the women were able to overcome the imposed barriers to their formal education and reached the public space.

In this discussion of female education, we pointed out, at the capixaba region, two official institutions of higher education that meet the teacher training demands. It stands out, primarily the Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo – UFES, which, since 1954, is responsible for this task. And, more recently, comes into play, the Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Espírito Santo – Ifes, lócus of this investigation.

3 IFES IN THE TEACHER TRAINING CONTEXT FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

The implementation of the Escolas de Aprendizes e Artífices in the states capitals happened during the republican system's organization in the country. The one in Espírito Santo was launched in 1910. Cunha (2000) and Queluz (2000) lists a number of issues about the inadequacy of this apprentices school system to the industrialization process dynamics developed in the country.

Ferreira (2003), located traces of the capixaba women presence in her studies about the inclusion of women in technical courses at this institution, on the beginning of the last century, on the 70s. A female figure is currently perceived in all disciplines and courses, including the ones called “male spaces” such as, for example, technical courses in the industrial area. The school is characterized today for acting from the initial training for the workers to postgraduate in the presence modality and also with distance learning courses.

In the distance learning modality, the Computer Degree Course stands out, it began in 2009, offering 270 seats, distributed throughout nine regions of the Espírito Santo (FROSSARD et all, 2010, p.3).

4 THE COMPUTER DEGREE COURSE STUDENT'S SCHOOL MEMORIES

A bibliographic/documentary qualitative research was developed. The information on the academic system and the student's posts of their school memory at the Moodle environment, of Polo São Mateus, on the year 2010, was used for data construction.

According to Delgado (2006), history and memory are interrelated in a dynamic way. They are social processes, which are references to individual and collective experiences of human beings. Therefore, they are supporters of individual and collective identities formed in the diachronic and synchronic process of social life. Stephanou e Bastos (2005), argue that memory and history are intertwined and maintain intimate relationship with each other. They defend that the researches from memories can make the educational subjects/objects problematic and not covered in other sources.

In this sense, through the student's narratives was possible to capture traces of the course's teacher-student's memories. This allows us to amplify our thoughts by analyzing the profile of this student audience, which seeks new training in distance education opportunities. These subject's choices was given by our interaction with these students, for their constant reflections posted on the Moodle environment and presented by the profile: they are all active teachers and with a few year of teaching experiences.

The profile of the students and their memories – all are inhabitants in the northern region of the state, working in the educational field as teachers in various levels and modalities of the basics education. Of these, only one teaches for four years. All of the others have more than ten years experience in the classroom, especially in public schools. The average age of students ranges from 29 to 44 years. Another important highlight of these lines and that allow us to profile the students is that of eight students, four have some specialization course (Lato-sensu) and are optimistic about this new computer training.

From the student's narratives, emerge positive memories of the school period and mention significant facts of their school career and characteristics and/or positive aspects of their teachers who they claim served as a role model. The negative memories are also referred as examples of misconduct that should never be followed by any educator, arguing that they are extremely harmful and can compromise the student's both school and personal life.

Pérez Gomes (1995, p.112 cited in OLIVEIRA, 2008, p. 42) announces the possibility of teachers in training not only be a working community, but also a learning network. In the reflective dialogue kept by the teacher-students with the real problematic, it creates a new reality, new exchange spaces, new benchmarks, new meanings and new communication networks. The students were asked to present the reasons why they chose the Computer Degree Course. They listed the following reasons: because it is an extremely current course; to develop an affinity with computers and use of new technologies; possibility of teaching another subject; to enhance the field in which they already work; seeking new job opportunities.

Oliveira (2008) describes that the Distance Education should be focused on a collective subject, should prioritize the most interactive technological resources to mediate the collaborative knowledge construction work based on research and problem solving. This means creating communities, virtual or in person, in order to prepare the teacher to learn how to learn, work together, share experiences, solve conflicts, readjust actions, master different ways to access information, develop critical evaluation capacity, collect and organize the most relevant information to build and rebuild her practice as an actor and author routine.

The students, once they reflected about the current work conditions of teachers in the Brazilian society, record that "today the teacher goes through many struggles in their professional field. But I think the lack of appreciation of that work is the most degrading for us" (STUDENT IRIS).

Macedo (2010, p. 41) states that

The struggle for a better understanding of the world, ourselves, our training, our inventions and the problems we create, should be part our daily work, whether in cognition, politics, ethical, aesthetic and spiritual terms.

We asked the students which were their life project after the end of the course, most highlighted their wish to fully dedicate to the integration of computer and education. Dália's testimony exemplifies this: "give computer classes and continue to specialize in the area".

We inferred through these narratives their interest for the course and mostly, even already working with education, they want to use their acquired knowledge and combine them with the classroom management; they also state their planned continuity of the studies.

We asked that the students registered how they hoped to contribute to their student's development as a teacher of computer science. The student Acácia states: "I know that my student is very involved with technology evolution, that's why he expects me to be thinking with him. It is up to me to offer him and education that includes his expectations and needs." The student Hortênsia says she will "provide integration among the student and the new technologies, encouraging them to develop critical thinking, encourage curiosity, and the initiative to develop new technologies".

The concern in offering quality education to their students is present on the narratives of the training teachers. In this context, Macedo (2010, p.93), expresses that

We have no doubt that the training can't turn its back to the innovation processes. By not meaning casual fashion, these processes bear the challenges pose by the need for training and socio-technical demands.

The author also points out that given the necessary innovation, we must mobilize in a not eliminable way, the critical sense and a qualified training to avoid delusions and hallucinations of the productive ethics of the industrial education model. And it states that "the time makes the training and the training makes the time; this is a reflection that puts us in a more humane way and critically present in the time and training relationship (2010, p. 136).

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Regarding the analysis of the teacher-students in the Computer Degree Course, it was possible to capture traces of their memories as a subject in training process and amplify our views about these students profile, which search new/other training spaces in the Distance Education mode.

The narratives that emerged from the students are their positive and negative memories, as well as the important moments of their school career, that influenced and (still) influence their teaching practices as a professional teacher.

The indicators that prove the existence of prejudice on the treatment given to the genders in professional relationships: sexist inequality persists in the market, in jobs and working conditions. We want to point out that the struggles for the inclusion of women in equal condition to the men, also in the training process, with emphasis on school management, is still a reality.

We emphasize that we have many challenges to be faced in the fight for equality among men and women, in education in general and in the distance education especially, in teacher training politics. We believe that by adopting clippings of gender in the educational analysis, it is possible to build new ways of thinking free of sexist differentiation, leading to social and educational practices compatible with the new position of genders in the world nowadays.

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