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Gender and Sexualities in the Context of the Public University: a Case Study of Project of Lives - UFOP*

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ABSTRACT

Considering the university as a space for social interaction and recognition of differences, this work aims to present and reflect on the scope of an extension project called “Lives: gender, diversity and sexualities”, developed at the Federal University of Ouro Preto (UFOP) since 2018. With a theoretical perspective based on post-structuralist studies, gender performativity (Butler, 2002, 2012) and Queer Theory, we use the methodological case study procedure, which analyzes how the existence of projects (and actions) of this nature at the university can contribute to the reduction of violence and the recognition of the existence of gender and sexuality differences within the institution and in the region of the Inconfidentes. The results of the analysis indicate that projects of this type, of a multidisciplinary and critical nature, as well as institutional policies adopted by universities, such as UFOP, contribute to inclusion and diversity processes that are so necessary today.

KEYWORDS

Vidas extension project. Gender and sexualities. Public university.

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Gênero e Sexualidades no Contexto da Universidade Pública: Estudo de Caso do Projeto Vidas - UFOP

RESUMO

Considerando a universidade como um espaço de interação social e reconhecimento das diferenças, esse trabalho tem como objetivo apresentar e refletir sobre o alcance de um projeto extensionista denominado “Vidas: gênero, diversidade e sexualidades”, desenvolvido na Universidade Federal de Ouro Preto (UFOP) desde 2018. Com uma perspectiva teórica baseada nos estudos pós estruturalistas, na performatividade de gênero (Butler, 2002, 2012) e na Teoria Queer, utilizamos o procedimento metodológico de estudo de caso, que analisa como a existência de projetos (e ações) dessa natureza na universidade pode contribuir para a redução da violência e o reconhecimento da existência da diferença de gênero e de sexualidade no interior da instituição e na região dos Inconfidentes. Os resultados da análise indicam que projetos desse tipo, de caráter multidisciplinar e crítico, assim como políticas institucionais adotadas por universidades, como é o caso da UFOP, contribuem para processos de inclusão e diversidade tão necessários na atualidade.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Projeto de extensão vidas. Gênero e sexualidade. Universidade pública.

Género y Sexualidades en el Contexto de la Universidad Pública: un Estudio de Caso de Projeto Vidas - UFOP

RESUMEN

Considerando la universidad como un espacio para la interacción social y el reconocimiento de las diferencias, este trabajo tiene como objetivo presentar y reflexionar sobre el alcance de un proyecto de extensión llamado "Vidas: género, diversidad y sexualidades", desarrollado en la Universidad Federal de Ouro Preto (UFOP) desde 2018. Con una perspectiva teórica basada en estudios postestructuralistas, performatividad de género (Butler, 2002, 2012) y Queer Theory, utilizamos el procedimiento de estudio de caso, que analiza cómo la existencia de proyectos (y acciones) de esta naturaleza en la universidad puede contribuir a la reducción de la violencia y al reconocimiento de la existencia de diferencias de género y sexualidad dentro de la institución y en la región de los Inconfidentes. Los resultados del análisis indican que los proyectos de este tipo, de naturaleza multidisciplinaria y crítica, así como las políticas institucionales adoptadas por las universidades, como UFOP, contribuyen a los procesos de inclusión y diversidad que son tan necesarios hoy en día.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Proyecto de extensión vidas. Género y sexualidades. Universidad pública.

Introduction

Understanding the importance of the university as a space for the recognition of differences and the promotion of the conditions of critical insertion of subjects who are involved in their daily sphere and considering it a central educational institution in the process of social interaction, we cannot shy away from confronting fundamental issues so that the university appears as a central place of socio-political and cultural transformation in the country.

By placing this institution in a privileged space within society, we claim its plural and diversified character, capable of housing activities that go beyond the classroom territory, since we do not fit in with the technical perspective of mere reproduction of knowledge. We know that the university, nowadays, reflects the disputes of meaning about its character and its purposes. We therefore confirm our intention to exemplify, through a case study, this space of experimentation and critical and citizen reflection.

In this sense, we created the project entitled "Lives: Gender, Diversity and Sexualities", from the Program for the Encouragement of Diversity and Coexistence (PIDIC/UFOP - 2018), launched by the Dean of Community and Student Affairs - Prace - of UFOP. This project, in force for three years¹, aims to propose reflections and actions in order to recognize the existence of gender and sexuality differences within the Federal University of Ouro Preto and the Inconfidentes region. In addition to the project, the inclusion and diversity policy of UFOP, approved by the Superior Council (September 2019), seeks to contemplate issues related to the intersectionality between gender and sexuality, race and ethnicity, as well as to contemplate people with disabilities already inserted in the University.

But why the "Lives" Project? In his work "Sexual diversity in education and the rights of LGBT citizenship at school", professor and researcher Marco Antônio Torres (one of the members of the Project) argues that life stories are strongly related to the ways in which sexualities are expressed. "There is, therefore, a uniqueness to the sexual experience that cannot be overlooked. Each person has the right to reproduce and elaborate in different ways the understanding of sexuality that he or she has developed during their story" (2010, p. 7). Addressing sexuality, therefore, is a challenge for researchers and education professionals alike, extending discussions about prejudice and discrimination in society and at school beyond isolated manifestations of violence. Reflecting on various sexual orientations can help us rethink sexuality from the issues of the present and daily life, as well as from theories that are in tune with the challenges of the present and that can commit us to building a society that recognizes the right to difference, beyond the idea of tolerance. In the discussion about

¹ We think it pertinent to mention, besides the researchers who sign this article, all those involved with the project during this period: Dayane do C. Barretos, Regina C. da Cruz, Helena Mollo, Marco A. Tôrres, Júlia Lery, Ludmila Camilloto, Fernando R. Paniago de Oliveira, Glayce Kelly F. Melo, Vitória Salomão Santos, João Paulo da Silva, Eduarda Garcia, Gabriel Figueiredo, Suzane Pinheiro, Maria Luiza R. Sousa and Vitório Damasceno.

sexualities there is present a desire to transform present power relations in the heteronormative society (WARNER, 1991), which is unaware of the multiple facets of human expression and imposes binary patterns of what is expected of "being a man" and "being a woman".

Over the last decade at UFOP, a group of professors and students committed to the discussions around diversity, difference and inclusion has been bluntly inserting themes, discussions, disciplines in the curricula, performances at various times, research and lines of research in graduate programs, production of books and articles, and extension projects, which provoke the institution and its deep silence around issues of gender and sexuality violence, race and ethnicity, as well as the inclusion of people with disabilities. The students and their differences also started to organize themselves into collectives and denounce/visibilize the violence they suffered and suffer inside the republics, classrooms, institution and cities that house the University.

Before going into a little more detail about our object of study, it is worth bringing some experiences in our respective fields of action. The author Margareth Diniz works in two graduate programs at UFOP, the Master in Education and the Law: New subjects, new rights. In the first, she participates in the line "inequalities, diversities, differences and inclusive educational practices" and, in the second, complements the discussions already held in the field of Education, through the research group Kaleidoscope, in which her look at the unique issues of the subject in relation to identity issues defended by social movements stands out. He also coordinated the Project "I am Younger" (2011 - 2017) as a catalyst for an attempt to institute youth policies at UFOP to accommodate differences.

The author Marta Regina Maia, of the Post-Graduate Program in Communication, has already coordinated extension projects on critical reading of the media with children and adolescents in the city of Mariana (from the perspective of the diversity of agendas), participated in the Working Group linked to the Truth Commission of Minas Gerais, which investigated the period of dictatorship in the region of Inconfidentes and has turned to discussions on the narratives of themselves and others in recent years, and was the first coordinator of Project Lives in 2018. She participates in the Research Group Point: Affections, gender and narratives (UFOP). The author Felipe Viero, also from PPGCOM UFOP (besides being a professor of the Journalism Course), has been noted for the researches and studies related to genders/masculinities and sexualities/homosexuality, besides academic productions focused on these issues. He is currently developing a research project entitled "What lives really matter in Westeros? Gender and Sexuality in The Chronicles of Ice and Fire and in Game of Thrones". It also participates in the Point Research Group: Affects, Gender and Narratives (UFOP) and the Nucleus of Studies Communicational Frames: Narrative and Experience (UFMG).

From our experiences, discussions and writings we ask ourselves what guides the "Lives" project? We can highlight the conceptual question as one of the topics we have covered over the years trying to clarify, support and inform the academic community on

topics considered thorny and therefore silenced. The concept of diversity has been widely used in different contexts, but it is a term with multiple meanings. The term diversity tends to include everything, in a generic way, not outlining itself as a category or concept. Perhaps we could think if using it in so many different situations would not be an attempt to homogenize the difference. The question is: how to deal with the subject who always presents a difference without, however, reducing it to a certain category? In this way, we have built a certain agreement that the term diversity will be referred to when it comes to the identities forged in favor of the construction of public policies. The difference, on the other hand, points to subjectivity through the path of the psychic constitution, therefore unconscious. Difference is exactly this possibility of perceiving oneself as a singular subject, legitimating even the singularity of the other - we say here of subjects crossed by lack and desire, subjects of difference, which is conjugated by singularity (DINIZ, 2017).

In this article, we aim to problematize the place of the university as an active and reflective institution on sexualities, gender and diversity. As a methodological procedure, we then accuse the use of the case study of this project at the Federal University of Ouro Preto, indicating the participant observation as a fundamental component in this process, since we are active participants (coordinators) of this movement and our problematization begins in the very writing of the project, in which we question the university as a place of diversity, but also of reproduction of conservative values, as we will analyze in the next topic.

Place of University in the 21st Century

Criticism of the university's role in vocational training and its relationship with society is not new. Anísio Teixeira formulated it when discussing the first University Reform in Brazil, pointing out the arrival of this one with a delay in Brazilian life and that it would not be possible to make any reformulation without the change of knowledge that it would produce and transmit. In other words, Teixeira was aware that the university needed to talk to society, especially the school, the locus of formation of the republican citizen.

The Nation was delayed until the first quarter of the twentieth century to begin the effort to transform higher education in the process of becoming aware of the national culture, in formation. And the acquisition of new methods of thinking and knowledge - it was only in 1922 that we had the first draft of a university - based on experimental science, for the solution of development problems. The new science was no longer a science of speculation or exegesis and interpretation of knowledge existing in the past, but a creative and extraordinarily fruitful science, in technological conceptions, for the solution of material problems related to human power and enrichment - this was the project Brazil had in the first quarter of the twentieth century. The new teaching was one of discovery, requiring an attitude of spirit and intellectual work methods radically different from those that dominated in the past. (TEIXEIRA, 1998, p. 98).

The Brazilian university and its contribution to society have been much discussed since the middle of the last century, and those who have addressed the issue have pointed to the need to build secular and public systems, whether in basic education or higher education,

that can break with traditional models of teaching directed at the elite (DINIZ, JARDILINO, 2019). Anísio Teixeira, who thought of the University as an institution that formed national culture, allied himself with many others who thought of the University as an interlocutor of culture, which, therefore, should be managed within the training of citizens in a "common, public, secular, free and compulsory school for all citizens" (TEIXEIRA, 1988, p. 97). For Teixeira, the university would be in constant dialogue with society, but the direction that the university in Brazil has taken, basing itself on its knowledge, has looked at society from outside. From this external viewpoint, with the implementation and consolidation of post-graduate studies in Brazil, the university ends up seeking to read society through research, packaged by the new methodologies of social sciences, especially action research.

It was from the 1990s onwards, animated by the historical critique of the university model and the reconquest of democracy, after a long period of silence, that researches approach real problems of society aiming at the construction of new knowledge. There are several methodological approaches that allow this turning point, especially in the areas of the human sciences. It is also necessary to highlight the struggles of social movements in the 1990s that forged the need for the university to review and rethink its way of acting in society. The new youths who managed to have access to higher education began to demand this greater approach to issues related to human diversity and its complexity, no longer allowing for the segregation and exclusion of these bodies: blacks, indigenous people, people with disabilities, non-heteromorative women, trans and other groups considered "minorities" (DINIZ, 2019). Our project "Lives" is part of this context, since we consider that the reduction of stereotypes and violence in our society also involves the performance of this space of formation of new professionals and researchers.

As one of the central institutions in the formation of Brazilian youth, the university needs to be stressed in its functions. In this sense, we recognize that this educational space must favor critical and autonomous learning. This means that teaching, research and extension must favor the process of (re)building knowledge. The technical aspects in association with the socio-political and cultural aspects can provide the basis for citizen formation, so necessary in adverse times.

As this place is located in space and time, it should be noted that the expansion of higher education through the Restructuring and Expansion of Federal Universities Program (REUNI) has decisively contributed to the inclusion of part of the population previously excluded from this possibility of training (FERNANDES; OLIVEIRA, 2019). The Program, which began in 2002 under Luis Inácio Lula da Silva and Fernando Haddad as Minister of Education, increased the number of vacancies in undergraduate courses, with two entries a year, with evening courses and interiorization of federal institutions. 14 new universities and 100 new campuses were created throughout the country. Another action that should be mentioned is the Federal Quota Law, implemented in 2013, which contributed to the diversification of the university public, since it indicated 50% of the places offered by public universities for social and racial quotas. In 2018, the number of black and mixed-race

students enrolled in public universities in Brazil began to represent 50.3% of the higher education students in the public network, according to the survey Social Inequalities by Color or Race in Brazil, published by IBGE².

This expansion, however, does not mean that Brazilian universities are disconnected from the market interests of the institutions of the capitalist system and its neoliberal policy. However, we are reflecting on a public university that somehow manages to foster affirmative action projects and activities in its daily life. This is what we will see next.

Project “Lives” in a Multidisciplinary Perspective

We start from the assumption that the way educational institutions are organized and structured is still based on knowledge that is disciplined in an almost impermeable way, isolating each area of knowledge to the maximum. From this diagnosis, we understand that the implementation of multidisciplinary projects that expose the complexity of contents and experiences that involve, in particular, the human, social and applied sciences, is urgent.

The multidisciplinary character of the project evidences the amplitude of concepts and actions necessary for the concretion of proposals and actions within the University and in the region of the Inconfidentes, besides proposing the reflection on which mechanisms can be activated for the fight against prejudice, misinformation and violence that these questions raise, as well as forging a singular place for each subject and its difference.

We will then make a short history of the two years of the "Lives" Project. The first round of talks promoted by the Project took place on June 19, 2018, in the Auditorium of the Institute of Applied Social Sciences (ICSA/UFOP). The meeting counted with the participation of Duda Salabert, the first transvestite to dispute a vacancy in the Senate and Fredd Amorim, member of the group "The Diversity Collective" and component of the project "Queerlombo". Students from various courses and the community in general, were able to hear examples of the struggle of transvestites and transgender people to overcome conservatism and ensure the basic right to live with dignity and be treated as they perceive themselves. In a country marked by violence against the community, transvestites and transsexuals are forced to live with exclusion on a daily basis, being put out of the possibility of dispute in social spaces.

The second round of talks of the Project took place on August 15, 2018, and brought as special guest the lawyer, activist, doctor in International Relations from USP and professor of Law at UNIFESP, Renan Quinalha. The meeting was a milestone in the 40-year struggle of the LGBT movement in Brazil. Quinalha, who also organized the dossier on 40 years of the LBGT movement in Brazil, published in issue 235 of Cult Magazine, gave an overview of LGBT achievements in recent decades. The researcher pointed out that some rights are

² Available at: <https://biblioteca.ibge.gov.br/index.php/biblioteca-catalogo?view=detalhes&id=2101681>. Access on: 4 Apr 2020.

somewhat ambiguous, since they provoke a conservative reaction in certain layers of society. In addition, Renan Quinalha criticized the Brazilian legislature, which is very "conservative" and spoke of the moral patrol within schools and universities, which do not allow issues such as gender and sexuality to be discussed, summarizing everything in the generic denomination of gender ideology.

The other activity contemplated the discussion about the violence that women suffer daily in society. We managed to organize this round of talks in partnership with the Ariadnes Project (PIDIC/UFOP) on October 31, 2018, in the ICSA Auditorium, in which we sought to discover situations of gender inequality and oppression of sexual manifestations, which also place us in situations of constraint within the institution itself, and also as a way of breaking with bureaucratic structures, by bringing up the notion of "bodies that matter", as named by Judith Butler (2002, p. 36).

The fourth "Chat Wheel" took place on November 26, 2018, in the ICSA Auditorium. This activity had as its theme "Post-election perspectives for the LGBTQIA+ segment" and brought as guest Professor Luiz Morando. He has a degree in Literature from UFMG and is a professor at UNI-BH, besides being a former volunteer at the AIDS Support and Prevention Group (GAPA-MG). He conducts research on LGBTQIA+ memory and sociability in Belo Horizonte.

The other actions of the Project aimed at carrying out a broad diagnosis of the support groups existing at the University and in the region; expanding the space for reports on the life stories of the subjects through the production and broadcasting on Webrádio Plural of radio programs with various testimonies on the theme; in addition to participation with two articles in the III Congress on Sexual Diversity and Gender, participation at the table on gender and diversity in the III Congress on Sexual Diversity and Gender and the production and presentation of the work at the Meeting of Knowledge - PIDIC Show, in November 2018.

In 2019, on March 20, there was the round of talks "Violence against Women", ministered by Prof. Dr. Margareth Diniz, and "Violence against LGBTQS", ministered by Prof. Dr. Felipe Viero. The mediation was performed by Prof. Dr. Marta Maia. On May 28th, the "Let's talk about masculinities?" round was held. The guest was Prof. Dr. Carlos Mendonça, of the Post-Graduate Program in Social Communication of UFMG, who addresses, in his researches, issues of gender and sexuality. Among several aspects, the discussion included the perception of the plural and comprehensive character of the notion of masculinity, how it is constituted, in a patriarchal scenario, as an arena of material and symbolic disputes and, also, how both men and women, daily, report to it (KOLINSKI MACHADO, 2018).

On June 18, mediated by Professor Ma. Dayane Barretos (UFOP), a researcher in the area of gender/sexuality, there was a round table discussion "For the right to be: trans issues on the agenda". On August 14th, the roundtable discussion "Transversal themes: problematizing genders and generations" was mediated by Prof. Dr. Felipe Viero and with the

participation of Prof. Dr. Karina Barbosa, of the Post-Graduate Program in Social Communication at UFOP and a researcher in the area of gender, generation and sexuality. This table, in a more specific way, pointed out the relations between gender and childhood, themes that are part of the research developed by the guest, showing the need to think about the identity constitution of the subjects from instances that are intersectional. On September 5, "Lesbianities: between the visible and the invisible" took place, with the presence of Ma. Dayane Barretos (UFMG) and Vanessa Fávero (UFOP), journalism student and member of the Colares Collective. In this event, the debaters addressed questions about heteronormativity and the legitimization of the right to the female body.

On October 25, in the roundtable discussion "Gender, Race and Sexualities: Intersectionalities", the guests were the pedagogy student (UFOP) Lorryayne Andrade, who is part of the Black Collective Braima Mané, and Prof. Dr. Pablo Moreno Fernandes, of the Social Communication department of UFMG and a researcher on issues related to ethnic-racial identities, who debated the prohibitions imposed on blacks and blacks in a country marked by strong racist traits. On November 26th there was the last round of conversation of the semester. The theme, called "The political body", included the following guests: students with special educational needs Cíntia Soares (journalism), Thales Lopes (performing arts) and Cleyfane Morais (administration). They problematized the absence of more effective public policies for the inclusion of people with special needs in the teaching process, while emphasizing the political power of these bodies in the university context.

It is also worth mentioning that for each of the conversation wheels that took place in 2019, a podcast was produced by the fellows, bringing the main discussions of each moment, making them available to those who could not be present. The podcasts were aired on the project's Facebook page³ (followed by about 800 people). Throughout 2019, the scholarship holders also participated, with a presentation of work on the project, in the Meeting of Knowledge - PIDIC Exhibition, in November 2019. Another issue that deserves to be highlighted is the involvement of the people who participated in the activities of the Project. The choice of the "conversation wheel" format proved to be the right one, as people were also able to present their stories in a public way, being welcomed by everyone at the tables.

In short, we consider it important to record some testimonies from the students present at the activities (especially from the scholars and volunteers involved). Glayce Kelly Fieno Melo, a Social Service scholar, stated that "the project, besides contributing to the understanding and information of gender, diversity and sexualities, also promoted, in various ways, information and activities that contributed to the fight against violations of rights, stimulated the confrontation and collective strengthening, through debates, lectures, which sought to reach various people, through the subjects themselves, with speeches and life stories that guide their struggle, resistance and experience" (DEPOSIT, Lives Project Report, 2018). Another report, by Vitória Salomão, from the history course, reinforces the importance of the

³ Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/projetovidasufop/> Accessed on: 4 mar de 2020.

university in this discussion: "We understand, therefore, the university as one of the main environments to encourage debates of this nature, which influence the representativeness and emancipation of the subjects who live there, as well as the affirmation of the importance of this issue within the community we live (Inconfidentes region), since we recognize education as a central point in the development of social interactions, thus needing to touch on fundamental issues for the educational process to be a natural point of political and social transformation in the country" (DEPOSITION, Lives Project Report, 2018).

Conceptual Perspectives of the Project

It is important to reflect on the conceptual perspectives that guide us, after all, to discuss issues about gender and sexualities at UFOP is justified because we are in a university that is still conservative, heterosexual, macho and homophobic in various contexts and situations observed by us and our students over the last decade. Moreover, the current Brazilian fascist situation and the Latin American situation, with strong backward, segregated and conservative waves, demands this pro-discussion of gender and sexuality, which causes a theoretical-methodological shift in our research and productions. Reflecting on fascism, Umberto Eco (2018) recalls that there are ways of thinking and feeling, cultural habits and a nebula of obscure instincts that endure. Fascism, for Eco (2018), would be a dictatorial regime that would subordinate individual acts to the State, which would be marked by the philosophical weakness of its ideology and that, instead of possessing an "essence", would be more of a collage of ideas (not rarely contradictory), corresponding to a fuzzy totalitarianism strongly based on some archetypes (ECO, 2018). It is from this place that Eco (2018) suggests the expression "eternal fascism" in order to account for a fascist nebula that, according to the author, would always be around us. For him, therefore, to understand how such a regime tends to manifest itself in civil and democratic clothes and to unmask it would be a fundamental action. And, we add, doing this is also one of the roles to be played by the public university.

Today, we can affirm that the discussion of this type of subject is a great challenge for us researchers, as well as for all educators who face daily situations of embarrassment around sexualities, their appointments and classifications, as well as the ruptures of heteronormative patterns that permeate our normally invisible gender narratives. It is therefore appropriate to activate some theoretical/political perspectives to which we adhere.

As suggested by researcher Guacira Lopes Louro (2008), the everyday phrases "is a girl" or "is a boy", often uttered even before the birth of the individual, are not merely descriptive. In recovering Austin's work, Judith Butler (2012, p. 168) suggests that in the naming of sex, "an act of domination and coercion, an institutionalized performative act that creates and legislates social reality through the demand for a discursive/perceptive construction of bodies according to the principles of sexual difference. Behind the question "is it a boy or is it a girl?", "a differentiated system that fixes the empirical order making the body intelligible thanks to fragmentation or dissection of the organs is hidden" (PRECIADO,

2014, p. 128). Sexual technology, then, would be an abstract operating table which would delimit certain body zones as being reproductive and sexual (penis and vagina) while denying others, such as the mouth or anus, this condition. The statements "it's a girl" or "it's a boy" institute a process that is supposed to have a definite course. Such phrases, rather than saying, make the bodies they name masculine and feminine, giving certain biological characteristics the power to generate differences. "The act of naming the body takes place within a logic that supposes sex as a "datum" prior to culture and gives it an immutable, a-historical and binary character" (LOURO, 2008, p. 17). Thus, the differences between men and women would be given from birth, through the framing of subjects into two completely distinct and stable categories, based then on physical facts that would be unquestionable, which would delimit the spaces allowed (and forbidden) to bodies. Sexual identity, however, although selling itself as such, does not consist of "the instinctive expression of the pre-discursive truth of the flesh," but rather of "an effect of reinscribing gender practices in bodies" (PRECIADO, 2014, p. 29). Male/Female and Male/Female would thus be categories that would conceal the fact that social differences would imply an economic, political and ideological order. Preciado (2014) will suggest that sex be thought of as a technology of heterosexual domination, which would act by reducing the body to certain and convenient erogenous zones, always bearing in mind an asymmetry of power between the masculine and feminine genders. Butler (1993; 2012) will remember that sex cannot be taken as a stable description of what someone is, but rather as a norm by which they are made viable and acquire cultural intelligibility (KOLINSKI MACHADO, 2018).

Judith Butler, in 1990, when she published *Gender Trouble*, assumes that, like gender, sex is also a cultural construct. Butler then did not limit herself to radicalizing an anti-essentialist perspective, but rather, starting from a reconsideration of the opposition between nature and culture, she would have refused the usual transposition of this into the sex/gender system. Far from being permanent substances, therefore, such categories would have their coherence and relationship established in order to ensure the maintenance of what Adrienne Rich (2010) defined as "compulsory heterosexuality". "It follows that gender is not for culture as sex is for nature; it is also the discursive/cultural medium by which sex nature or a natural sex is produced and established as pre-discursive" (BUTLER, 2012, p. 25). Taking gender, then, as a continuum of doing, as a becoming and an activity, Butler (2012, p. 48) will say that it is "performative within the discourse inherited from the metaphysics of the substance - that is, constitutive of the identity it is supposed to be", consisting of a repetition that takes place in the body, within a regulated and controlled framework, and which, over time, would acquire the appearance of a naturalness. Being the internal truth of the genre a fabrication, and therefore the genre being a fantasy that is replicated in the bodies, it can be neither true nor false, but produced as an effect of truth. (KOLINSKI AXE, 2018).

The actions and activities developed by us in this project have been widely compared to the perspective of the Queer Theory, which has been incorporated into the culture and practices of Brazilian society, questioning the devices of biopolitics that discipline and control bodies and desires, causing suffering to those who dare to be different. This

discussion leads us to seek new proposals and new perspectives for society and, especially, for education, deconstructing static forms of an impossible hegemony of identity, dealing with what is different, from the perspective of also transforming itself and questioning itself: this is Queer provocation for a society and education that stigmatize and segregate difference. Instead of punishing those who break the norms that seek to frame them, the educator can draw inspiration from these expressions of dissent for the educator himself" (MISKOLCI, 2012, p. 63).

The experiences developed by the Project have highlighted the need for the deconstruction of gender performativity that perpetuates heteronormativity, the understanding that we need to break the dichotomy that implies poles of masculinity and femininity including groups and subjects that do not fit into hegemonic patterns, as happens with transsexual subjects. We still live in a society that tries to make heterosexual discourse (man and woman) as hegemonic. But the social movements and the real lives of the subjects put them in a position to question this so-called hegemonic model. It should be noted that today, the LGBTQIA+ social movement is composed of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transsexuals, transvestites, transgender, pansexual, queer, intersex, asexual and + (the + sign represents any subject who does not feel included in any of the previous categories). Our actions and discussions attest that the social movements of the LGBTQIA+ population seek, above all, to guarantee visibility, dignity and equality, in the face of a body that is still very marked, especially in Brazil, by discrimination and prejudice against sexual and gender diversity.

Another aspect worked on in our project refers to the term "trans", since several scholars and militants have pointed out that it serves to designate both transsexuals and transvestites, which would therefore preserve the political and historical truth of each group. As an example, we can cite Transgenicity: understood as a sociological phenomenon of transgression of the binary gender device, or the phenomenon by which a subject identifies with a distinct gender to that which was attributed to him at his birth due to his biological sex. In this way, we consider transgenders, or trans, the subjects who recognize themselves in gender-divergent identities or trans identities. We use here the master's research carried out by Ludmilla Camilloto defended in the Graduate Program in Law, entitled "Transgenicity and the right to be: relationship between self-recognition and legal recognition of new rights subjects", defended in March 2019. What the research aims to question is: how do the bodies of transgender subjects move beyond the binary discourses proper to heteronormativity and according to their subjectivity?

The word transvestite, in Brazil, denotes a series of words such as doll, Mona, faggot, transvestite etc., having gained strength in the LGBTQIA+ movement. Some transvestites do not feel contemplated by the prefix "trans", because they understand that the social movement to which they belong was built by Brazilian militants and is prior to the cause of transsexuals and transgenders. Transsexuality refers to a complex phenomenon, in which the subject lives an intense suffering of not feeling adequate to the anatomical sex. The social constructions attributed to the physical body, within a hegemonic discourse, lead to an incoherence between sex and gender, so that the transsexual subject is placed on the margin, as something

inconceivable. On the subject, Butler asserts that "certain types of gender identity appear as mere failures of development or logical impossibilities, precisely because they are not confirmed by the norms of cultural intelligibility" (BUTLER, 2003, p. 39). Thus, the author believes that disagreements with gender norms and expectations of behavior, as in transsexuality, are perceived as impossible experiences because they escape forced naturalized patterns.

As Torres presents, "the use of these terms signals the subject's attempt to access a semantics to reiterate in human rights policies the positions of pro-sexuality groups" (TORRES, 2012, p. 53). Thus, the homogenization of these three nomenclatures, transsexuals, transvestites and transgenders, would disregard the independent web that the groups pursued in search of meanings for their own existence (TORRES, 2012). There will be no end to the polemics, due to narrative disputes also within the movements. The respect and protection of the singularities and particularities of the subjects, the assumption, even if broad, of these subjects, within the legal system, is what will allow them to be assigned rights and obligations.

The tension between the need to legally situate subjects in the Law and the possibility that they may exist outside stigmas and categorizations, influenced and delimited by the paradigms of modernity, gives rise to reflection on what contours the concepts of subjects can and should assume so that the State entity does not promote the waste of the countless sexual and gender experiences that manifest themselves in time and space (CAMILLOTO, p. 86, 2019)

This is why tensions are constantly being established, since while the "hegemonic" discourse values and uses the binary categories of gender (male/female or male/female) to operate politically and culturally speaking, the psychic subject (with his sexuality) implodes with the frameworks and does not allow himself to be easily apprehended. This is the dilemma of public policies: of a universal character, it does not take into account and recognize diversity, besides the two rigid and hermetic categories from which it establishes its legal, normative and human conduct devices.

Therefore, in the words of Ludmilla Camilloto (2019) there are no simple solutions to the issues of equality and difference, when seeking to broaden hegemonic perspectives on gender. We will need to agree that there is a plurality of existential situations, in which there are countless ways in which the subject is personally realized and socially presented. That the gender of people is the result of the cultural construction of society, and that there cannot be a simplistic division into heterosexual behavior in which everyone must fit in between men and women. And, finally, when we make the blunt defense of all this plurality of beings, we must excel in the liberation of bodies, and fight all forms of violence.

When discussing the interactive processes and the various forms of agency of the subjects in contemporaneity, Marta R. Maia (2012) argues about the large volume of organizations that seeks to attract the attention of the subjects today. Among these organizations, we can mention the media networks that, in a certain way, agency, especially the youth, the largest audience of the university community. We realize then that this type of

project triggers other mechanisms of organization, communication and manifestation precisely from the events that are aroused by the events. We consider, therefore, that it is possible to configure other narratives from the collective actions, which can trigger, affect and mobilize people for the recognition of differences. We also reinforce the formative aspect of our fellows and volunteers, since all, all and all of them participated, during the lifespan, in the research groups led by the participating teachers.

We are aware of the limitations of the case study, as Magda Ventura warns us when she says that "the most serious seems to be the difficulty of generalizing the results obtained" (2007, p. 386), however, we evaluate that the advantages of this type of approach are numerous, because "they stimulate new discoveries, according to the flexibility of their planning; they emphasize the multiplicity of dimensions of a problem, focusing on it as a whole [...], besides allowing an analysis [...] of the processes and relationships between them" (p. 386). In bringing these issues to the debate, we recognize the exploratory character of this work and evaluate that "Lives", among many other projects, actions, curricular components and research can contribute to reduce the violence suffered daily by those who do not follow the heteronormative patterns imposed by values that today can - and should - be questioned.

Final Considerations

This article aimed to problematize the role of the University in recognizing the existence of gender and sexuality differences in this space. It also proposed the reflection on which mechanisms can be activated to fight prejudice and misinformation that these issues raise and which conceptual perspectives should be activated for such actions.

The VIDAS project, among other nineteen approved in the PIDIC 2020 Call for Proposals, is part of the Inclusion and Diversity Policy of UFOP approved in 2018 by the Education, Research and Extension Council and is very important for the academy to enable discussions and actions on issues related to diversity in general and, In particular, the issues of gender and sexuality within the University are inseparable from teaching, research and extension, since our scholarship holders are students and undergraduate students, they integrate our study and research groups and accompany our disciplines on gender and sexuality issues in order to broaden their training and work with other students. We believe that reflecting on projects of this kind can contribute to a better understanding of what place the Brazilian university occupies in the Brazilian scenario.

The need for insurgent thinking and a new epistemology, in addition to broadening the understanding of public policies for all, guided by the promotion of human rights, in the sense of the recognition of diversity and difference in opposition to hierarchical relations and oppression that relate in some way to categorizations are our target in this Project.

The University, even after the approval of the inclusion and diversity policy, still needs to advance in its guidelines in this direction. Our work aims at disseminating the principles that we have managed to elucidate in the policy for the LGBTQIA+ population, as

well as incorporating these principles into the teaching, technical and student training of the subjects who work at the university, as well as into their daily actions and practices, which are still very much marked by gender and sexuality violence, as is still the case in our society.

If we are going through a period of instability over the place occupied by institutions, it is necessary to reflect and act on the connections that are made by the university community. We believe that the university must allow itself to be contaminated by the burning issues that circulate daily in our surroundings, since it is the foundation of the ways in which thousands of young people are formed throughout the country.

We are witnessing a dispute of senses nowadays. We can cite, among many other examples that could be evoked, the collection, by the governor of São Paulo, João Dória, on September 3, 2019, of the didactic material of sciences of the São Paulo network that, according to him, was an apology for the "gender ideology". This material dealt, among other aspects, with sexual diversity and explained terms such as "transgender," "homosexual," and "bisexual. Another striking example is the definition of sexual abstinence as a public policy for safe sex and prevention of teenage pregnancy by the Ministry of Women, Family and Human Rights, headed by Minister Damares Alves. These actions, among others, point to a conservative way out for education. We reject these conceptions in course and seek to build through projects, as reported here, actions and policies within educational institutions that advance in conceptions that recognize dissenting bodies and alter heteronormative representations that annul diversities and differences.

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