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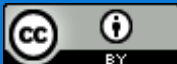
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## The (In) Existence of Male Gender Students in the Course of Pedagogy: Why do They Give Up?<sup>1</sup>

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### ABSTRACT

The research deals with the academic circumvention of men in the undergraduate course in Pedagogy of the Campus of Naviraí of the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (CPNV/UFMS) and aims to identify the main reasons that motivated male students to enter and to withdraw from said course. After surveying the number of entering, dropping and finishing students of the course studied, three of the dropouts and recorded individualized interviews were identified. It is understood that the difficulty of reconciling the higher education with work, the lack of knowledge about the education of the pedagogue and the low remuneration of the teaching profession are factors that interfere in the dropping of male students of the course of Pedagogy of the CPNV/UFMS.

### KEYWORDS

Education professionals. Teaching career. Teaching.

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## A (In)Existência de Estudantes do Gênero Masculino no Curso de Pedagogia: Por que Eles Desistem?

### RESUMO

A pesquisa trata da evasão acadêmica de homens no curso de graduação em Pedagogia do Campus de Naviraí da Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul (CPNV/UFMS) e visa identificar as principais razões que motivaram estudantes do gênero masculino a ingressar e desistir do referido curso. Após fazer o levantamento do número de homens ingressantes, desistentes e concluintes do curso pesquisado, foram identificados três dos desistentes e gravadas entrevistas individualizadas. Compreende-se que a dificuldade de conciliar o curso superior com o trabalho, o desconhecimento sobre a formação do pedagogo e a baixa remuneração da profissão docente são fatores que interferem na desistência de discentes do sexo masculino do curso de Pedagogia do CPNV/UFMS.

### PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Profissionais da educação. Carreira do magistério. Docência.

## La (In) Existencia de Estudiantes de Género Masculino en el Curso de Pedagogía: ¿Por qué se Renuncian?

### RESUMEN

La investigación aborda el abandono académico de los hombres en el programa de pregrado en Pedagogía del Campus de Naviraí de la Universidad Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul (CPNV / UFMS) y tiene como objetivo identificar las principales razones que motivaron a los estudiantes varones a unirse y abandonar. ese curso Después de encuestar el número de estudiantes de primer año, abandonos y graduados del curso investigado, se identificaron tres de los abandonos y se grabaron entrevistas individuales. Se entiende que la dificultad de conciliar la educación superior con el trabajo, la falta de conocimiento sobre la educación del pedagogo y la baja remuneración de la profesión docente son factores que interfieren con el abandono de los estudiantes varones del curso de pedagogía CPNV / UFMS.

### PALABRAS CLAVE

Profesionales de la educación. Carrera docente. Enseñando.

## 1 Introduction

When observing the Campus of the Federal University of Naviraí/MS (CPNV/UFMS), it is clear that the contingent of female students stands out in quantity of insertion and conclusion in the undergraduate course in Pedagogy. Although this course is not restricted only to women, it is noticeable that the demand of men for this degree is considered minimal and, as if this were not enough, many of the male students enrolled drop out and few graduate and become educators.

Thus, the present study addresses the academic dropout of men in the course of Pedagogy in CPNV/UFMS, aiming to understand the local reality and the reasons for these dropouts, since it is a higher education course in a public federal university. Thus, the objective of this research is to investigate the entry and dropout of male students in the undergraduate course in Pedagogy at CPNV, seeking to identify the main reasons that motivated their entry and dropout.

For this, the qualitative research sought to gather data from the Academic Secretary of CPNV, in order to ascertain the quantity of men who entered, concluded and continued attending the Pedagogy course between the years 2009 and 2018. Three dropout students were also selected, so that individualized interviews could be recorded. Since it is a current theme, which presents reflections on society as a whole, it is believed that proposing a discussion about the academic dropout of men in the Pedagogy course provides new knowledge about the theme and a better understanding of gender relations among education professionals.

## 2 Gender Relations in Education and the Feminization of the Teaching Profession

The history of education in the Brazilian territory is marked by stages and transformations, since the Jesuit period. According to Ribeiro (1993), school education in Brazil starts from the colonization, a context suitable for the dissemination of capitalism associated with the interests of the Portuguese crown, as well as the church that struggled to maintain its ideals in the face of the counter-reformation that was taking place.

According to Shigunov Neto and Maciel (2008), the Jesuits already had pre-established goals such as the expansion of capitalism and aimed to "mitigate and catechize the Indians", under the intentionality of contributing to the colonization process. They were bearers of a European education model after Europe sent a large number of settlers to work in the extraction of wealth in this land. Thus, Shigunov Neto and Maciel (2008, p. 173) point out that "The Jesuit Educational Project was not only a catechization project but a much broader project, a project of social transformation since its function was to propose and implement radical changes in the Brazilian indigenous culture".

This initial phase of education in Brazil is marked by the exclusive presence of male educators since only Jesuit priests assumed the function of teaching or catechizing indigenous children. For Straiotto (2017, p. 36), it was only from the nineteenth century that the school space, previously male, opened to women, making teaching a predominantly female field of work, since "[...] women acquired the right to education through the creation of first letter schools for girls, which required the hiring of female teachers. Thus, men continued teaching boys and women teaching girls, thus creating gender differentiation in teaching.

In this same perspective, Almeida (1996, p. 75) states that the teaching work done by women was considered inferior, because there were differences in the salaries of male and female teachers, since "[...] men alleged that since women were not heads of families, nor depended on their wages to support themselves and others, they could not have the same rights as men, a mentality that served to justify lower salaries for women.

It is important to highlight that gender relations in education also existed among students, because although boys and girls should learn to read, write and count, for boys the emphasis was on scientific content, while for girls the priority was to learn domestic activities, as Louro (2011, p. 2) points out: "[...] for boys, notions of geometry; for girls, embroidery and sewing".

It is noticeable that the work performed by a teacher went beyond the pedagogical and social responsibility since she also had to train the students according to the ideal wife model labeled by society. Thus, the main concern in relation to the girls was to prepare them to marry a provider man, as Louro (2011, p. 2) highlights:

For the daughters of privileged social groups, the teaching of reading, writing and the basics of mathematics was usually complemented by learning the piano and French, which in most cases were taught in their own homes by private teachers, or in religious schools. Skills with the needle, embroidery, lace, culinary skills, as well as the command skills of maids and servants, were also part of the girls' education; plus, elements that could make them not only a more pleasant companion to the husband, but also a woman capable of well representing him socially (LOURO, 2011, p. 2).

With the urbanization and industrialization process, men began to dedicate themselves to other professional activities and there was a decrease of the male gender in normalist schools, which trained for teaching, so that women began to occupy such spaces. This process of female entry into the area of education was not easy because there were doubts about female capacity or if women were fit to become teachers, as Louro (2011) emphasizes:

The process did not happen, however, without resistance or criticism. The identification of women with the teaching activity, which today seems so natural to many, was the target of discussions, disputes and polemics. For some it seemed a complete foolishness to give to the usually unprepared women, bearers of brains "underdeveloped" by their "disuse" the education of children (LOURO, 2011, p. 2).

On the other hand, there were those who believed that women were able to become teachers because of the experience of motherhood, or because of the practice of caring for children. The fact is that men gradually stopped being interested in teaching, while women became increasingly interested in this professional area. To this end, Vianna (2013) points out that:

The entry of women into the teaching profession should be examined from the point of view of class and gender relations. We can then remember that it is one of the first fields of work for white women of the so-called middle classes, scholars and bearers of an idealized femininity for this class, but also protagonists of the struggle for the expansion of female participation in the economic sphere (VIANNA, 2013, p. 164).

Thus, the environment that was once exclusively male, began to be occupied by women, resulting in an inverse effect, i.e., the predominance of women in teaching in the early stages of basic education, indicating that gender relations are present among education professionals. Based on the acceptance that women are the ones best able to educate children at school, Louro (2014), Gonçalves and Carvalho (2014) understand that the few men who remained working in the initial stages of basic education went on to experience some unfavorable experiences.

Studies conducted by Monteiro and Altmann (2013) indicated that male teachers suffer various forms of discrimination and for this reason avoid working with children, especially in early childhood education. Thus, they state that the main obstacles to increasing male participation in teaching with children are:

[...] a) the "deep-rooted myths and ideas about masculinity", b) the issue of this professional area being occupied preferentially by women, c) low wages, d) inadequate employment conditions, e) the low status of the profession, f) concerns related to the possibility of abuse against children, in an association of masculinity with violence. (MONTEIRO; ALTMANN, 2013, p. 4).

Thus, gender relations in teaching practice are perceptible, for these relations, built up over time, impact social and cultural behavior, since they come to characterize roles that are considered appropriate for men and women, just as they are seen by society.

### 3 Configurations of the Pedagogy Course in Brazil

When analyzing the history of education in Brazil, Straiotto (2017, p. 45) highlights that "[...] the institution of the Pedagogy course in our country, equally articulates to the socio-economic transformations that were drawn in the world at the end of the 1920s", whose pole, before dominated by the male figure, is now imposed by the female presence, which remains until the XXI century. For Saviani (2012), the Pedagogy course has its concern focused on the students in order to reflect on what will be taught and to whom it will be taught. It is an undergraduate course that was standardized in the 1930s.

Decree no. 1.190/39, in organizing the National School of Philosophy, structured it into four sections: philosophy, sciences, letters and pedagogy, also adding the didactics section, considered a "special section". While the sections of philosophy, sciences and letters each had different courses, the pedagogy section, as well as the special didactics section, was composed of only one course whose name was identical to that of the section. (SAVIANI, 2012, p. 38).

The pedagogy course began in the 1930s, precisely during a phase in which the teaching profession was already in a process of transition and the number of male teachers had increased, aiming for career advancement. The course's qualifications were aimed at working in several areas, including secondary, basic or primary teaching in normal schools, also allowing the professional to work in the administrative sector. Thus, the Pedagogy course was not directly related to early childhood education, as Straiotto (2017) highlights:

They are closely linked to the prerogatives set by the Reform Francisco Campos that, in 1931, provided for the organization of secondary education and regulated issues related to the registration of teachers to work in education [...]. Thus, in the period between 1931 and 1939 - the year of promulgation of Decree No. 1190 - some isolated Colleges of Education, Sciences and Letters were created around the country, many of them without a minimum infrastructure for operation or with educators specialized in teacher training (STRAIOTTO, 2017, p. 50).

Throughout the structuring process, many changes happened so that this formation was legitimized as a higher level formation, training professionals to act in the most diverse areas of education. Thus, Azevedo (2018) agrees that the Pedagogy course did not have its own identity and gradually went through reformulations and qualifications that trained for functions such as school supervision and guidance.

[...] it would only suffer alterations with the creation of the Law of Directives and Bases for National Education (LDB), in compliance with Law number 4.024/61 (LDB). Thus, the Bachelor's degree course for the formation of the Pedagogue was maintained (CFE opinion 251/62) and the Licentiate degrees were regulated (CFE opinion 292/62). The CFE opinion 252/69 abolished the difference between Bachelor's and Degree courses, but maintained the formation of specialists in the several qualifications. These mean the first changes in the flow of history (AZEVEDO, 2018, p. 10).

Following the transformations related to educational policies, Law no. 5.692/1971, which defines the Guidelines and Bases for first and second-grade education, conceived the competencies for teaching practice in the different categories of education, regulating the Licentiates (BRASIL, 1971). For Straiotto (2017, p. 55), the fragmentation between licentiate and bachelor degree can be considered as the "[...] triggering element of the reformulation movement of Pedagogy courses in the 1980s". In that scenario, and with the endorsement of the Federal Council of Education, many institutions of higher education "[...] progressively, were incorporating new qualifications to the Pedagogy course, essentially turned to the teaching exercise, what constituted a progress for the courses of formation of teachers, in special, the pedagogue".

From 1996, with the diffusion of the Law of Directives and Bases of the National Education - Law nº 9394/96, the institutions had to adapt the hourly load allowing courses with inherent qualification (BRASIL, 1996). However, there were two distinct qualifications for Pedagogy, one that trained for specific teaching in early childhood education and the other for the initial years of elementary education, leading to mistakes in many candidates when choosing between one and the other without being able to differentiate them, as reported in their research Gonçalves and Antunes (2015), about a male student who enrolled in the Pedagogy course without knowing which qualification he had:

When I took Pedagogy, we lived a teacher training process that was based on qualifications, which had Early Childhood Education and early years. As I was very young, when I took the course I was 16, so I started college when I was 17, and I didn't know that Early Childhood Education was to work with babies, right, with children from zero to six years old. So I stayed a whole year. I think I was wrong, thinking I was going to be a teacher of the early years and then I would hear people talking about babies, talking about the phases a child goes through, talking about how to clean the baby, how to bathe it, child development? And then I found out only at the end of the first year that there were two courses, Pedagogy in the afternoon at UFMS in Três Lagoas, which was what I did, which was Early Childhood Education and the night course was for the early years (GONÇALVES; ANTUNES, 2015, p. 145).

Finally, in 2006 the new national directives of the course of Pedagogy were approved, in effect until today, excluding the qualifications and prioritizing the teaching of the initial years of the fundamental teaching and infant education. This way, the referred law determines in its Art. 2º:

The Curricular Guidelines for the course in Pedagogy apply to the initial formation for the exercise of teaching in Infant Education and in the initial years of Basic Education, in the courses of Secondary Education, in the Normal modality, and in courses of Professional Education in the area of services and school support, as well as in other areas in which pedagogical knowledge is foreseen (BRASIL, 1996, s/p).

Thus, the teaching profession may have become uninteresting to the male audience, as Louro (2014) highlights, since social constructions over time permeate the idea that caring is related to the female gender, due to the issue of motherhood and affection.

In this follow-up, what could justify the dropout of men in this undergraduate course, could be related to working with children, especially in early childhood education, making it unmotivating for men, as Straiotto (2017) analyzes:

The implantation of Early Childhood Education pushed away the entrance of men in the Pedagogy course and consequently there was a decrease of male graduates in the course. Even because a small percentage of the new qualification was established in the pedagogical area, occurring a decrease in the demand of men for the Pedagogy course in this new qualification. As this is a possibility, we understand that another research would be needed to answer this question, leaving it to be "thought". (STRAIOTTO, 2017, p. 118).

It is evident that the changes related to the qualifications of the Pedagogy course in Brazil have influenced the gender relations among pedagogues, considering that the formation for teaching, especially for the performance in children's education, ended up making an area of performance even more feminine.

#### 4 The Course of Pedagogy at the UFMS Naviraí Campus and Gender Relations

The Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UFMS) was founded in 1962, in the city of Campo Grande, capital of the State of Mato Grosso do Sul. In accordance with the Pedagogical Project of Pedagogy of CPNV, the objective of this study, the referred course follows the same formation of the national guidelines.

Thus, driven by the new Law of Directives and Bases for National Education (LDB–Law No. 9.394, of 20.12.1996) and pressured by the National System of Course Evaluation, provided by the LDB in Article 9, more precisely in items VI, VIII and IX, and established by the Ministry of Education (MEC), the various educational institutions in the country could reflect on the quality of education offered by them and found in the official results. From this reflection, they began to rethink this education, resizing goals and objectives in the face of new national requirements, thus instituting a new way of thinking about the training of undergraduates (UFMS, 2016, p. 10).

After studies and surveys on the local reality, the Pedagogy course of UFMS starts in Naviraí in 2009, as the building itself had not yet been completed, for some months the classes were held at the Municipal School Marechal Rondon, unit where classes started from February 5, 2009.

The Naviraí Campus was created as part of the Higher Education expansion process, a Reuni goal established by UFMS. To this end, there was a partnership between the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul and Naviraí City Hall, [...]. It is noteworthy that Naviraí is a hub city in the Southern Cone, and that the presence of UFMS/CPNV also provides intellectual and cultural development to the population of the surrounding cities. Such implementation considered a survey in the region that detected the need for teacher training to work in Basic Education, being the Pedagogy course focused on working in Early Childhood Education and the early years of Elementary Education and the Social Sciences course to work in Secondary Education (UFMS, 2016, p. 7).

The Pedagogical Project of the Degree Course in Pedagogy of the Naviraí Campus of UFMS, in the item referring to the history of the course, highlights that

The Pedagogy Degree Course, implanted in UFMS in the first semester of 2009, had its operation authorized by the Resolution COUN nº 65, of 28.08.2008. Its implementation was due to the need to promote and expand the supply of teacher education courses in the country and in the Southern Cone region, where the course's main campus is located, especially in Early Childhood Education and the initial years of Elementary Education, meeting local and national demands (UFMS, 2016, p. 8).

The training of teachers to work in the early stages of basic education is the main reference of the Pedagogy course of CPNV, but it also trains the education professional to work in other areas, including non-schooling spaces. Thus, the general objective of the course, according to the Pedagogical Project, consists of

To train professionals with critical capacity and solid cultural training, able to perform the activities of the teaching-learning process and contribute to the formation of critical citizens, when exercising teaching in Early Childhood Education, in the initial years of Elementary Education and in Professional Education, as well as the functions of the Pedagogue work in school and non-school institutions (UFMS, 2016, p. 16).

As for the vacancies, the Pedagogical Project describes that the "Number of vacancies offered for admission (face-to-face course)" corresponds to "60 vacancies" per year and about the class schedule the document highlights: "Shift of operation (face-to-face course) Evening and Saturday morning and afternoon" (UFMS, 2016, p. 3).



Since it is an evening course, with classes on Saturdays, one might think that many students, including males, might be interested in the possibility of working during the day and studying at night. However, this is not what we can see, because in many classes there are almost no males present, as it is a predominantly female undergraduate course.

If there is not much interest from male students in studying Pedagogy at CPNV, even though it is an evening course, a possible explanation for this lack of interest could be related to the course's training, focused on the school education of children. It is believed that not all men are interested in becoming teachers of children, due to the representations that this area is considered a female profession, as Gonçalves and Carvalho (2014) point out:

[...] men are seen as unfit for teaching because they do not possess these characteristics that culturally have been attributed to the female gender, would this preponderant event capable of justifying the escape of the male presence. Analyzing this reason takes us to the questions that allow reflection, would it even be necessary such attributes that have been socially granted to women to work as a teacher? (GONÇALVES; CARVALHO, 2014, p. 4).

The aforementioned authors point out that it is relevant to have the male presence acting as children's teachers, but the low salaries may be considered discouraging for many men, especially if they are heads of household.

On the other hand, Straiotto (2017) reflects on the power relations between female and male in the field of education, as it is a space that was once male domain, but which has undergone transformations. In this scenario, the number of women studying Pedagogy is higher compared to men in the same degree course. Thus, Straiotto (2017) agrees with Louro (2014) when he states that:

The gender approach enabled the discussion of power relations between men and women and made explicit the construction of inequality between them in the history of Western societies. Today, apparently with breaking the dichotomy that assigned men to the public domain and women to the domestic domain, it has not exhausted the need to discuss gender relations, since power relations are inherent to them and all social relations suffer constant and continuous transformations throughout history (STRAIOTTO, 2017, p. 26).

It is worth reflecting here what is meant by gender relations, whose idea is different from the concept sex, since the latter is biological, while the former is cultural. In this sense, Scott (1998) explains that:

Gender is the social organization of sexual difference. It does not reflect primary biological reality, but it constructs the meaning of this reality. Sexual difference is not the original cause from which social organization could be derived; rather, it is a mobile social structure that must be analyzed in its different historical contexts. (SCOTT 1998, p. 15).

It is evident that sex refers to the biological differences of people, while gender is a social construct related to the way social groups have historically created behavior patterns for both sexes.

Regarding gender relations among education professionals, the research developed by Straiotto (2017), about men graduating from the Pedagogy course, presents some considerations about the performance of men in the early stages of basic education, in which many opt for administrative positions and teaching focused on childhood is seen as a female function.

Among the interviewed subjects, we observed that the justification for exercising administrative and management positions often derives much more from their own gender condition. In this sense, within the relationships established within the school space, relationships of authority and subordination are traced, within which the male subjects continue to occupy a position of dominance. As men are "directors" and for being men, they impose more "respect" to the school community, "demanding" their "masculine authority". Thus, teaching, especially that aimed at younger children, remains a "woman's function" because it requires care and support, which would be "inherent" to the gender, (STRAIOTTO, 2017, p. 117).

Based on the arguments cited, it is possible to state that gender relations interfere in the teaching work and consequently among undergraduate students, who do not always feel motivated to continue in the course in the CPNV Pedagogy course and end up giving up to become teachers of the early stages of basic education.

## 5 Empirical Research Methodology

For the development of the study, a qualitative research was developed, of descriptive nature, which according to Gunther (2006) is about the interaction between the data raised from the bibliographical research with those obtained from the field research. Thus, qualitative research presents data in a more generalized way, as an instrument capable of concluding results according to the methodological approach needed to disclose real information achieved.

In this way, a research was carried out with men who dropped out of the Pedagogy course CPNV/UFMS, being the investigation developed from the following stages:

First stage: Survey of the lists of those enrolled in the Pedagogy course since the first year it began activities at CPNV/UFMS, to identify the amount of men who enrolled, dropped out, and continued attending this undergraduate course between the years 2009 and 2018.

Second stage: Preparation of the research instrument, characterized by a semi-structured script, which was used for the recording of individualized interviews with the research participants.

Third stage: Location and contact with some former Pedagogy students, all male, who enrolled, attended for a period, but eventually dropped out and, therefore, did not complete the degree course. It is worth mentioning that due to the difficulty in locating the students who dropped out, as well as the lack of availability of some of them to contribute to the research, the option was made to record individualized interviews with the three men

highlighted below, who signed the Free and Informed Consent Form. To preserve the identity of the three participants, names were substituted, and during this stage of data collection, the profile of each man interviewed was as follows: Alex - 39 years old, married, father and worked as a watchman in a school institution; Bruno - 26 years old, married, father and worked as a waiter and cashier attendant in a restaurant; and Carlos - 40 years old, married, father and worked with electrical engineering.

Fourth stage: Organization and systematization of the data collected through the field research, which were analyzed and based on some authors who address the research theme, as presented in the sequence.

## 6 Results and Discussions

Based on the data obtained from the Academic Secretary of CPNV/UFMS (TABLE 1), it is possible to see that in all years there were male students enrolled, but few concluded the undergraduate course in Pedagogy.

**Table 1.** Male students in the Pedagogy Course at CNPV/UFMS (2009-2018).

Year	Entered	Concluded	Continued	Dropped out
2009	3	2	-	1
2010	2	1	-	1
2011	6	1	-	5
2012	6	1	-	5
2013	2	-	-	2
2014	4	1	-	3
2015	5	-	-	5
2016	8	-	6	2
2017	7	-	5	2
2018	10	-	7	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>29</b>

Source: Authors (2019).

By analyzing the data described in Table 1, it is observed that before 2015 the number of male students entering the undergraduate course in Pedagogy of CPNV/UFMS was low. From 2016 there was a significant increase, however, when considering that 60 vacancies are offered and filled annually in that course, the total number of enrolled men is still considered very low if compared to the number of female students. Another point to highlight, based on the data in Table 1, is that since 2009, when the Pedagogy course of CPNV/UFMS started, a total of 53 (fifty-three) men, after applying for and getting a place in a public university, made their enrollment official. However, among this total, only 6 (six) graduated and became educators, while more than half, that is, 29 (twenty-nine) dropped out.

The 6 (six) pedagogues who graduated did not belong to the same class and, therefore, in most cases there was only one man who, although he persevered, had to live in the classroom with the situation of being the only male representative among the women. Such

reality was also identified by Straiotto (2017, p. 106), who thus highlighted about one of the pedagogues during his graduation period: "P8 was the only man in a room of twenty-five women, which led people to 'think something wrong about him,' alluding to the possibility that he was homosexual." Another pedagogue, identified by the author, also mentioned the fact that he was the only man among the female audience:

The pedagogue P19 felt the impact of the Pedagogy course from the very first day. Once again, the massive female presence in a room in which he was only a man was deeply impacting: "[...] and I thought: what am I doing here? I didn't see any other male colleagues in that room, so I had that impact and thought, my God, will I be able to stay here in the middle of all these women? (STRAIOTTO, 2017, p. 112).

Perhaps this fact may have influenced the male students of CPNV/UFMS, since none of the two entrants of 2013, or five entrants of 2015 reached the conclusion of the Pedagogy course, there were, therefore, only women celebrating graduation. However, it seems that this reality has begun to change as of 2016, a period in which the entry and permanence of men in the undergraduate course in Pedagogy of CPNV/UFMS increased. In this new and recent scenario, at the end of the 2018 academic year, there were 18 (eighteen) male students enrolled in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd year classes of the course, while in the 4th year class (which entered in 2015), there were no men enrolled.

A new research would be necessary to understand why the entry and permanence of male students in the Pedagogy course increased, as well as the professional performance of those who have already graduated. But, considering that, for the present study, the intent was to understand the causes of the dropout, the data presented in the sequence present the point of view of three men who enrolled and attended Pedagogy in CPNV/UFMS, but are among the more than half who ended up abandoning this graduation course.

Therefore, among the 29 men who enrolled but dropped out of CPNV/UFMS, three of them, identified here as Alex, Bruno and Carlos, recorded interviews and showed their perceptions about the course. Thus, the interviewees were asked about the reasons that motivated them to enter the Pedagogy course, aiming to identify the influential factors for the access to higher education, specifically in this graduation for the exercise of teaching. Alex answered: "I had already been working for some time in the area of education, this area interested me and I wanted to take a higher education course as well. I realized that the pedagogy course could open other doors, not only in classrooms, so it was interesting for me." Bruno pointed out, "At the time, Pedagogy was the second option, because I didn't actually get my first option. So as not to be without doing anything, I got into Pedagogy! My first option was food engineering". Carlos mentioned that it was the most accessible course at that moment of choice.

The fact that I was already very advanced in age and had been idle for a long time, I felt the need to have a higher level course to enter the job market. As at the time the course that was most accessible to me was at the Federal University, I enrolled in Pedagogy (CARLOS).

The desire to get an education, even if late, emerges as the main factor for entering this graduation, mixed with the need to seek a degree to enter the job market. However, one can define among the main reasons for entering this undergraduate course, the opportunity to earn a higher education course and the idea that this way to achieve the possibility of leveraging professional life, as Straiotto (2017) addresses:

For many graduates, the higher education courses represented "a diploma", capable of leveraging or guaranteeing their employment, that is: a diploma that would allow a rise or insertion in the labor market. It is true that we observed, as mentioned above, the practical issues, [...], the fact that it was an evening course. All these aspects, to which would also be added a late entry into the university, contributed to feed the imaginary of "ease" of the Pedagogy course, defining their choice (STRAIOTTO, 2017, p. 95).

The analysis allows us to distinguish that the entry of men in the Pedagogy undergraduate course at CPNV/UFMS coincides with social aspects associated with late professionalization, aiming at the opportunity to have a degree independent of any training area.

To understand each candidate's understanding of Pedagogy, the next question referred to each participant's prior knowledge about the competencies and areas of action of the pedagogue. When asked about what they knew about the course before they enrolled, they stated

I already had a little knowledge, few, but I already had, due to the fact that I already worked in an education environment so I already had this contact, even working in another area the periods that I work here during the day already allowed me to have this contact, so at least a little I already knew (ALEX).

Bruno recognizes that he didn't know exactly the attributions of a pedagogue, especially about the work developed with babies: "I didn't know a lot of things, mainly I didn't know that I had to work with early childhood education and take care of daycare children. Similarly, Carlos was also unaware of some specificities of the Pedagogy course.

I didn't know practically nothing! I knew nothing! I didn't even know what a college course was, especially in the area of education. After having been so long without studying, I had no idea. This week, for example, when we were talking about higher education and the pedagogical profession, I remembered that I had no insight, none, none... (CARLOS).

It is possible to notice that social factors historically influence the choice of professions, since even without knowing the attributions of the profession, they considered it important to get a diploma, as Furlani (1999, p. 175) points out that "There is a movement that has the force of each person's history, in which their reasons, motivations, and hopes interact with the continuous changes of each context, in different temporalities.

Only Alex said he had some knowledge about the attributions of this degree, while Bruno and Carlos said they entered this course without any knowledge about this profession, confirming that the concern in having a higher level course, lead some candidates to enter without understanding the dimensions and functions inherent to this course.

Based on the reports it was possible to assess the expectations related to this graduation, when asked about the perspectives referring to the Pedagogy course at the moment they made the option to enroll in this course, the participants presented different opinions: "I understood that it was a way to open doors for us to have new opportunities, it was also important to study so as not to stand still and to acquire new knowledge. And as I was already in education, I wanted to have this continuity" (ALEX). Carlos also mentioned the possibility of new opportunities, more specifically the intention of taking contests after finishing higher education.

My expectation was to finish the course and take a competitive examination in the area, but the rise in my work made it very difficult, you know? Today I already have a family, children, a house... But at first, when I started the course, the intention was to finish and take a contest here in the city (CARLOS).

While Alex believed he would have new opportunities with a degree in Pedagogy and Carlos hoped to achieve stability in the teaching career, Bruno once again mentioned his misunderstanding about the formation of the Pedagogy course.

In fact, I thought that this course was more focused on teacher training, in the sense of training for teaching language, mathematics and other subjects in elementary school. I didn't know that I had to take care of daycare children. (BRUNO).

Bruno's account suggests that he had the perspective of working as an elementary school teacher, but with daycare children he would not have the same interest. When reflecting on their previous knowledge and the reasons that motivated them to enter the undergraduate course in Pedagogy, it is necessary to ask why these men gave up the higher education course, if the way to get a place is not so simple, because they have to pass an exam (Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio - ENEM) and compete with many candidates. About this perspective, Alex inferred that:

The main point for me to have given up was because of my work schedule, I work in the afternoon and at night, so I had an agreement with the previous management, to work only during the day so that I could attend college without taking my night bonuses, but then they changed the agreement and it was no longer possible for me to continue because of this, the issue of time. Yes, because of work (ALEX)

Bruno admitted that he was unemployed and couldn't miss the job opportunity, so he chose to quit the Pedagogy course.

I received a job offer to work at night and as I needed the service and I didn't really have much vocation I ended up giving up. I believe that to work in Education you have to have a real vocation, not to mention that for the amount of study the salary is very little (BRUNO).

Carlos even mentioned that he would not like to report the real reasons for his giving up, but he ended up mentioning that:

At the time I had no desire to give up, no. I had the need to have a college degree, but some circumstances, which I prefer not to relate, forced me to do so. But what I can say about this fact is that I couldn't fit my work schedule with college. Besides, studying so hard for a teacher's salary is not easy, because in my profession I took a two-year technical course and earn practically double. So, several things ended up leading me to this (CARLOS).

About the reasons that caused them to give up this undergraduate course, the three research participants reported that they were unable to reconcile work and studies, while Bruno emphasized his lack of affinity with the profession, agreeing among themselves that the salary is considered demotivating. Such arguments corroborate with Rabelo (2013) by stating that: "Thus, the representation that this profession is poorly paid and, therefore, is not for men discriminates and can be a stimulus for men's non-choice or avoidance of teaching".

In this sense, it is important to conceive that besides the gender stereotypes considered appropriate to teaching, the devaluation of salaries also makes this profession uninteresting for men in the municipality of Naviraí, reinforcing the historically built concept in society that childcare is tied to female care. The research participants also responded about what should be done to make the Pedagogy course more attractive to men, and all agreed that it should increase the salary, recognition and appreciation of the teaching profession, as Bruno pointed out: "Without a doubt there should be a greater appreciation of the teacher and this way it would attract more men. Due to the low pay, teachers feel devalued, unmotivated, and thus many lose interest in this profession.

Corroborating such ideas, Rabelo (2013) mentions that "[...] another generified representation that falls on male teachers is that the teaching profession is not for men because it pays low wages and heads of families cannot receive so little. Thus, one notices that there is a predominant belief that men who "head their families" should receive better salaries, thus transposing the idea that women who work as teachers would only complement the family income, a fact that diverges from the current society in which men and women generally have equal responsibilities in providing for the family.

The three men who participated in the research also commented on their goals, if by any chance they were to finish Pedagogy and Alex stated: "My interest was to get some position in coordination because I.. well, I'm not good with small children. The female teachers, on the other hand, are better at it", reinforcing the idea that only females have the skills to work with children.

When showing resistance to work with the first stage of basic education, Bruno emphasized that: "I wouldn't work with the daycare part, I would just stay with early childhood education which is more really the phase of learning to read and write." Carlos mentioned that it would be interesting to have the involvement of men and women in the teaching of children.

I truly believe that in order for man to work with early childhood education, those called daycare center, there should be a male teacher and a female teacher in the classroom. It would be better because the children would have contact with both male and female teachers, also because since women are more delicate about some things, it would be easier to take care of the children. (CARLOS).

Despite agreeing that men and women should be involved in early childhood education, when considering that the most appropriate would be to have the woman to be responsible for child care, it confirms the belief that they are more capable because they are mothers, reinforcing the historically constructed idea that women have born skills to take on this function, as highlighted by Gonçalves (2009):

[...] the skills of the housewife and wife are usually transferred to the teaching function, because to be performed by a woman it is assumed that the professional has or should have some characteristics such as docility, submission, sensitivity, patience, among others. In this case, men are seen as incapable of teaching because they do not possess these characteristics that culturally have been attributed to the female gender (GONÇALVES, 2009, p. 41).

There is a perception that predominates nowadays and that is rooted in society regarding some concepts that have been built throughout history, as to the roles and skills related to genders, making it noticeable that in the field of teaching, more specifically in early childhood education, there is still the idea that this function should be assigned to the female gender and thus men end up not being interested in working in this professional area.

## 7 Final Considerations

Considering that this research is entitled "The (in)existence of male students in the pedagogy course: Why do they drop out?", from the study carried out, it is possible to affirm that there are several factors that contribute to the dropout of Pedagogy students.

Firstly, the social construction that the female figure is more adequate for the care of children persists in society, reinforcing the idea that women are more suitable for this function because of their maternal delicacy and affection. It is noticeable that there are few men entering the Pedagogy course who have or have researched to have prior knowledge about the functions of the pedagogue and the attributions of the teaching work for early childhood education. Some of the research participants who dropped out of the Pedagogy course argued that they did not know that they would have to work in the daycare center with small children, showing that these men did not identify themselves with such a function, perhaps because they mistakenly believed that it is a feminine attribution. Therefore, the lack of information causes men to enroll in this undergraduate course without knowing about the specifics of this area, causing the great majority of the enrolled men to give up and/or drop out at the beginning of each year.

Other factors that, in a certain way, explain the reason of the dropout of the male students of the Pedagogy course of CPNV/UFMS, include: the difficulty to conciliate the superior course with the working days; the unfamiliarity on the formation in Pedagogy; the low remuneration of the teaching profession; and the perception that, to act in this area, the women would be naturally better prepared.

Finally, it is evident that the perception that concepts historically built in society are difficult to be broken, because even though we now live in a society where men and women fight for space in the job market, the idea that there are professions that are more suitable to the female or male gender still remains. And teaching in the early stages of basic education is seen as feminine and, in this case, many men choose to quit the Pedagogy course in order not to have to educate children in the school environment. It is necessary to break with old habits and stop pegging them to gender, since what counts is the competence and professionalism to



perform such functions, valuing the profession. There is a growing need for male educators to speak more passionately about success in their profession, in order to awaken the male audience to the field of education.

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