

LEISURE, GENDER AND PANDEMIC: PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS IN SETE LAGOAS MINAS GERAIS

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*Fernanda Santos de Abreu*¹

Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG)

Belo Horizonte – MG – Brazil

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5588-4283>

*Elisângela Chaves*²

Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG)

Belo Horizonte – MG – Brazil

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2069-4316>

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ABSTRACT: This research aims to analyze the relationships between gender issues and the leisure practices of Physical Education (PE) teachers at public schools in Sete Lagoas, during the pandemic. The following methodological procedures were used: semi-open questionnaire via Google Forms and semi-structured interview. It was found that gender was configured as an element of difference in opportunity and enjoyment of time, space and leisure experiences, especially in the case of teachers who identified themselves as female, cis and heterosexual women and teachers who declared themselves gay, sex masculine and cis men. Regarding the leisure practices of these people, there was a predominance of activities related to virtual interest, such as, for example, the use of social networks such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and TikTok, as well as the use of digital platforms such as Netflix and Prime Video.

KEYWORDS: Gender. Leisure activities. Teachers.

RESUMO: Esta pesquisa tem como objetivo analisar as relações entre questões de gênero e as práticas de lazer de professores e professoras de Educação Física (EF) das escolas públicas de Sete Lagoas, na pandemia. Utilizou-se como procedimentos metodológicos: questionário semiaberto via Google Forms e entrevista semiestruturada. Constatou-se que o gênero se configurou enquanto elemento de diferença de oportunidade e usufruto do tempo, espaço e experiências de lazer, em especial no caso

¹ Attending the Ph.D. program in Leisure Studies by the Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Program in Leisure Studies at UFMG. Teaching License in Physical Education from Centro Universitário de Sete Lagoas (UNIFEMM), Master's Degree in leisure studies PPGIEL/UFMG.

² Professor of the Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Program in Leisure Studies PPGIEL/UFMG. Bachelor's Degree in Physical Education from Universidade Federal de Viçosa (1995), Master's Degree in Education from Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (2002) and Ph.D. in Education from Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (2013).

das professoras que se identificaram como sexo feminino, mulheres cis e heterossexuais e dos professores que autodeclararam gays, sexo masculino e homens cis. No que se refere às práticas de lazer dessas pessoas, constatou-se a predominância de atividades relacionadas ao interesse virtual, como, por exemplo, o uso de redes sociais como *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *WhatsApp* e *TikTok*, bem como a utilização de plataformas digitais como *Netflix* e *Prime Video*.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Gênero. Atividades de lazer. Professoras e professores.

Introduction

Over the last decades, the field of academic debates focusing on leisure and gender has been expanding in different fields of research (GOELLNER et al., 2010; ALMEIDA et al., 2012; BARBOSA; LIECHTY; PEDERCINI, 2013). It is also observed that the binomial leisure and education is already the object of multidisciplinary investigation (MARCELLINO, 2012; GOMES, 2008), however, when approaching these themes, relating them, specifically, to the senses, meanings and experiences of teachers and school Physical Education (PE) teachers, we found a gap to be explored.

Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to problematize leisure and issues related to gender, based on the appropriations, perceptions and experiences of Physical Education (PE) teachers from Sete Lagoas (Minas Gerais -MG) in the context of the coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19), which was announced by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2020 (WHO, 2022).

To this end, it should be noted that the reference period for carrying out this study is: March 2020 to March 2021. This time frame takes into account the fact that the pandemic reality has concretely altered social customs and, consequently, people's relationships with their work, leisure, and other spheres of life.

Silvestre and Amaral (2017) emphasize that in the face of a heterogeneous professional category, gender presents analytical potential as a social marker of

difference in the possibilities of access, experience and meaning of leisure for male and female teachers.

In perspective, it is noteworthy that this study demarcates the understanding of gender as a cultural and analytical category, whose constitution as a social marker is implicated in other processes of subjectivation that are articulated, such as race and/or ethnicity, religiosity, nationality, socioeconomic conditions, among others.

Therefore, this research presents gender as a perspective within the scope of post-structuralist discussion, that is, understanding this category as a plural construction, which suffers implications from social institutions and reverberates in social practices, such as leisure (LOURO, 2014; CONNEL, 2016; BUTLER, 2020).

Therefore, the present study aims to analyze the perceptions and appropriations of Physical Education teachers on gender issues and their leisure experiences during the pandemic.

Learning about Gender

Gender issues permeate representations, through social historical constructions of society that permeate different contexts in which times, spaces and people relate. Gender as a category of analysis was constituted in its first moment, seeking the development of a field of debate, affirmation and consolidation of women's rights, having a beginning related, therefore, to a context of the feminist movement (MEIRA, 2014).

In this way, gender and its issues acquired centrality in scientific debates in line with sociopolitical debates from movements related to feminism and its waves, thus gaining strength as an area of visibility through this movement, leading to a

problematization of the concept of gender among scholars, activists, critics of the topic (LOURO, 2014).

Thus, it is relevant to understand that in this initial scenario regarding the understanding of what gender is, it arises through an immediate relationship with sex and sexuality, making this understanding related to the biological sex of men and women (LOURO; FELIPE; GOELLNER, 2013). Butler (2020 p. 25-26), in this relationship between sex and gender, considers that:

the distinction between sex and gender serves the thesis that, however intractable sex may seem in biological terms, gender is culturally constructed: consequently, it is neither the causal result of sex nor as apparently fixed as sex. Thus, the unity of the subject is already potentially challenged by the distinction that opens up space for gender as a multiple interpretation of sex.

Butler (2020, p. 27), also emphasizes in his understanding that “gender should not be merely conceived as the cultural inscription of meaning in a previously given sex”. These perceptions about gender refer us to a social logic of reproduction of identity labels that are part of the historical/social construction that permeates society, encompassing cultural, biological, social aspects, etc.

Thus, in this intertwining between gender and its cultural, social, biological instances, which create historical/social paradigms, the importance of:

rejecting and problematizing biologicalist, essentialist and universal notions of woman and man, and of femininity and masculinity, to argue that, within different cultural processes, individuals and their bodies are transformed into – and learn to recognize themselves as – subjects and gendered bodies (MEYER; SILVA, 2020, p. 487).

Today, it is clear how discussions in the epistemological field have expanded perspectives on gender and its possibilities. Not to mention that in everyday social and cultural practices, people's experiences are permeated by markers related to biological aspects, which can constitute a mechanism of oppression.

This scenario demonstrates the connection that gender presented with two categories: female / male. When considering aspects related to gender, we consequently talk about the differences between the categories mentioned (CONNELL, 2016).

As provided by Escosteguy (2016, p. 70), gender in its layer of social construction “is associated with the idea that identities are defined in a relational way and, from a certain moment on, no longer exclusively via the feminine-masculine pair.” Explaining the words of Escosteguy (2016), there is an intention to break the feminine/masculine binary, making human plurality visible.

Thus, gender would seek to “account for socially constituted relationships, which start from the opposition and questioning of the conventional female and male genders, their variations and social hierarchization” (VEIGA; PEDRO 2019, p. 330).

There’s no doubt that the construction of understanding about gender is influenced and influenced by different contexts that are mixed and modified according to human realities. Therefore, from such judgments, it is noted that the perception related to gender was constituted through the construction of the notion of social roles (DELPHY, 2018).

In this line, gender contemplates an understanding pointing to the notion that, “throughout our lives, through the most diverse social institutions and practices, we constitute ourselves as men and women, in a process that is not linear, progressive or harmonious, and that also it is never finished or complete” (LOURO; FELIPE; GOELLNER, 2013, p.18).

Therefore, gender does not materialize in isolation, but is constituted and materialized in structures of power, in social movements, among other contexts of human life, and thus all these panoramas emerge in environments that influence the composition of gender (CONNELL, 2016).

It should be pointed out that these aspects regarding the conceptualization of gender conjecture a perspective of a plural and conflicting body that is (de)constructed based on its historical/social construction, which will also be linked to other social markers such as: sexuality, nationality, race and/or ethnicity, religion, etc.

Therefore, it is extremely important to think about a conceptualization of gender based on plural thinking, noting the varied features of men and women, realizing that the understanding of gender, therefore, will be diverse, in the same way that they differ in different constitutions. and their social groups (LOURO, 2014). Within this scenario, Barreto (2014, p. 7) emphasizes in his words that “talking about gender is not just talking about women and men or sexual difference, but also about identities that are constructed outside a heteronormative logic, such as transvestites, transsexuals and transgender people”.

Within this understanding, another element present in the scope of gender is the LGBTQIA+³ movement, which includes categories of gender identity and sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transvestite, transgender, queer, intersexual, asexual and more that correspond to the other countless possibilities of gender). In general, therefore,

understanding discussions of gender relations means not only understanding the differences between men and women and not allowing them to be unequal, but rather, observing how education, family relations, the media, the cultural industry, the capitalist market and the activities of Leisure attempt to camouflage the historical-cultural constructions of differences to justify various inequalities as something “natural” (SAMPAIO, 2011, p. 33).

³ The acronym LGBTQIA+, throughout its constitution, underwent changes in its understanding, with the existence of other acronyms such as LGBTQ, LGBTQI, LGBT+, LGBTI, which are also used widely. In this study, we chose to use the acronym LGBTQIA+.

Through all the aspects explored, it is important to (re)think knowledge and ideas about gender and its contexts and cultural instances that permeate society, establishing structures in everyday relationships, education, work and other spheres.

Leisure and Gender: Some Close Relations

Debates in the academic field of leisure present varying historical and contextual perspectives on its understanding and composition (DUMAZEDIER, 1994, MARCELLINO 2006, CAMARGO, 2003). However, this study is based on the understanding of leisure as the production of culture, which remains in permanent transformation according to social transformations and which, therefore, is related to human needs. Gomes (2014, p. 9) states that:

understanding leisure as a human need and dimension of culture is incipient in the systematized production on thematic. Following this perspective of understanding and analysis, what is generally designated as “leisure” is rooted in playfulness and constitutes a complex social practice that encompasses a multiplicity of cultural experiences situated in each context.

Leisure is linked to the different dimensions of human life, uninterruptedly, (re)creating and producing practices according to human and social needs – being present in people’s daily lives, in the most diverse spaces, times and situations. Therefore, leisure merges with other spheres of life and is consequently part of human formation.

It is necessary to emphasize that the inclusion of leisure in the lives of citizens, over time, became concrete in the political sphere as a social right. Despite the difficulties in understanding leisure for the political actors involved in the constituent process (SANTOS, 2014), it was legitimized by the Constitution, based on its article 6:

Art. 6th: Social rights are education, health, food, work, housing, leisure, security, social security, protection of motherhood and childhood, assistance to the destitute, in accordance with this Constitution (BRASIL, 1988).

In this outlook, it is important to highlight that a series of factors inhibit and/or hinder the experience of leisure, making it a privilege. It is highlighted by Marcellino (2006), social markers such as: age, education level, race/ethnicity, sex, economic class, violence among other factors, require specific and contextualized considerations to be analyzed as obstacles to the enjoyment of leisure.

Based on aspects related to barriers to the experience of leisure, we chose to problematize gender relations, which are part of a process of historical/social construction and impact on understanding contemporary times, “leisure, as a configurative dimension of culture, cannot be thought of outside of society. It is a social activity that needs to deepen reflection on gender relations” (LEIRO, 2002, p. 4).

Thus, Barbosa, Liechty and Pedercini (2013) highlight that the scenario involving the relationship between leisure and gender undergoes interventions that are linked to social expectations aimed at each person's gender, which, therefore, leads to limited opportunities in the practices of leisure.

Scientific production focused on the relationship between leisure and gender often operates with the expression of this category based on the man-woman binomial. Tejera, Sousa and Sampaio (2013), in their research on leisure activities experienced by women and men who work in cooperatives, for example, point out that the “[...] aspect related to the differentiation in the choice of activities practiced by men and women tends to be marked by cultural and social factors” (TEJERA; SOUSA; SAMPAIO, 2013, p. 4).

Goellner *et al.* (2010) in the study in which a gap was observed in the analysis and interpretation aimed at the biases that influence the experience of men and women in leisure practices, also carried out this operationalization using the man-woman binomial.

From this panorama, through the relationship between leisure and gender, such a leisure space is “gendered and gendered, as it produces and reproduces different behaviors, actions, discourses and practices for men and women, which reaffirm hegemonic representations of masculinities and femininities” (GOELLNER *et al.*, 2010, p. 18).

In this regard, it is essential to critically explore these cultural, social and pedagogical instances, which permeate this situation of leisure and gender and its aspects, since these contexts are related to identity markers which, consequently,

interferes with the adhesion and permanence of men and women in distinct and unequal ways. Certain other factors also reinforce these and other inequalities. However, we cannot deny that gender relations configure different spaces for men and women (GOELLNER *et al.*, 2010, p. 18).

It is evident, therefore, that the intertwining between leisure and gender permeates dimensions that are based on different aspects that meet the social, cultural and historical perception of society, therefore being a space for (re)production of instances that gender bodies, people and social identities.

By bringing the scenario closer to the public of teachers, the analysis by Silvestre and Amaral (2017, p. 84) points out that:

When comparing the phenomenon of leisure among teachers, it was evident that, in addition to the smaller amount of time, leisure activities reported by females occur primarily in the time and space of the private environment, while leisure activities for males are experienced more regularly. in spaces outside the domestic environment.

It is clear that issues related to leisure and gender in the context of teachers are present, becoming a field of contemporary exploration. However, it is noteworthy that we still need more investment in studies to expand our understanding, consequently enabling the advancement of information in this context, through sociocultural peculiarities.

Methodology

This research is qualitative in nature and exploratory in nature. To develop the study and collect data, a questionnaire via Google Forms and a semi-structured interview via Google Meet were used. It should be emphasized that this paper was approved by the Research Ethics Committee (Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais), under opinion number 5.341.232.

The composition of the group of participants included in the research occurred intentionally, with PE teachers from the public education network (state and municipal) working in the city of Sete Lagoas, Minas Gerais, being invited to participate in this study voluntarily. Using data obtained in advance from the Municipal Department of Education and the State Department of Education (SEE) of Sete Lagoas, the total number was 93 teachers in the state sector and 61 teachers in the municipal sphere.⁴

The invitation to participate in this research was sent to teachers in Sete Lagoas through contact networks, including WhatsApp groups and email lists, between April and June 2022.

This data collection process resulted in a total of 33 respondents (15 male and 18 female) to the questionnaire, of which 20 participants expressed interest in participating in the interview. However, some of these people did not contact the researcher again, others did not indicate a contact telephone number and/or email address for their identification in the field requested for this information, therefore, it was not possible to contact everyone. Thus, in the end, 11 participants (7 males and 4 females) responded to the researcher's contact and were interviewed through the Google Meet platform in July 2022.

⁴ It is worth highlighting that, in this context, the data obtained may undergo changes, considering that, in some schools, the process of hiring teachers was still taking place, as well as issues related to leave for health treatment, functional leave, retirement, which leads in a certain way to a “flexibility” of these data, due to different realities, in addition to the possibility of these teachers working in more than one school, and with different ties.

The data resulting from the questionnaires were presented descriptively. It is noteworthy that it was not intended to statistically operate the variables obtained in the questionnaire, as the objectives of the study are not linked to questions of this nature. The interviews, in turn, were transcribed and subjected to content analysis (CA) (BARDIN, 2006).

According to Bardin (2006), CA consists of a set of techniques that involve three steps to infer the meaning of data, namely: 1) pre-analysis, which involves everything from contact to the organization of the material to be analyzed; 2) exploration of the material, which consists of defining analytical categories; and 3) treatment of results, inference and interpretation, which refers to interpretations and inferences about the data in the form of critical and reflective analysis.

In the case of this paper, the moment of dialogue between the researcher and participants, in addition to the interview transcriptions, constitutes the pre-analysis phase. As the transcribed text is assessed regarding the content of the speeches and themes that are articulated, regardless of the order of the questions, the categorizing phase takes place, that is, coding thematic groupings for analysis, this is the inference phase of results, supported by the theoretical repertoire and perspective that underlies the look at the research topic.

Results and Discussion

In analyzing the data obtained in the questionnaires and interviews, we sought to articulate the descriptive analysis with the analytical categories generated from CA, presenting them in “descriptive-analytical” topics in which the techniques are integrated and interact, in order to enhance the inferences and interpretations about the reality of the people researched.

In this regard, the next topic will present the characteristics and identifications of PE teachers from the public network in the city of Sete Lagoas, seeking to better understand the context of their lives and professions. Subsequently, 3 categories of analysis were defined, namely: Professional understanding of leisure; Practices, experiences, time and importance of leisure during the pandemic; Perceptions and understandings about gender.

These categories, in line with the descriptive data of this study, seek to clarify and contextualize in a reflective and critical manner crucial points for the objectives of this research, consequently providing opportunities for enriching and deepening an approach to the reality to be explored.

Male and Female Teachers of PE from the Public School of Sete Lagoas, Minas Gerais

In the first stage of methodological development of this study, it was possible to obtain a total of 33 questionnaire respondents, with 54.5% self-reporting as female and 45.5% as male. The predominant age group of participants was 29 to 39 years old with 51.5%, followed by 21.2% from 18 to 28 years old, 15.2% between 40 and 50 years old, 9.1% from 51 to 61 years old and 3% between 62 and 72 years old.

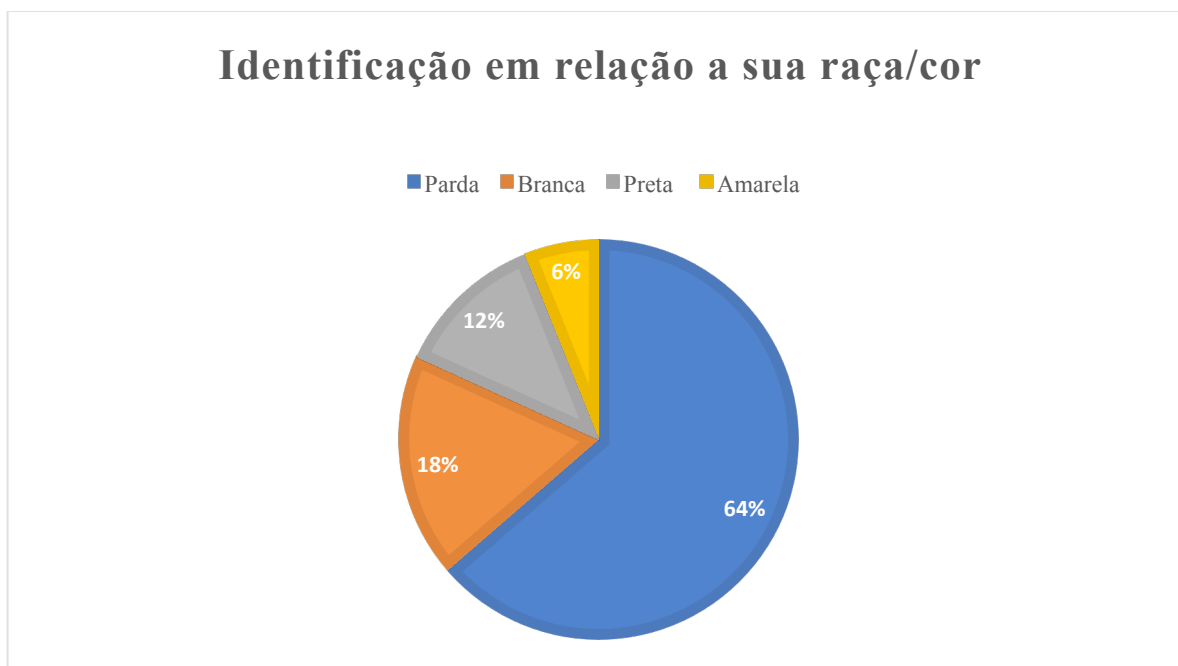
The majority of the research participants worked within the state public education sector of Sete Lagoas, 23 (87.9%) and 10 (30.3%) teach in the municipal education network. With regard to private institutions, 5 participants (15.2%) indicated that they work in this sphere. This is a scenario in which the same teacher can work in different education networks, occupying positions with different duties.

This aspect may also reflect the type of employment of these respondents. In the study, it was observed that 63.6% of teachers worked on a permanent basis, while

42.4% had a temporary employment contract (hired for a specific period). It is noteworthy, therefore, that the same respondent can work in these two employment spheres, in education networks.

These teachers, when asked about how they identify in relation to their color/race⁵, identified themselves as:

Chart 1: Identification regarding their race/color

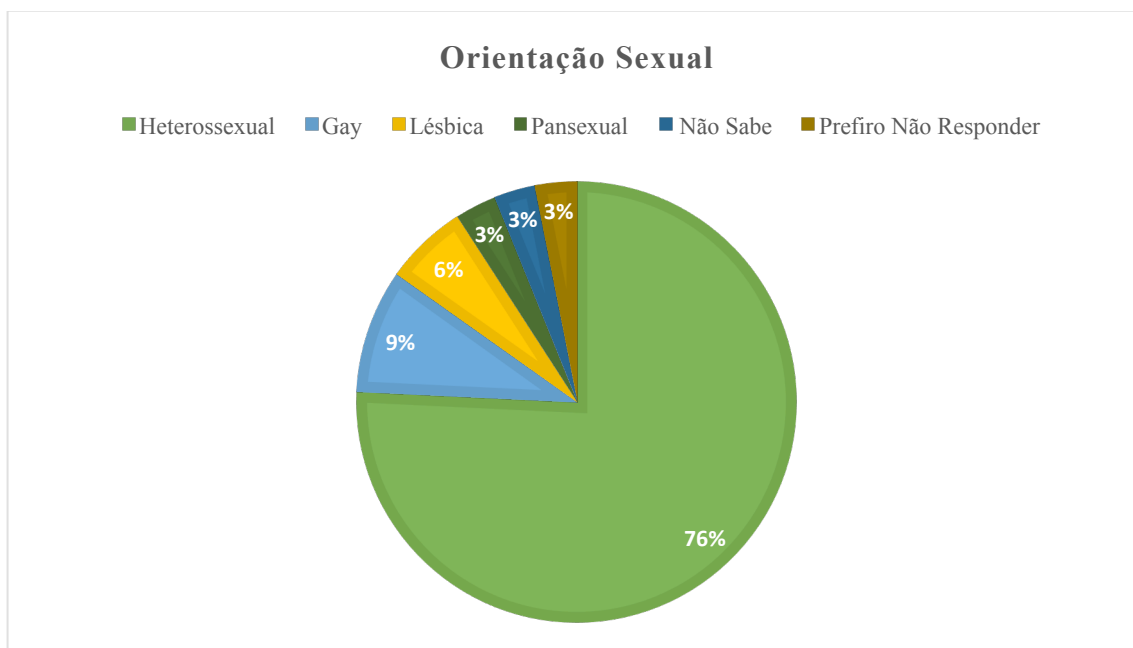


Source: The authors themselves.

It is clear that the group in this research is predominantly made up of brown, black and white people. Regarding sexual orientation, the following data can be noted below:

⁵Classification used by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE).

Chart 2: Sexual orientation



Source: The authors themselves.

It is important to highlight in this sense that debates about sexual diversity in line with gender are already present in the agendas of various social groups, however barriers such as the difficulty in promoting specific actions are encountered, which consequently influences the visibility of the theme, in appropriation by the general population of terms and meanings referring to this sexual diversity (DIAS; BRAZÃO, 2021).

Based on this information about the research participants in relation to their academic/social profile, another important point is related to the sphere of leisure in the daily lives of these teachers, which will be better observed in the following topic.

And what about leisure? Identifying the Perceptions of Male and Female Teachers

An important piece of information for this study is these people's understanding of what leisure is. The data was summarized in the table below (similar responses were grouped)⁶:

Table 1: What is leisure?

What is your definition of leisure?	Answers
Teacher 1 / Teacher 2 / Teacher 3 / Teacher 5 / Teacher 8 / Teacher 11 / Teacher 14 / Teacher 15 / Teacher 16 / Teacher 18 / Teacher 21 / Teacher 25 / Teacher 27 / Teacher 29 / Teacher 31 / Teacher 32	Leisure is everything you do and feel pleasure / Moments with pleasurable activities
Teacher 3 / Teacher 4 / Teacher 7 / Teacher 12 / Teacher 14 / Teacher 17 / Teacher 29	Distraction / Fun / Happiness / Relaxation / De-stress
Teacher 6	Cultural activities free of obligation, which are practiced in free time, and can have numerous categories, physical sports, manuals, technological, etc.
Teacher 8 / Teacher 10 / Teacher 11 / Teacher 12 / Teacher 13 / Teacher 15 / Teacher 16 / Teacher 19 / Teacher 21 / Teacher 25 / Teacher 26 / Teacher 28 / Teacher 31 / Teacher 32 / Teacher 33	Activity you do outside of work hours. Activity outside religious, family, study obligations, etc. Free time activities. Free choice/free will activity
Teacher 9	Everything that gives you physical, mental and social well-being. Even at work I have moments of leisure.
Teacher 10 / Teacher 22 / Teacher 23	Resting /Sleeping
Teacher 12	Recreation
Teacher 15	Over time, leisure takes on new characteristics, largely due to routine and new work configurations.
Teacher 20	Set of occupational preferences/choices for idle, relaxing and carefree hours. Let's say, occupations chosen by affinity and preference.
Teacher 22	Take advantage of time off and/or vacations.
Teacher 24	Being with family.
Teacher 30	Leisure is everything that involves pleasure in doing things. According to the professional conception, they exist for leisure and leisure, one being defined as free time and the other as tasks (responsibilities).

Source: The authors themselves.

⁶ To maintain the confidentiality of the participating teachers, each respondent will be identified as follows: Teacher for respondents who indicated they were male, and Teacher for those who indicated they were female, taking into account the date of sending the questionnaire.

This question was open, allowing the respondent to formulate their sentences in a different way, which reflects the appearance of the same teacher in different answers in the table above. In general, the group of respondents understands leisure as a pleasurable practice that should be carried out based on aspects such as: time free from obligations and through activities of free choice.

This relationship between pleasure and leisure abounds with academic discussions such as Melo and Alves Junior (2012, p. 34) who state “leisure activities are sought with a view to the pleasure they can provide, although this does not always occur and although pleasure should not be understood as exclusive to such activities”. What can be inferred is that for research participants, the search for pleasure in their leisure practices guides their demand and objective. A dichotomy can also be observed between working time and family, religious, professional obligations, among others, with the time and experience of leisure activities (MARCELLINO, 2006).

Another point to highlight is the response from Teacher 6, who mentions the categories of leisure cultural interests, as discussed by Marcellino (2006), who classifies them into six interests: artistic interests (linked to emotions, imagery and visual content), intellectual (activities linked to reasoning), physical/sporting (prevalence of movement), manual (object manipulation), tourist (tours, travel) and social (social interaction).

Therefore, leisure practices are connected with other human and social spheres, in a network of articulations that impact people's experience, time and understanding of what leisure is. However, it is necessary to highlight that despite the varied responses obtained, in none of them is leisure cited as a social right, which deserves a critical and reflective look, pointing to a possible lack of knowledge of the respondents about leisure in the Brazilian Constitution.

The connection between what leisure is for these teachers may be related to their training process, given the proximity of the field of leisure to PE. Of the group surveyed, 97% indicated that they had some subject/content about leisure in their undergraduate studies and only 3% indicated that they did not.

This data converges with the historical moment in which leisure was consolidated in the academic universe. Filippis and Marcellino (2013), in their study on professional training in leisure in PE courses in the state of São Paulo, analyzed six institutions and only one of these did not mention leisure in its pedagogical project.

The scenario of the rapprochement between academic training and leisure was effectively reflected in the interviews carried out, composing the first analytical category extracted from the content analysis: understanding of leisure by PEPE teachers. That is, when the participants were questioned in an interview, they were asked whether their area of activity (PE) interferes with their leisure possibilities and experiences. If so, how? The following reports were obtained:

I think that being a Physical Education teacher makes us **more aware of having these moments, of how to take advantage of them and also of having the knowledge, of being able to expand these experiences, not being restricted to just one category of leisure**, for me, yes, the fact of being a teacher does expand my possibilities, my experiences⁷ (TEACHER 6).

It makes it a lot easier⁸. Our Physical Education area is a very large area, we can experience leisure in several ways. **Because in college, I learned that leisure is everything that gives you pleasure, right?!** Mainly during free time, then, I can understand the meaning of **leisure** (TEACHER 1).

Continuing the articulated use of the technique of descriptive analysis of the questionnaires with the AC on the interviews, the second category called: practices, experiences, time and importance of leisure for teachers of Sete Lagoas during the pandemic is presented.

⁷ Emphasis added. It was decided to transcribe the speeches of the people interviewed as they spoke, without spelling or agreement corrections.

⁸ Emphasis added.

Practices, Experiences, Time and Importance of Leisure for Teachers of Sete Lagoas during the Pandemic

The first and already expected finding is that the domestic environment has become the central space for leisure during the pandemic. In the questionnaire, respondents were asked which activities they considered and experienced as leisure and how frequently (always, sometimes, never) during the pandemic period from March 2020 to March 2021.

In this regard, it was observed in this research that 79% of respondents indicated the use of social networks such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, WhatsApp and with a frequency of continuous use (always) as their predominant leisure practice during this pandemic period. This same situation was obtained with regard to the use of platforms such as Netflix, YouTube, among others, to watch films, series and/or documentaries. Thus, the virtual interest that Schwartz (2003) understands as the seventh content of leisure encompasses the artifact of the digital world.

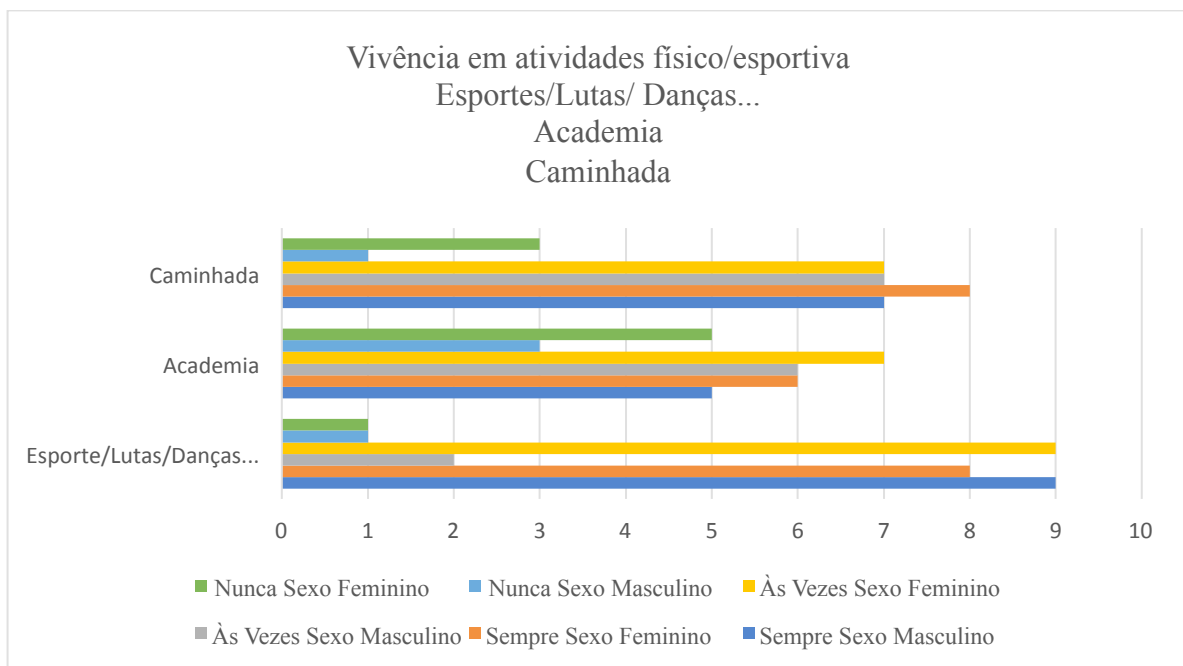
In this same line, in the study by Montenegro, Queiroz and Dias (2020) when analyzing the leisure activities of university students in the city of Macapá, internet use was predominant for 89.9% of respondents. It is important to point out that respondents are locating their activities during the period in which several spaces were closed or had access subject to crowd reduction protocols, etc., due to the pandemic scenario.

It was noticed that in relation to manual interest, the majority of respondents do not perform this activity frequently. It is noteworthy that, among the respondents who selected the option sometimes (8 respondents), 75% declared themselves to be female. Mayor, Silva and Lopes (2020), in relation to manual activities, consider that they are usually activities carried out in the domestic space, associated with the feminine universe (in relation to an expectation of performativity), highlighting that manual

interest is more common among women who work, which fits with the group of responding teachers.

With regard to activities related to the physical/sporting aspect (gym, walking, sports, fights, dances, etc.), the data obtained presented a noticeable frequency oscillating between always and sometimes, which may be related to biosafety protocols and flexibility implemented between 2020 and 2021 and which reached spaces suitable for the practice of some of these activities. Furthermore, due to the fact that they are PE teachers, it is expected that this affinity with this repertoire of activities in particular will occur.

Chart 3: Leisure of physical/sporting interest and its frequency



Source: The authors themselves.

From the graph above, it is possible to notice an apparent similarity between the notes of male and female respondents, which is different from the findings of the study by Mayor, Silva and Lopes (2020), taking as a backdrop the practices of leisure during or at the weekend, physical/sporting activities were more prevalent among men compared to women, and also in the research by Tejera, Souza and Sampaio (2013), in

which physical/sporting interest was predominant for males, and little expressive for females.

Intellectual interest (reading books, newspapers, magazines, etc.) was more frequent between “always” (12 respondents) and “sometimes” (18 respondents). Relating these data to the self-identification by sex of the teachers in this study, it was found that this interest predominated among female respondents in relation to males.

In this sense, in the findings of the study by Mayor, Silva and Lopes (2020), a greater constancy of women's choice for activities related to intellectual interest in the pandemic scenario was observed, given their greater opportunity to enjoy in the domestic environment and/or private, these being spaces that are culturally associated with the feminine imagination and their places of care imposed on the social role of mother and/or wife.

In social interest, which is related to socializing and meeting possibilities, such as: going to parties, going out with friends, going to clubs, going to squares, it was possible to observe a more expressive number of teachers who indicated that they always go out with friends, in relation to what was recommended by teachers, and this data is also repeated when it comes to going to squares with the same frequency (always).

In line with these data Mayor, Silva and Lopes (2020, p. 176) found, in their study, “a relevant aspect in the choices of working women is the substantial increase in the experience of tourist and social interests on weekends”.

In the pandemic scenario, with restrictions on the gathering of people in the study by Conceição (2021, p. 506) reinforce that the “social interest of leisure was the most compromised due to the pandemic and its restrictive measures of social distancing

and isolation”. In this atypical pandemic context, social interest was the most missed in studies that focused on this situation (RIBEIRO *et al.*, 2020; CONCEIÇÃO, 2021).

Tourist interest, with the activity of traveling, was found to be predominantly “sometimes” (19 respondents) and “never” (9 respondents). This periodicity may be related to the fact that non-home environments suffered major impacts due to the pandemic scenario, considering the need to reduce the circulation and crowding of people, activities such as tours and trips had to be postponed or even canceled thus reaching the tourism and travel sector (CLEMENTE; STOPPA, 2020).

Such data in general also appears in the interviews carried out with all participants, highlighting that their leisure practices, predominantly, were carried out in their homes, in an adapted but still restricted way, as for example, in the report below:

I started watching series, I started doing physical activity, at **home, activity adapted**⁹ with what I had available (TEACHER 14).

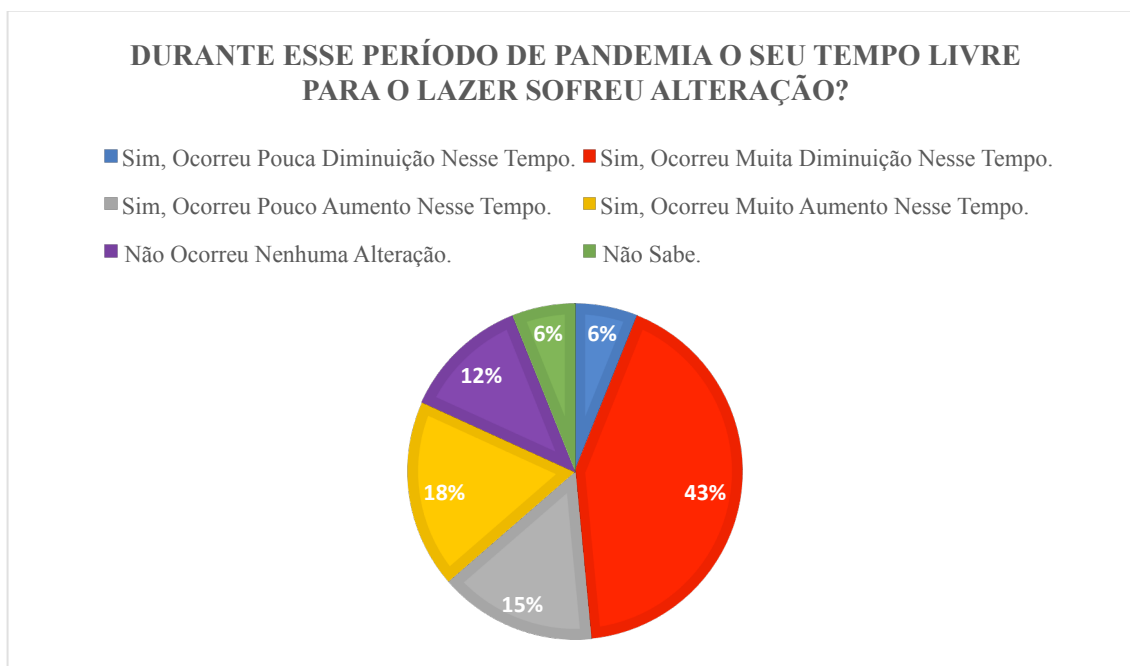
In my leisure time, I managed to meet other people despite many things being closed, **we get together a lot at home**, right. (TEACHER 1).

These notes extracted from the questionnaire and interviews, visualize a scenario in which the leisure practices of the teachers in this study faced effective implications of the pandemic on their leisure possibilities, as a time, space and experience of a practice as an affected human need by various elements that affect society.

Respondents, when asked whether their free leisure time had changed during this pandemic period, obtained the following data:

⁹ Emphasis added.

Chart 4: Pandemic and leisure time



Source: The authors themselves.

For a significant portion of respondents, leisure time suffered a significant reduction during the pandemic period. Of these 43% (14 respondents), 71% (10 respondents) are female, and 29% (4 respondents) are male. This reduction in time may be linked to the accumulation of functions performed by women during the pandemic based on a new work configuration with remote teaching, thus requiring greater training and preparation of classes along with video applications, assembly of teaching material, etc. , as well as household chores that intensified due to the necessary care due to the pandemic (PESSOA; MOURA; FARIAS, 2021).

From the perspective in which participants reported an increase in leisure time, we have a contrary panorama, where male respondents represent 83% and female respondents 17%. These data corroborate the findings of the study by Pessoa, Moura and Farias (2021), which found that the women participating in the research showed a reduction in their leisure time.

When articulating these descriptive data from the questionnaire related to time

with the CA of the interviews, in this scenario of difficulty in relation to time and the experience of leisure, it also reflects the professional performance of teachers:

I will emphasize that as a teacher, I continued working with distance learning, so that was another thing that I had a lot of difficulty with, **because there was a lot of paperwork, a lot of information, a lot of spreadsheets, a lot of activities, demands, so it turns out that at the same time that you had time because you were at home, you didn't have time, which creates all the difficulty in this sense of working**¹⁰ (TEACHER 3).

The pandemic period for teachers was very complicated, our working hours tripled!¹¹ We didn't have a defined time to leave work, so leisure issues were left aside (TEACHER 14).

In terms of our working hours, they were from noon to five, but **we had parents who would send us messages outside of working hours. An exhausting demand from management, work that we had to do outside of working hours, attachments, planning. We were left with a demand for work outside of working hours even though we were at home. So our leisure time really decreased a lot**¹² (TEACHER 15).

For most participants, the pandemic positively redefined the importance of leisure in their lives. Regarding the fact of being a teacher, it was found that, with the pandemic period and the introduction of online teaching, the workload of these people increased significantly, impacting the time for experiencing leisure.

Another important aspect for this study is related to gender, and it is therefore necessary to cover the perceptions of the male and female teachers in this study. Therefore, continuing the articulation between the descriptive analysis technique of the questionnaire and the CA on the interviews, we arrived at the third category called: perceptions and understandings about gender: its interference in time, space and leisure experiences of male and female teachers.

Gender: Is it a Difficult Question to Answer?

At the time of the interview, when asked about what they understand by

¹⁰ Emphasis added.

¹¹ Emphasis added.

¹² Emphasis added.

gender, it was possible to verify a certain difficulty and hesitation in talking about it, therefore reflected as a difficult question to answer as noted below:

Gender how can I say, wait, how can I say... **now you got me**¹³(TEACHER 1).

Come on, **I'm so scared of getting this question wrong!**¹⁴ It's a difficult question (TEACHER 3).

In addition to such fear in answering the questions asked, it was possible to perceive in the interviews the rapprochement between the understanding of gender and the female/male universe, as well as relating it to biological sex, which can be better observed below:

In today's world, where we are always updating our knowledge, I was going to say that it is **male and female gender, right, but I think it goes beyond that too, right, I'm going to stop at male and female gender**¹⁵ (TEACHER 3).

This concept, well, **I'm going to take a masculine and feminine basis**¹⁶ (laughs). But today there are so many questions that are arising, right? (TEACHER 28).

The relationship between gender and the feminine, masculine universe and their identity roles are part of a historical and social construction, which reflects on the understanding of what gender is for people through a cultural structuring of this knowledge, even understanding that this process does not develop from passive and immutable bodies, but through a scenario in constant reformulation (BUTLER, 2020; CONNELL, 2016).

This approach of understanding that connects gender to feminine and masculine is part of the everyday way in which gender is identified to us, where we recognize what is feminine and/or masculine and from this we are guided and position ourselves before the world (CONNELL; PEARSE, 2015).

¹³ Emphasis added.

¹⁴ Emphasis added.

¹⁵ Emphasis added.

¹⁶ Emphasis added.

However, it is noteworthy that other responses obtained in the interviews already reveal to us a context of more critical and contextualized perceptions, which are already related to advances in the exploration of the theme of gender in the social, political and scientific fields, bringing reflections on the construction of the identities and subjectivities of the subjects and their definitions (KNIJNIK, 2010):

For me, genders are social markers that place our bodies within rules and what is expected of people. A man, whether masculine or a provider of money, is expected to marry a woman, to have a certain way of being. So, gender, for me, is this package of questions that define, you know, biological sexes, if you were born with a penis, you have to behave in a certain way, if you were born with a vagina, you have to behave, be this or that¹⁷(TEACHER 6).

Gender, it is related to the subjectivity of the subject, right, so it has to do with female and male relationships, but not necessarily with biological sex, but practices, in the way, with behavior¹⁸ (TEACHER 14).

Gender is how a person identifies themselves, how they recognize themselves, how they feel most comfortable, and how they want to be treated¹⁹(TEACHER 15).

It is necessary to highlight that Professor 6 and Professor 15 identify themselves as cis men and both indicated, in relation to sexual orientation, that they are gay, with Professor 6 also self-declared as black and Professor 15 as white. This is yet another indication that understanding terminologies is not yet incorporated knowledge for most people.

Another important element to be analyzed is that 78.8% of the participants in this study indicated that they found it difficult to experience leisure in the period from March 2020 to March 2021. In the questionnaire, when asked whether these difficulties were related to their gender, 72.7%, a total of 24 respondents, indicated “no”, 24.2% of which 8 respondents indicated “maybe” and only 3% (one respondent) selected the option “yes”. It is noteworthy that of the 24 respondents who indicated the “no” option, 14 identified themselves as female.

¹⁷ Emphasis added.

¹⁸ Emphasis added.

¹⁹ Emphasis added.

It is important to highlight, for example, the situation of Teachers 3, 14, 29 and 30 who indicated negatively in the questionnaire, however, when conducting the interview and being asked about their leisure practices during the pandemic from March 2020 to March 2021, they announced that they were impacted by some gender issue, as perceived in the reports below:

Yes, I, as a woman, not only during the pandemic, but let's focus on the pandemic. I think we are harmed in terms of fear, just because I am a woman or because I wear comfortable clothes to practice physical activity, so the issue of getting around, the place I will be. All of this impacts on general life, and on leisure, every place I go I have this concern²⁰(TEACHER 3).

I believe so! Because, unfortunately, in the society where we live, patriarchy is very strong and machismo still prevails. So, the woman who had to stay at home during the pandemic changed her entire journey, expanded it even more, almost suffocating, honestly! While in men we don't see this²¹(TEACHER 14).

Indeed, very much! It's because we, because we are women, you know, that thing about us being women, the housework that we have to do is always overwhelming for women, housework, childcare, work has theoretically increased, so, As you've seen, we're women as we are, so there's everything left for us²²(TEACHER 29).

Therefore, based on this reality revealed in the speeches of these teachers, gender was configured as an influencing element in their time possibilities and consequently leisure practices during the period from March 2020 to March 2021, through a panorama, in which these Teachers suffered direct implications in their daily lives, with the exhausting workload in line with other social, family and professional obligations.

In the study by Pessoa, Moura and Farias (2021), when analyzing the composition of teachers' social time during the pandemic, it was found that the quality of life of these people was affected, as the organization of work, domestic tasks and the confinement at home provided feelings of overload for these women, which is in line with the statements of the teachers from Sete Lagoas (MG).

²⁰ Emphasis added.

²¹ Emphasis added.

²² Emphasis added.

The only respondent who responded positively to the question whether gender was an influencing element in their difficulties in experiencing leisure during the pandemic was Teacher 15, who identifies as male, cis and gay. The participant, in the interview, emphasized:

We live in a very exclusionary society! We notice a very disguised prejudice, nowadays it is not something so blatant anymore because there is law. I've been noticing that people from the LGBTQIA+ community have been taking up space²³(TEACHER 15).

Gender-based violence against the LGBTQIA+ community is part of a sad scenario that perpetuates itself in our society in its historical and social construction, fostering an exclusionary panorama that reflects on the affirmation and legitimization of other basic social rights of these people.

In this scenario, during the interview, the following question was asked to participants: in your leisure experiences during the pandemic, did gender issues influence or limit in any way your access to public or private leisure spaces and facilities? If so, how?

In this analysis, it is important to understand the statements of three different groups: the first being composed of respondents who identified themselves as female (teachers), the second being teachers who declared themselves gay and male and the third being teachers who indicated that they were of the male and heterosexual.

Table 2: Gender issues influenced or limited in some way their access to public and/or private leisure spaces and equipment during the pandemic – GROUP I

According to your leisure experiences during the pandemic, have gender issues influenced or limited in any way your access to public or private leisure spaces and facilities? If so, how?	Answers
Teacher 3	Yes, because I was a woman I stopped going places, because I was afraid of going alone. ²⁴
Teacher 29	Yes, because we are women and go to the place alone, sometimes the majority of the public is male, so because we are women we

²³ Emphasis added.

²⁴ Emphasis added.

	don't go. I believe that during the pandemic violence against women increased significantly. There are places where men keep harassing us. ²⁵
Teacher 30	Yes, I am afraid of violence, most places are frequented by males ²⁶

Source: The authors themselves.

Table 3: Gender issues influenced or limited in some way your access to public or private leisure spaces and facilities during the pandemic – GROUP II

According to your leisure experiences during the pandemic, have gender issues influenced or limited in any way your access to public or private leisure spaces and facilities? If so, how?	Answers
Teacher 6	Yes, very much. I always say that anyone who goes through these issues related to gender and sexuality, we think twice or three times before going somewhere. Because we never know if this place will fit us, as a human being, right?
Teacher 15	No, not with me! Interviewer: And during your life, was this a factor that limited you from going to any public or private space due to gender issues? Teacher 15: No doubt about it. Fear of wearing a certain outfit. It's something that straight people don't have to worry about, we have to worry all the time that we're going to tell people not to know that we're gay, we were afraid of people knowing that we're gay. ²⁷

Source: The authors themselves.

Table 4: Gender issues influenced or limited in some way their access to public or private leisure spaces and equipment during the pandemic – GROUP III

According to your leisure experiences during the pandemic, have gender issues influenced or limited in any way your access to public or private leisure spaces and facilities? If so, how?	Answers
Teacher 1	No, for me there is no problem. ²⁸
Teacher 28	No, not because of gender. ²⁹ What limited access was not having vaccination.

Source: The authors themselves.

As can be seen, gender-related issues impact social groups differently, and it is

²⁵ Emphasis added.

²⁶ Emphasis added.

²⁷ Emphasis added.

²⁸ Emphasis added.

²⁹ Emphasis added.

noticeable that for the majority of female respondents, as well as for LGBTQIA+ people, gender is (or has been) an influencing element in their opportunities to access and experience leisure in public and/or private spaces.

Therefore, access to spaces intended for leisure by these social groups finds in their gender condition a barrier that is based on the fear of suffering some type of violence, thus limiting the conditions for enjoying leisure in the most varied places, having in view of the connectivity between gender elements with the production and reproduction of social roles, power relations and gender symbology (KNIJNIK, 2010).

In another scenario, on the other hand, the interviewed teachers who recognize themselves as male, cis and heterosexual men, in their daily lives, elements related to gender and its implications are not present as social markers that limit their possibilities of experiencing leisure.

In this regard, the relevance of understanding the data obtained in this study is noted as a way of enriching the academic field related to leisure, contemplating and recognizing gender as a social marker that impacts people's daily lives in different ways, thus becoming , an important tool for analyzing social reality – specifically in this research by a group of PE teachers from the city of Sete Lagoas (MG).

Final Considerations

This paper, as well as the entire social structure, was crossed by a global health crisis, which reconfigured the entire social organization around the world. Thus, this study, in particular, analyzed the relationships between gender and the leisure experiences of PE teachers at public schools in Sete Lagoas during the pandemic, taking the period from March 2020 to March 2021 as a time frame.

With regard to gender issues, it was noticed that for the majority of people in

the research, elements related to gender may reflect aspects of differentiation of opportunities, conditions and enjoyment in their leisure experiences, however, when questioning whether the difficulties faced in pandemic to experience leisure was related to gender issues, most of them signaled negatively. However, in the process of developing the research, it was found, for example, that teachers who had indicated negatively in the questionnaire, in the interviews already indicated another position.

Regarding the perceptions and appropriations of these teachers, three groups were particularly evident in the interviews, namely: one made up of people who indicated that they were female, cis and heterosexual women, the other made up of participants who indicated that they were male, cis and heterosexual men, and finally those made up of people who declare themselves gay, male and cis men.

From these groups it was found that gender issues directly impacted the first and last groups mentioned above. It was noted, for example, that aspects related to gender influenced these people's access to public and/or private leisure facilities or facilities during the pandemic, highlighting a scenario of fear, insecurity, and violence that is heightened due to gender.

This paper also sought to identify and analyze the leisure practices of PE teachers in the context of the pandemic. In this section, the predominance of activities related to virtual interest was found, such as, for example, the use of social networks such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and TikTok, as well as the use of digital platforms such as Netflix and Prime Video, which is in line with the findings of other studies that addressed leisure during the pandemic, with virtual interest prevailing (MONTENEGRO; QUEIROZ; DIAS, 2020; RIBEIRO *et al.*, 2020; PESSOA; MOURA; FARIAS, 2021; CONCEIÇÃO, 2021).

Finally, it is expected that other research approaches that focus on leisure and gender will gain greater notoriety. Highlighting the need for attention and contextualization of this topic also from an intersectional perspective, which can provide an approach to the social reality of different people and their subjectivities.

Therefore, it is possible to support and stimulate the creation of public leisure policies that articulate in their development the breaking of the different hierarchies and inequalities that are interrelated in leisure and gender in society.

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Address of the Authors:

Fernanda Santos de Abreu
Electronic Mail: fernandaabreuedfisica@gmail.com

Elisângela Chaves
Electronic Mail: elischaves@ufmg.br