

**REPORTS FROM THE LITERATURE ON WOMEN'S LEISURE BARRIERS****Received on:** March 16, 2024**Passed on:** September 02, 2024License: 

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**ABSTRACT:** Leisure is crucial for personal and social development, but women often face disparities in the time available for it. The aim of this study was to analyze scientific production to identify and understand the barriers to women's leisure. The categorical content analysis of 17 articles elucidated that time; race and ethnicity; financial resources; gender and sexuality; and space and safety are barriers that have limited women's leisure experiences. It is hoped that the conclusions of this study will fuel discussions and initiatives aimed at creating a more inclusive reality that truly allows all women, in their diverse possibilities and expressions, to enjoy satisfactory leisure experiences.

**KEYWORDS:** Leisure activities. Women. Barriers.

**RELATOS NA E DA LITERATURA SOBRE AS BARREIRAS AO LAZER DAS MULHERES**

**RESUMO:** O lazer é crucial para o desenvolvimento pessoal e social, mas as mulheres frequentemente enfrentam disparidades no tempo disponível para ele. O objetivo desse trabalho foi analisar a produção científica, com o objetivo de identificar e compreender as barreiras ao lazer das mulheres. A análise categórica do conteúdo de 17 artigos elucidou que tempo; cor e raça; recursos financeiros; gênero e sexualidade; e espaço e segurança são barreiras que tem limitado a experiência das mulheres ao lazer. Almeja-se que as conclusões deste estudo possam alimentar discussões e iniciativas que visem a criação de uma realidade mais inclusiva, que verdadeiramente permita que todas as mulheres, nas suas diversidades de possibilidades e expressão, desfrutem de experiências de lazer satisfatórias.

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**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Atividades de lazer. Mulher. Barreiras.

## **Introduction**

Leisure, guaranteed as a social right by the Brazilian Constitution of 1988 (Brazil, 1988), represents an essential component to promote well-being and quality of life. In addition to offering moments of relaxation and fun, this dimension plays a fundamental role in the physical, emotional and social balance of individuals. More than just moments of entertainment, leisure constitutes a period of experiences that directly influence human development, standing out as a facilitator of personal and social development (Dumazedier, 1980; Marcellino, 2006).

In Brazil, there is a “rapid” and progressive convergence of the patterns of participation of women and men in the labor market. However, this equivalence is not reflected in the distribution of domestic responsibilities and caregiving, resulting in notable disparities in the time available for leisure, a situation that frequently affects women (Bonalume; Isayama, 2018). Such inequalities, originating from diverse sources, significantly impact universal access to this dimension of life (Gomes, 2023). This multifaceted limitation can generate substantial disparities in leisure enjoyment, especially when considering women's specific experiences.

Analyzing women's experiences in the context of leisure is essential for a comprehensive understanding of the impact of this dimension on people's lives. Persistent gender inequalities, which relegate women to a system of disparities, have significant implications. These implications are evident in the excessive time dedicated to socio-domestic tasks and family care and the limited time dedicated to leisure (Cunha; Carvalho, 2021; Bonalume; Isayama, 2018). The system of persistent gender inequality is directly reflected in women's leisure opportunities, influencing their access,

participation and enjoyment of involvement in these activities. Understanding the intrinsic relationship between women's experiences, gender disparities, and leisure opportunities is essential to promoting a comprehensive analysis of this vital dimension of people's lives.

Leisure experiences differ significantly between men and women, being shaped by social expectations related to gender, imposing several restrictions on our daily lives, including moments dedicated to leisure (Barbosa; Liechty; Pedercini, 2013). Namely, inequality of opportunities in gender relations often does not receive due consideration in public policy proposals aimed at sport and leisure in Brazil (Goellner *et al.*, 2010), negatively impacting barriers that limit, in particular, women's access to leisure. The lack of addressing this issue in public policies highlights the need for a more in-depth analysis of gender disparities in leisure contexts, aiming to promote inclusive and equitable strategies that consider the different experiences and expectations, especially of women in this area.

It is crucial to highlight the need to expand studies on women's experiences in the context of leisure, covering a diversity of experiences and considering factors such as social class, ethnicity, gender, time and space, as well as the relationship between these factors. Understanding these experiences becomes fundamental, especially when taking into account the different social classes, ethnic groups and gender variables that influence the experiences of this population (Cunha; Carvalho, 2021). Given this scenario, analyzing the barriers faced by women in leisure emerges as an essential endeavor to promote equity and inclusion. This study aims to analyze specialized scientific production, with the objective of identifying and understanding the specific and recurring barriers that women encounter in their leisure experiences, recognizing the importance of addressing the nuances of the female gender in this context.

The relevance of this study is evidenced by the scarcity of specific research that addresses the barriers faced by women in their leisure experiences. Although leisure is recognized as an essential component of well-being, the lack of in-depth research on women's particularities in this context limits our understanding and, consequently, the effectiveness of policies and practices aimed at promoting equal access to leisure. The lack of studies dedicated to this topic contributes to the reproduction of gender inequalities in the leisure sector, negatively impacting women's participation, satisfaction and opportunities in this area. Thus, this study seeks to fill and/or elucidate this gap by critically analyzing existing scientific production, offering information that can enhance reflections, policies and interventions aimed at promoting equal access to leisure for women from different contexts and identities. By highlighting the importance of this research, we aim to contribute to building a more comprehensive and sensitive understanding of the complexities of women's leisure experiences, fostering a more inclusive and equitable approach in this field.

## **Method**

This qualitative approach work was constructed from a literature review, which is the gathering, the joining of ideas from different authors on a given topic, obtained through readings, from research conducted by the researcher. The literature review is, in this sense, the documentation made by the researcher about the work, the research that he is proposing to do (Brizola; Fantin, 2017).

To carry out this review, the keywords and their synonyms were selected from DECS and/or DeCSMeSH: woman, women, gender, leisure, leisure activities. The selection of descriptors in both databases is important to ensure standardization, accuracy, hierarchical organization and semantic richness in the search and retrieval of

health information. The databases facilitate communication between researchers, the accurate indexing of articles, and the location of relevant information, contributing to the advancement of knowledge in the field.

To search for texts, the two main journals on Leisure Studies were previously selected: Brazilian Journal of Leisure Studies (RBEL) and Licere Journal. The choice of RBEL and Licere to search for articles, in addition to the specificity in the approach to the themes in the journals, is justified by the access to quality content, the broad thematic scope in the possible relationships with leisure, free access, editorial quality and peer review, regular updating and academic recognition of these sources of information. These characteristics contribute to obtaining reliable and up-to-date information, essential for research and evidence-based practices in the health field.

The outcome of each selected study was analyzed using categorical content analysis (Bardin, 2011), which is a methodological approach widely used in qualitative research to analyze textual data. This approach seeks to identify, categorize and interpret the themes, meanings and patterns present in the textual data, allowing for an in-depth understanding of the analyzed content. Bardin's content analysis follows a series of sequential and systematic steps, which involve coding and categorizing data, drawing inferences, and interpreting results.

## **Results**

Between 01/27/24 and 02/16/24, 12 searches were conducted using the keywords in a combined manner. The same searches were conducted in the databases of both journals. In total, 147 complete texts were found, which after reading the title and abstract, totaled 103 texts. After eliminating duplicates and reading them in full, 17 articles were selected to compose this study, nine from the Licere and eight from RBEL (TABLE 1).

**Table 1: Selected texts**

Author (year)	Journal	Title
Goellner <i>et al.</i> (2010)	Licere	Leisure and gender in city sports and leisure programs
Barbosa, Liechty and Pedercini (2013)		Restrictions on women's leisure: particularities of leisure experiences of homosexual women
Tejera, Sousa and Sampaio (2013)		Gender relations in the leisure options of people working in work cooperatives
Silvestre and Amaral (2017)		The leisure time of teachers in the São Paulo state school system: a comparative investigation between genders
Meyer and Silva (2020)		Gender, culture and leisure: strengths and challenges of this articulation
Cunha and Carvalho (2021)		Studies on women in leisure activities in the journals Licere and RBEL
Pereira and Couto (2021)		Work and leisure interfaces: a study with young apprentices in the context of the Education and Work Program (PET)
Dores <i>et al.</i> (2021)		Breaking the silence about the leisure profile of the black population in Brazil
Wedig <i>et al.</i> (2020)		Sociability and leisure among peasant women: experiences at the mothers' club
Pinto and Almeida (2014)	RBEL	Queer fans on the field: the emergence of groups challenging homophobia and sexism in football
Bonalume and Isayama (2018)		Women in the Brazilian leisure research
Montenegro and Isayama (2019)		Leisure and the city: the perspective of university professors in Pará and Amapá
Rodrigues and Pontes (2020)		Measuring the level of satisfaction of users of urban parks in Belém do Pará
Soutto Mayor <i>et al.</i> (2020)		Barriers to access to leisure activities for women according to race/color and social class in the Southeast and Northeast regions of Brazil
Bonalume (2022)		Women's leisure: a political action
Tavares <i>et al.</i> (2022)		Leisure-time physical activities: a preliminary analysis of social markers of difference
Moreira and Couto (2023)		Women and e-sports: a look at motivations and discrimination

**Source:** Prepared by the authors.

After reading and analyzing the selected texts, categories were identified that encapsulate the main information related to women's non-participation in leisure experiences: barriers. The categories, organized to highlight the central information of each theme, are as follows: a) time; b) color and race; c) financial resources; d) gender and sexuality; and e) space and security.

The analysis of barriers to leisure identifies factors already recognized in Leisure Studies, such as time, color and race, and financial resources. However, the relevance of other elements in the specific contexts of women's experience is highlighted, notably

gender and sexuality; and space and security. It is important to emphasize that these barriers are not isolated, presenting permeability and an interchangeable dialogue with one another.

The distinct presentation of each seeks to provide a comprehensive and integrated understanding of the various facets involving female limitations in the context of leisure. This approach allows for the analysis of the complex interactions between these factors, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics that shape women's leisure experiences.

## Time

Cunha and Carvalho's (2021) analysis of barriers to access to leisure, based on the book "Lazer no Brasil", highlights the relevance of limitations in time and financial resources, with lack of time being one of the barriers most cited by women. Goellner *et al.* (2010) identified that the lack of time, especially due to work outside the home and family care, is a predominant concern among women. The influence of these barriers transcends mere access restrictions, affecting both the quantity and quality of time dedicated to leisure.

Silvestre and Amaral (2017) revealed significant gender disparities in this context, indicating that women dedicate fewer hours to leisure compared to men. This discrepancy in the distribution of leisure time between genders points to fundamental inequalities that permeate leisure experiences. Understanding these barriers and disparities is essential to promoting inclusive strategies that address not only access to leisure, but also equity in the distribution of leisure time between men and women.

The regional analysis of barriers to leisure highlights the complexity of women's experiences, highlighting significant disparities, particularly in relation to the "time" barrier. In the northeast region, data reveal that 4.5% of White women, 3.4% of Black

women and 10.2% of Brown women indicate limited time as an obstacle to leisure. In contrast to the southeast region, there is a greater proximity in values, with 21.8% of White women, 20.2% of Black women and 15.2% of Brown women facing this barrier (Soutto Mayor *et al.*, 2020). Intriguingly, even when considering different filters, such as social class, the "time" barrier persists more frequently in the southeast region.

This trend also aligns with data related to the longer working hours faced by Black women, as indicated by Dores *et al.* (2021). This correlation between the availability of leisure time and working conditions suggests that Black women face not only regional but also structural challenges, directly impacting the number of hours dedicated to leisure activities. These findings highlight the importance of integrated and targeted approaches to overcoming regional and structural barriers that limit equal access to leisure time.

Viewing barriers to access to leisure from a critical perspective reveals the intrinsic complexity of women's experiences and the urgent need for more inclusive approaches. The lack of time, identified as a major barrier, reflects the realities faced by women, especially due to work and family responsibilities. Studies by Goellner *et al.* (2010) and Silvestre and Amaral (2017) highlight the unequal distribution of leisure time between genders, exposing fundamental disparities. The regional analysis by Soutto Mayor *et al.* (2020) and racial by Dores *et al.* (2021), particularly in the comparison between the northeast and southeast regions, highlights not only regional but also structural challenges related to the long working hours faced by Black women. The persistence of the "time" barrier even after considering different filters highlights the need for integrated strategies to overcome systemic inequalities. Given this scenario, it becomes imperative to adopt specific measures that not only enable access to leisure, but also address equity in the distribution of time for these experiences. This reflection

emphasizes the importance of public policies (TAVARES *et al.*, 2022) and social practices that consider intersectionalities, recognizing and addressing regional and structural barriers that directly impact women participation in recreational activities.

### **Color and Race<sup>3</sup>**

The approach to leisure in the context of Black women is still not very expressive in research, revealing a scenario in which there is a limited and insignificant number of studies dedicated to this specific demographic (Lira *et al.*, 2011; Viana, 2013; Pisani, 2014). Furthermore, many studies neglect the operationalization of the color/race category, treating women as a homogeneous group in leisure practices (Scochi *et al.*, 2004; Garcia, 2005; Alves; Trovó; Nogueira, 2010). The scarcity of research focusing on the leisure activities of Black women points to a significant gap in understanding the specific experiences of this group. This lack of representation can perpetuate stereotypes and generalizations, ignoring the diversity of experiences and needs within this community. Therefore, there is a pressing need to broaden and deepen research, adopting a more sensitive approach to the nuances of intersectionality, in order to offer more comprehensive understandings and inform inclusive policies and practices in the context of leisure (Soutto Mayor *et al.*, 2020).

Gender and racial inequalities in income, as evidenced by Dores *et al.* (2021), highlight the persistent wage disparity faced by Black women, who generally receive a lower average salary than men, regardless of race, and White women. This wage disparity not only reflects a scenario of economic injustice, but also directly impacts leisure choices and access to certain experiences. Black women face significant limitations in their consumption capacity, conditioning their type of access to leisure

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<sup>3</sup>The terms Black man or woman are expressed here as in each source study.

according to their socioeconomic status. These financial constraints can result in fewer opportunities to participate in cultural, tourism, and recreational activities, contributing to a more restricted and less diverse leisure experience.

In this context, Dores *et al.* (2021) highlight that the wage gap becomes a substantial barrier to the full enjoyment of leisure, especially for Black women, who are the most impoverished and have the least education. Bonalume (2022) expands this discussion by addressing the absolute lack of contact these women have with the right to leisure and their lack of knowledge about the available options, especially in the context of artistic and cultural activities. Precarious living conditions and exclusionary practices deprive women of opportunities to experience, enjoy and learn about a variety of leisure options. This situation highlights the urgent need for more equitable and inclusive approaches in public leisure policies, considering the intersectionalities that permeate women's experiences across different social strata.

Faced with underrepresentation in Leisure Studies, Black women find themselves at a crossroads of inequalities, where the lack of research dedicated to this specific demographic perpetuates stereotypes and generalizations. Negligence in operationalizing the color/race category contributes to the invisibility of these women's unique experiences, ignoring the complexity of the experiences and needs within this community. Intersectionality, addressed by Soutto Mayor *et al.* (2020), emerges as an essential tool for unraveling the nuances underlying interactions between gender and race in the context of leisure. At the same time, the wage inequalities highlighted by Dores *et al.* (2021) reveal not only an economic disparity, but also a substantial barrier to the full enjoyment of leisure for Black women. Financial limitations imposed by lower wages affect access to leisure experiences, perpetuating a significant restriction on the variety and quality of leisure enjoyed by this segment of the population. The

urgency of more equitable approaches in public leisure policies is highlighted, requiring not only the correction of wage disparities, but also the creation of inclusive opportunities that recognize and value the distinct experiences of Black women in different social strata.

## Financial Resources

The intersection of gender and racial inequalities in income reveals a complex and interconnected picture, directly influencing women's access to leisure. The data highlighted by Dores *et al.* (2021) on the gender and wage gaps particularly emphasize the challenging situation faced by Black women. These wage inequalities not only reflect economic differences, but are also intrinsically linked to consumption capacity, time available for leisure and types of access to such activities.

When analyzing the barrier related to "money/financial resources", Soutto Mayor *et al.* (2020) highlighted significant regional distinctions. In the Northeast, 19.7% of Black women indicate this barrier, contrasting with 7.9% of White women. In the southeast region, 17.9% of Black women report financial limitations, while 11.9% of White women highlight this barrier. Brown women, in both regions, also have higher values than White women. These numbers clearly illustrate how racial inequalities manifest themselves in leisure experiences, where economic factors disproportionately impact Black women, limiting their leisure experiences.

The complexity of the intersections between gender and racial inequalities in income paints a challenging picture, with direct implications for women's access to leisure. The data presented by Dores *et al.* (2021) highlight the particularly difficult situation faced by Black women, highlighting not only economic disparities, but also their close connection with consumption capacity, time available for leisure and the

different ways of accessing these activities. When examining the barrier related to "money/financial resources," stark regional and racial distinctions emerge, highlighting how Black women face disproportionate challenges in leisure experiences, shaped by economic factors. The numbers clearly demonstrate how racial inequalities are reflected in these contexts, significantly restricting Black women's recreational opportunities.

Thus, the connection between wage, gender, and racial inequalities and perceived "money/financial resources" barriers highlights the pressing need for comprehensive approaches to address these structural disparities. Overcoming such barriers goes beyond ensuring fair wages; it requires a profound transformation of economic and social systems. Promoting equal opportunities so that all women can fully enjoy their leisure time requires actions that systematically address the roots of inequalities, ensuring that public policies are built on foundations that recognize and eliminate the structural barriers that perpetuate disparities.

## Gender and Sexuality

Differences in the understanding of leisure between genders point to distinct patterns of free time experience, elucidating differences in leisure experiences between men and women (Barbosa; Liechty; Pedercini, 2013; Pinto; Almeida, 2014; Silvestre; Amaral, 2017; Rodrigues; Pontes, 2020; Soutto Mayor *et al.*, 2020; Bonalume, 2022; Tavares *et al.*, 2022; Wedig *et al.*, 2020). Men often highlight fun and action as central elements of leisure, while women more often associate their leisure experiences with activities carried out in the domestic environment and the search for tranquility (Goellner *et al.*, 2010).

This divergence suggests the existence of social and cultural constructs that shape individual perceptions of what constitutes meaningful leisure experiences.

Furthermore, gender distinctions in leisure activities, with women more involved in household chores and men directing their activities towards fun and sport, reflect the persistence of ingrained gender norms in society (Goellner *et al.*, 2010). This dichotomy highlights the importance of a critical and reflective approach in promoting more egalitarian leisure experiences, considering and challenging the social constructs that limit the diversity of experiences in free time.

Historically, Physical Education was - and has been - influenced by gender norms that dictate distinct sporting practices for men and women, resulting in the segregation of both in physical activities considered socially appropriate for their respective genders, regardless of social class (Goellner *et al.*, 2010). This approach contributes to the perpetuation of gender stereotypes, shaping sporting identities according to socially determined norms. An emblematic example of this phenomenon, exported by Bonalume (2022), occurred in the context of football in Brazil, where the prohibition of women practicing sports considered "incompatible with the conditions of their nature" was established by Decree-Law 3,199, of April 14, 1941, during the government of Getúlio Vargas. This ban, which remained in force until 1983, explicitly included football among the sports considered masculine (Brazil, 1941). This regulation highlighted the need for politicized conduct, significantly influencing female participation in football and highlighting the historical burden we carry in relation to gender norms in the sports scene.

Segregating physical activities based on gender not only limits opportunities for participation in sports, but also reinforces a harmful dichotomy, perpetuating the idea that certain activities are more suitable for men or women, including leisure experiences. Therefore, it is essential to reflect on these practices, seeking to promote

more inclusive and egalitarian social environments that recognize and value the diversity of interests and abilities, regardless of gender.

In contemporary times, social constructs based on cisgender and heteronormativity exert a significant influence, shaping the knowledge considered true (Meyer; Silva, 2020). In the context of the production of meanings about sexuality and gender in the leisure sphere, entertainment practices are intrinsically connected to pre-existing social norms. Understanding these meanings attributed to sexuality and gender in the context of leisure reveals the permeability of normative structures in various aspects of life. Such perspectives not only reflect but also contribute to the reproduction of preconceived ideas, often restricting the expression and full experience of diverse identities and sexual orientations. An analysis of these patterns is crucial to promoting more inclusive and respectful leisure environments, challenging the norms that have historically shaped individual and collective experiences.

Shame and gender stereotypes play significant roles in shaping prejudiced and discriminatory attitudes in the spheres of physical and leisure activities, clearly delineating spaces frequented by different sexes (Goellner *et al.*, 2010). The influence of gender identity seems to manifest itself notably in the type of activity carried out, resulting in stigmatization in certain contexts (Tejera; Sousa; Sampaio, 2013). This stigmatization sometimes reflects a pattern of gender bias, where stereotypes are associated with practices considered "masculine" or "feminine," perpetuating limitations and restrictions based on social norms. By recognizing and analyzing these patterns, we can challenge the rigidity of gender stereotypes that shape choices and experiences in leisure activities.

The fact that women face resistance and prejudice when engaging in activities culturally associated with men, such as football, highlights a complex dynamic of

prejudices reproduced in various contexts (Tejera; Sousa; Sampaio, 2013). This resistance often has its roots in gender perceptions perpetuated by parents, as evidenced in cases where mothers may not allow their daughters to participate in activities such as soccer, mistakenly associating these practices as exclusive to men (Goellner *et al.*, 2010). According to Bonalume (2022), women playing football goes beyond mere male entertainment, representing a political position, since this practice is permeated by discussions and debates about gender equality and female empowerment.

The division in sports practices is not restricted to gender binarism, but also encompasses motor skills as an influential factor in participation. The association of certain activities with stereotypes of masculinity or femininity can result in avoidance and prejudice, contributing to the reproduction of rigidly defined gender norms (Goellner *et al.*, 2010). In the specific context of football, there are stereotypes that create embarrassment for girls, who may feel inhibited by male observation, in addition to facing labels that perpetuate the idea that women are less skilled in this sport. The male dominance in football reinforces gender dynamics that, in some cases, limit the full and equal participation of women, highlighting the need for inclusive approaches that challenge these stereotypes and provide more equitable sporting environments. This reflection highlights the importance of going beyond analyzing gender divisions, considering other dimensions, such as motor skills, to promote more diverse and equal participation in physical and sports activities.

In eSports, women's participation is also affected by stereotypes and performance challenges that permeate gaming culture. The identity of female gamers is often prejudiced and associated with supposed limitations in gaming performance, highlighting a harmful gender bias (Moreira; Couto, 2023). Entrenched gender role expectations fuel persistent stereotypes, wrongly suggesting that women are inherently

less skilled at video games (Consalvo, 2012; Zolides, 2015; Schelfhout; Bowers; Hao, 2019). Furthermore, eSports reflect patterns of male dominance, creating an environment in which women are perceived as outsiders and often subjected to hostile and toxic treatment (Moreira; Couto, 2023). The valorization of hegemonic masculinity in this context contributes to the creation of significant barriers, perpetuating the stigmatization of women in electronic sports (Nash, 2017). This scenario highlights the need to challenge and transform gender norms ingrained in gaming culture, promoting a more inclusive and equitable environment for women in eSports.

Female participation in activities traditionally considered "masculine", such as football, electronic sports, capoeira and jiu-jitsu, highlights the existence of gender distinctions in leisure practices (Goellner *et al.*, 2010; Moreira; Couto, 2023). This search for involvement in spaces historically dominated by men does not occur without challenges, facing threats, hostility and constraints that make it difficult to transcend the virtual sphere and the interest in appropriating the places where these practices are carried out.

These demands have also triggered significant reflections and increased the visibility of the debate on homophobia and sexism as segregating factors that create obstacles to the participation of women and LGBTQIAPN + community members in the sporting context, particularly in football. These demands seek recognition and respect for multiple subjectivities, representing a crucial step towards building a more egalitarian society. The analysis of these dynamics highlights the importance of overcoming gender barriers in accessing activities considered traditionally masculine, contributing to the transformation of discriminatory norms and practices in the sports and leisure scene (Pinto; Almeida, 2014).

Sports practice, such as attending capoeira classes, is permeated by issues related to sexual identity, highlighting the persistence of prejudice and discrimination based on gender identity (Goellner *et al.*, 2010). In addition to the barriers faced by women in general, lesbians face specific challenges related to their sexuality, being the target of stereotypes associated with homosexuality, in general, and lesbianism, in particular (Barbosa; Liechty; Pederzini, 2013). These experiences highlight the need for more inclusive and diversity-sensitive approaches to sport practices, recognizing and addressing the complex intersections between sexual identity, prejudice, and leisure participation. Promoting more welcoming and respectful sports environments will contribute to a more enriching and harmonious experience for all, regardless of sexual orientation.

### ***Space and Security***

The space designated for leisure is a scenario that is simultaneously gendered and genderifying, influencing and reproducing distinct behaviors, actions, discourses and practices for men and women. These discrepancies reaffirm hegemonic representations of masculinities and femininities (Goellner *et al.*, 2010). In the broader context of questions about gender, body and leisure, it is clear that gender plays a crucial role in assigning meanings to bodily differences, raising fundamental questions in areas such as education, sport and leisure (Meyer; Silva, 2020). The significant differences in the choice of activities between men and women, as observed by Tejera, Sousa and Sampaio (2013), are not only a reflection of the cultural expectations associated with each gender, but also a manifestation of the gender socialization that permeates the leisure space. This analysis highlights the need to question and challenge

gender norms that shape the use and occupation of leisure space, promoting more inclusive and equitable environments for both men and women.

These discriminatory patterns are also reflected in specific leisure spaces, as observed in a survey conducted with participants of the Sports and Leisure in the City Program (PELC) in Porto Alegre and Rio de Janeiro, where men avoided dance classes because they considered them feminine practices, while women who opted for soccer often faced restrictions, using improvised courts at less popular times (Montenegro; Isayama, 2019). These examples illustrate the need to challenge and transform entrenched gender norms, both in family contexts and in leisure spaces, to create more inclusive and egalitarian environments.

Satisfaction rates regarding the leisure environment reveal significant disparities between men and women, highlighting the feeling of safety as a crucial factor in the experience of these spaces (Rodrigues; Pontes, 2020). The analysis shows that women, compared to men, have lower satisfaction rates, influenced by the variability of the feeling of security, which can be impacted by the location and region in which they carry out physical or leisure activities.

This difference in perception is particularly evident, as women place greater importance on safety when engaging in physical or leisure activities than men. Furthermore, regardless of the parks' intrinsic level of safety, women feel less safe than men. This dissatisfaction extends to parks located in both central and peripheral regions, indicating that the issue of safety is central to women's assessment of the location of these leisure spaces (Rodrigues; Pontes, 2020). These findings highlight the importance of considering and addressing women's specific safety concerns when formulating strategies for developing more inclusive and egalitarian leisure environments.

The eSports scene is largely marked by hostility and discrimination, with an emphasis on masculinity as a central element of this environment (Schelfhout; Bowers; Hao, 2019; Moreira; Couto, 2023). As a result, women are often subject to embarrassment related to various factors, contributing to the creation of a less welcoming and consequently unsafe space. This scenario raises critical reflections on the gender norms entrenched in this context, raising the need to address and overcome these issues to promote more inclusive and equitable participation of women in eSports. Understanding these dynamics is crucial to effectively implementing measures that can significantly transform the culture of these spaces, making them more accessible and fair to all people, regardless of gender.

The search for comfortable leisure spaces is also a reality for homosexual women who often face the fear of judgment from heterosexuals and discrimination from the gay community. These women face difficulties and restrictions in using public spaces, shaped by discourses and ideologies that establish powerful relationships. Specific restrictions for lesbians extend beyond experiences in urban public spaces and affect their leisure activities, with direct implications for their health and well-being (Barbosa; Liechty; Pedercini, 2013).

The generalization and stereotypes associated with lesbians have direct implications for the physical and psychological health of these women, creating specific restrictions on their experiences in urban public spaces and in their leisure activities (Barbosa, Liechty, Pedercini, 2013). Relating leisure practices to women's well-being and lifestyles, Cunha and Carvalho (2021) highlight the importance of understanding leisure as a source of learning and emancipation, in addition to providing self-satisfaction and pleasure. Within the scope of these reflections, Tejera, Sousa and Sampaio (2013) highlight the search for people's awareness of their role in power

relations in society, recognizing leisure as an inalienable right. This integrated approach emphasizes the need to consider the interconnections between stereotypes, leisure practices, and the impact on health and well-being, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of women's experiences in different social contexts.

In the broader context of health and spatial inequalities, the lack of adequate spaces for leisure activities presents an additional obstacle, alongside barriers related to time and money. These limitations disproportionately impact Black people, revealing a direct connection between the quality of leisure spaces and income (Dores *et al.*, 2021). Faced with these challenges, it is imperative to rethink and transform leisure spaces, ensuring they are inclusive, safe, and welcoming for all identities and orientations, thus contributing to the construction of a more just and equitable society.

In rural communities, a variety of leisure spaces, such as churches, associations, clubs, and party halls, play a crucial role in promoting sociability among residents. The church stands out as a significant center of social interaction, notably for women, who play an active role in coordinating activities such as chapels and catechesis (Wedig *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, during election periods, an interesting dynamic is observed in the mothers' club, transforming it into a space where candidates use to present their political proposals, highlighting an intersection between the political sphere and spaces of sociability in rural communities (Wedig *et al.*, 2020). This context highlights not only the importance of these places in promoting social interactions, but also their relevance as arenas for public recognition and discussions.

When analyzing the experience of young people from the working class, a different dynamic is observed in relation to leisure, indicating that these young people enjoy leisure activities without showing signs of deprivation due to work, domestic obligations or gender (Pereira; Couto, 2021). This perspective counters the narrative of

restrictions associated with socioeconomic and gender factors, highlighting the complexity of individual experiences and underscoring the importance of contextualized approaches when analyzing access to leisure in different segments of Brazilian society. These reflections highlight the ongoing need for a critical evaluation of the social structures that shape individual and collective experiences in Brazil, promoting a more comprehensive and equitable understanding of contemporary social dynamics.

The analysis of leisure spaces, based on women's leisure experiences, reveals an intricate network of social dynamics shaped by issues of gender, sexual orientation, safety and power, highlighting the pressing need for structural transformations to ensure more inclusive, equitable and safe environments. Reflecting on the intersectionality of these experiences, considering variables such as gender, race, sexual orientation, and social class, is essential for a more complete understanding of the complexities that permeate access to leisure spaces. Challenging gender norms, rethinking hostile dynamics, and addressing the barriers women face—simply because they are women—are crucial steps toward building societies that value diversity and ensure equal access to leisure. By rethinking and transforming these spaces, we contribute not only to promoting health and well-being, but also to building a more just and inclusive society, where every individual can fully enjoy the right to leisure, free from discrimination and restrictions.

Considering the barriers, both visible and invisible, faced by women in vulnerable conditions becomes imperative in the formulation of intersectoral public policies related to sport, leisure and health. Highlighted in the Movement is Life Report (UNDP, 2017), the need to address the specificities experienced by poor women, those with low levels of education, those from peripheral areas, Black women, lesbian women, trans women, indigenous women and women with disabilities, etc., aims to

ensure an inclusive and equitable approach. However, reflection is present when examining how the category "woman" is often treated in a simplistic and homogeneous way in research.

The approach proposed by Butler (2019) questions the assumption of a single expression of being a woman, challenging the idea that all women are classified under a single category of identity. The question arises whether being a woman is the only aspect that defines a person's complexity. Furthermore, by lumping all women together based solely on the oppression they face, it neglects the taxonomies that grant symbolic, cultural, and structural power to certain groups of women over others. Comparing White and Black women, or rich and poor women, reveals significant disparities in terms of access, oppression, and violence. Thus, reflection on these complexities is essential to avoid generalizations that may perpetuate internal inequalities, highlighting the importance of more inclusive and diversity-sensitive approaches in public policies related to sport, leisure, and health (Tavares *et al.*, 2022).

## Final Considerations

The objective of this work was achieved, as it was possible, based on the specialized literature available at Licere and RBEL, to analyze and reflect on the barriers to female leisure. Furthermore, it was possible to elucidate that today it is necessary to broaden the perspective on women, because in the possible intersectionalities, women are, exist and express themselves in different ways. Recognizing and addressing these multiple facets is of utmost importance for contemporary Leisure Studies, since grouping them homogeneously would be a mistake to be avoided.

After the analysis carried out, it was possible to identify several barriers that impact women's leisure experience, including issues related to available time, color and race, financial resources, gender and sexuality, as well as space and safety. In many cases, these barriers intertwine, further exacerbating the difficulties women face in their free time. This highlights the urgency of understanding and adopting strategies that aim to promote a more equitable and fair experience in leisure.

The review and compilation of information played an important role in this process, highlighting the relevance of this methodological approach. The organization of data related to a given topic can serve as a guide for future research, providing directions and highlighting gaps that still need to be explored. The results of this study on women in the context of leisure highlight the importance of adopting new perspectives to understand this relationship in a comprehensive and meaningful way.

Although efforts have been made, it is important to recognize that this study has limitations. Although we focused our analysis on specialized journals, we recognize that other sources, databases, and periodicals could offer additional perspectives on the barriers discussed, especially considering the interdisciplinary nature of the topic of leisure. This interdisciplinarity suggests the need for a more comprehensive and inclusive approach in the quest to understand the complexities of women's leisure experiences.

To deepen our understanding of the intersection between leisure and women, and in relation to the barriers reported in the literature, further research is essential. Considering the multiplicity and diversity of the female "spectrum," studies that address different realities of work, occupations, color and race, sexuality, social class, among other aspects, can be fundamental to broadening our understanding and developing effective strategies to improve the quality of female leisure. This research has the

potential to enrich our understanding of the dynamics between leisure, work, and women, contributing to the creation of more inclusive and equitable environments.

It is hoped that this work can contribute academically to the expansion of perspectives in Leisure Studies, highlighting the relevance of female diversity and how these barriers impact differently in each context. Furthermore, it is hoped that this study will promote a deeper reflection on women's leisure experiences and their interactions with different social, cultural and economic dimensions. Socially, it is hoped that the conclusions of this study can fuel discussions and initiatives aimed at creating a more inclusive reality that truly allows all women to enjoy satisfying leisure experiences.

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