


TEACHING IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND MOTHERHOODS: BUILDING OTHER INTERRELATIONS

*DOCÊNCIA EM EDUCAÇÃO FÍSICA E MATERNIDADES: CONSTRUINDO
OUTRAS INTER-RELAÇÕES* 

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CONSTRUYENDO OTRAS INTERRELACIONES* 

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Abstract: This article aims to reflect on motherhood and the ways of living this experience which impact and are impacted by teaching in Physical Education, Basic Education and Higher Education in Porto Alegre/Rio Grande do Sul/Brazil and metropolitan area. The theme addressed is based on the analysis of the interpretations of two discussion groups constituted as a methodological strategy and on information obtained that allowed the construction of a category of a Doctoral research. The analyzes and interpretations of the research indicate that the teachers collaborating in the study realize that despite motherhood being an experience lived individually, surrounded by social demands and which places significant responsibility for raising children on women, there are possibilities to conceptualize and live other experiences of mothering in a way that is more collective and communal.

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1 INTRODUCTORY CONSIDERATIONS

This article is part of a research that emerged from the concerns of research professors of Physical Education (PE) who having experienced motherhood, felt instigated by the questions: “Is it possible to be a mother and a scholar? Is it possible to be a mother and a professional? Is it possible to be a mother and a woman conscious of her sexuality? Is it possible to be a mother and anything else?” (BEZERRA, 2017, p.19).

The research originated from a doctoral thesis¹ that proposed approximations between Griô Pedagogy² and PE in an attempt to break away from the hegemonic Eurocentric mindset in Basic Education schools. The thesis defended was that Griô Pedagogy can be a possibility to build a Decolonial Education (OLIVEIRA, 2018; WALSH, 2009) in PE classes. In addition, the theme of motherhood and the ways of living this experience that impact on teaching in PE was a category that emerged from the field of research and that we dealt with at that moment. Therefore, by recognizing the importance of this theme, we chose here to focus on the experiences of teachers who are mothers and how each one has been constituted in this continuous and unfinished process.

We start from the understanding, according to Bezerra (2017), that motherhood generates an accumulation of pressures and demands of a different kind for women, since they are given greater responsibility for raising children: “Society reinforces every day the old idea of ‘whoever bore the children should raise them’ reinforcing an old saying that goes ‘the child belongs to the mother’, without realizing the ideologies underlying such a thought and which determine women’s role in society” (BEZERRA, 2017, p. 14) [emphasis added].

Given this, we aim to reflect on motherhood and on the ways of living this experience that impact and are impacted by PE teaching. To do so, we start with an analysis of the concept of motherhood from the perspectives of non-hegemonic feminist studies³, reflecting, in the same way, under the light of African and indigenous cosmoperceptions since they converge and therefore oppose the Eurocentric cosmovision, as these peoples guide their lives based on other perceptions, whose values are not only focused on rationality. Finally, we reflect on possible dialogues between motherhood and PE teaching these days.

2 METHODOLOGICAL PATHS

In this article, we expanded and deepened the category of analysis “Motherhood and the ways of living this experience that impacts on PE teaching”, built in the thesis

1 BINS, Gabriela Nobre. **Tecendo saberes, tramando a vida: a Educação Física e a Pedagogia Griô: uma experiência autoetnográfica de uma professora de educação física na RME POA.** Tese (Doutorado em Ciências do Movimento Humano) - Escola de Educação Física, Fisioterapia e Dança, Universidade de Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, 2020. Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/10183/248889>. Accessed on: 4 Jul. 2021.

2 The Griô Pedagogy was systematized in Lençóis/Bahia by Lilian Pacheco and Márcio Caires. It deals with a reinvention of methods of education, participation and social enchantment that seeks to value the word, affections, memories and rituals of oral tradition.

3 The term defines a positioning of feminism in the face of the oppressions of our white, European-based heteropatriarcal society, undoing the idea of a global and hegemonic feminism as a single voice (RIBEIRO, 2020).

aforementioned. This category emerged from the analyzes and interpretations of two discussion groups (WELLER, 2006) carried out during 2019, with the participation of 9 mothers, researchers and PE teachers in Basic Education and Higher Education, who work in the city of Porto Alegre and in the metropolitan area. The groups were composed of 6 teacher-mothers who work in Basic Education in public networks, aged between 40 and 60 years old and with children from 9 to 19 years old; and 3 professors of the PE Course at UFRGS, aged between 40 and 65 years old and with children from aging from 1 to 35 years old. The discussion groups were recorded, transcribed and analyzed as research material from which we reflected on the relationships between the experiences of PE teaching and motherhood.

3 REFLECTIONS ON MATERNITIES BASED ON WESTERN FEMINIST STUDIES

For most of the authors of this article, motherhood was planned and expected. However, we know that this is not always the reality of many Brazilian women. And, even though this experience was a desired one, the arrival of our children provoked changes in our lives that we could not have measured previously, and of which have reflected in our pedagogical practices in the schools and universities where we work.

We understand that social representations about the experience of motherhood and the demands that accompany it are significantly different from what we feel/live when we are mothers. D'Ávila (2019) reflects that:

I wanted to be a mother because I was impregnated with this idea that every woman who is an adult and fulfilled is a mother. We reproduce this culture without even realizing it. But living with women like me, militant women (we use this term for people who dedicate their time to a cause or a political party), assemblywomen, made me put the issue of motherhood in its rightful place: there is no romanticization. There is no room for romanticization and idealization. Being a mother is hard work. Being a mother is exhausting. Being a mother is tiring. Being a mother is lonely. Being a mother is missing out on one's career opportunities. Being a mother is not having anyone to leave the kids with. And yet, socially, being a mother is an obligation for women (D'ÁVILA, 2019, p. 77).

In the West, the theme of motherhood has been discussed in feminist studies for some time now, having been consolidated in the late 1960s. Analyzing the works of Kahhale (2010), Moreira and Nardi (2009) and Scavone (2001a), we perceive how the subject has been treated, beyond its medical-biological aspects, in our Western and Euro-American society over time. The forms of motherhood are cultural, therefore, there are cultural historical devices that indicate to people what a mother is or how she should be.

In feminist studies, "motherhood began to be understood as a social construction, which designated the place of women in the family and in society" (SCAVONE, 2001a, p. 138). These studies emphasize that, with the advent of industrial society (SCAVONE, 2001b), we moved from a model that exalted the role of women as mothers, linking women's social function to motherhood, the so-called "traditional model of motherhood", to a modern model in which women, in addition to being a mother, can be defined with other identities and with less offspring. Furthermore, with

technological advances in the field of contraception and conception, modernity brings about a new dilemma for women: the choice of whether or not to be a mother.

Badinter (2011) stresses that, since the 1980s, motherhood has been (re) considered as “the crucial experience of femininity”. In this regard, the author presents a new wave that replaces motherhood as a “natural” path for women. When discussing the book “The conflict: the woman and the mother”, Tatagiba (2011, p. 443) emphasizes that: “Elisabeth Badinter shows that a “soft tyranny of maternal duties” is in progress, composed of speeches (mainly maternalistic) which, by all indications, has echoed among women” [emphasis added]. At the same time that we have this resumption of the maternal ideal for women, we live in a society that demands more and more from us in other areas of our lives. On this aspect, Scavone (2001a, p. 145) reflects that: “[...] the realization of motherhood is still a dilemma for women who want to pursue a professional career, since, in terms of parental responsibilities, they are still the more burdened ones”.

Despite the (re)consideration of motherhood as a crucial experience of femininity, in other historical moments feminism presented a posture that, for some, was opposed to motherhood. This factor caused a “collective reluctance of black American women to develop critical analyzes of black motherhood” (COLLINS, 2000, p. 295).

Feminist studies are an important point of reference for studies on motherhood, mainly because they have included the concept of gender, which enabled a relational understanding of motherhood. “Feminist criticism contributed to a deeper questioning, from a gender perspective, about the “mother’s place” in relation to the “father’s place” in the family and society” (SCAVONE, 2001a, p. 146) [emphasis added]. However, feminist studies have carried out analyzes of motherhood for white, heterosexual, middle- or upper-class women (BADINTER, 1985; 2011; SCAVONE, 2001a), and often locate the experiences of these motherhoods as universal.

Collins (2000), when analyzing the motherhood of black American women, brings forth the idea of the “super strong mother”, that super woman who can handle everything:

Historically, the concept of motherhood has been of central importance in the philosophies of people of African descent. In many African-American communities so much sanctification surrounds Black motherhood that “the idea that mothers should live lives of sacrifice has come to be seen as the norm” [...] In the context of this historical significance, many African-American thinkers tend to glorify Black motherhood. They refuse to acknowledge the issues faced by Black mothers who “came back to the frequently thankless chores of their own loneliness, their own families (COLLINS, 2000, p. 174) [emphasis added].

The author seeks to problematize this image of the super strong black mother and points out that “many African Americans are unable to see the true toll of motherhood for African Americans” (COLLINS, 2000, p. 293). In addition, it emphasizes the importance of collective care and presents the concept of othermothers:

[...] African and African-American communities have also recognized that vesting one person with full responsibility for mothering a child may

not be wise or possible. As a result, othermothers—women who assist bloodmothers by sharing mothering responsibilities—traditionally have been central to the institution of Black motherhood (COLLINS, 2000, p. 195).

However, the practice of othermothers still persists as a practice of women from the lower classes, as a form of resistance to the capitalist system. “African Americans who continue the community care of children challenge a fundamental assumption of the capitalist system: that children are ‘private property’ and can be treated as such” (COLLINS, 2000, p. 304) [author’s emphasis]. By defining the community as responsible for the child, and sharing the right to educate these children with the othermothers and with people outside the family environment, African American women/mothers question the property relations prevailing in capitalism.

Still on the debate of the centrality of women in African-American families, Collins (2000) points out that this centrality reflects the cultural continuity of African origin and the functional adaptations to the intersectional oppressions of race, gender, class and nation that these families need to face:

Organized, resilient, women-centered networks of bloodmothers and other mothers are key aspects in understanding this centrality. Grandmothers, sisters, aunts, or cousins act as othermothers by taking on child-care responsibilities for one another’s children. [...] In many African-American communities these women-centered networks of community-based child care have extended beyond the boundaries of biologically related individuals to include “fictive kin” (COLLINS, 2000, p. 195-196) [emphasis added].

This is a relationship that we often find in lower class populations in Brazil and in the workplace, as well as in traditional communities, whether they are Quilombolas, riverine or indigenous communities. Collective and community care that go beyond blood ties. Thus, the existence of community care and othermothers play a key role in confronting racial oppression for Afro-American communities.

Thus, authors such as Amadiume (1998; 2001), Collins (2000) and Oyèwùmí (2004; 2016) question the assertion of a universal pattern of motherhood, emphasizing that generalizing analytical models are not useful for thinking about motherhood in Africa or in the peoples of the African diaspora, for example. Therefore, in accordance with these and other authors, we present the following section.

4 THE UNDERSTANDING OF COLLECTIVE MOTHERHOODS BASED ON AFRICAN AND INDIGENOUS COSMOPERCEPTIONS

Amadiume (1998; 2001), Malomalo (2019) and Oyowumi (2004; 2016; 2018) discuss the central role of women in African societies, the concepts of matriarchy, matripotence and motherhood in these societies and the conceptualization of gender. These authors present the understanding that, in many African societies, patrilineal cultural systems coexisted and coexist alongside matrilineal cultural systems. According to Malomalo (2019), all Africans, men and women, must have reverence for women, whether she is a mother or not.

Amadiume (1998; 2001) and Oyowumi (2004; 2016; 2018) question the use of gender concepts to analyze African societies and issues of motherhood in these

societies. According to these authors, it is not possible to simply transpose the concept of gender formulated by Euro-American theorists to African societies. Oyewumi (2004, p. 3), regarding motherhood, states that “feminist concepts are rooted in the nuclear family”, which is a specifically Euro-American concept; therefore, it is not universal. According to Malomalo (2019),

[...] the Euro-American and African logics that inform the genders are opposites. For Amadiume (2001, p. 114), the thought that deifies women from the logic of motherhood is offensive to many Western feminists. It is easy, she argues, to understand this from the point of view of the European system, where motherhood and being a wife mean enslavement of women. In the African system of matriarchy, she concludes, all this means the empowerment of women (MALOMALO, 2019, p. 52).

Oyewumi (2004; 2016; 2018) criticizes Western feminist analyzes of gender since they stem from the idea of the biological body or sexual difference to define the place of men’s superiority and women’s inferiority, and subsequently generalize this idea when dealing with the category of mother, initially defined as the wife of the patriarch. “There seems to be no understanding of the mother’s role regardless of her sexual ties to a father. Mothers are, first of all, wives” (OYEWUMI, 2004, p. 05). Therefore, the Euro-American expression ‘single mother’ does not make any sense from an African perspective. In these societies, a mother, by definition, cannot be single because, “in most cultures, motherhood is defined as a relationship of descent, not as a sexual relationship with a man” (OYEWUMI, 2004, p. 05). The author exemplifies that the traditional Yoruba family can be described as non-gendered, because the kinship roles and their categories are not differentiated and classified by gender, but by seniority. “Within the Yoruba family, *omo*, the nomenclature for child, is best translated as the offspring. There are no words that individually denote girl or boy in the first instance” (OYEWUMI, 2004, p. 06). She emphasizes that motherhood is a role-identity that defines females in these societies:

Within the household, members are grouped around different mother-daughter units described as *omoya*; literally, siblings born of the same mother-womb. Because of the matrifocality of many African family systems, the mother is the axis around which family relationships are delineated and organized. Consequently, *omoya* is the comparable category in Yoruba culture to the nuclear sister in white Euro-American culture. The relationship between womb siblings, like that of sisters in the nuclear family, is based on an understanding of common interests which stem from a shared experience. The defining shared experience, which unites the *omoya* in loyalty and unconditional love, is the mother’s womb. The category *omoya*, unlike sister, transcends gender (OYEWUMI, 2004, p. 7).

When discussing the importance of motherhood and the concept of matripotence, Oyewumi (2016) introduces us to the concept of *Ìyá*, which is most often translated as mother. However, for this author, such a translation is problematic because it distorts the original meaning of *Ìyá*, a socio-spiritual category that, in its origin, did not derive from notions of gender. “*Ìyá* is at the center of the system based on seniority, which symbolizes what I describe as the matripotent principle. Matripotency describes the spiritual and material powers derived from the procreative role of *Ìyá*” (OYEWUMI, 2016, p. 03). Mother is, above all, an ancestral principle. “The matripotent ethos expresses the system of seniority in which the *Ìyá* is the venerated

senior in relation to her offspring. As all humans have an òyá, we are all born from an òyá, no one is greater or older than òyá” (OYEWUMI, 2016, p. 03).

The Mbya-Guarani and Kaingang indigenous peoples, in addition to this community vision of motherhood, value the presence of children with their mothers, a fact that causes strangeness for the non-indigenous population. Fagundes (2013) addresses this issue by analyzing the controversy surrounding the presence of Mbyá-Guarani people said to be “begging in the streets” or employing “child labor” in the center of the city of Porto Alegre, as mothers take their children together to sell crafts and raise money. According to this author, the indigenous presence is considered, by various sectors of Porto Alegre society, conflicting with the norms of child protection, which gave way to a Public Civil Inquiry in the Public Prosecutor’s Office in Rio Grande do Sul. With regard to monitoring the fathers and mothers and the “alleged mistreatment suffered by indigenous children”, the Mbyá consider that the problem to be avoided is abandonment, since Mbyá mothers, ideally, should never deprive their children of their presence (FAGUNDES, 2013).

When reflecting on the Kaingang people, Laroque and Silva (2013, p. 267) state that motherhood takes place “in collective care, that is, everyone takes care of and is responsible for everyone”. According to Carvalho (2020):

From a very early age we understand motherhood as something sacred, we take our children to the forest, we teach them how to ask the forest for permission while still in the womb, we carry our little ones after they are born in baskets, in baby slings on our backs, on our breasts, under no circumstances does one separate mother and child (CARVALHO, 2020, p. 43).

In addition to being sacred, motherhood is collective and experienced on a daily basis. In everyday life, children accompany their mothers in all spheres of their lives and activities. From this, our thinking and rethinking of motherhood in the current context in which we live has been placed under new light in regards to other possibilities of experiencing these motherhoods. In the same way, this quest for less individualistic views, which can provide a dilution of the pressures suffered by women who are mothers, has influenced our ways of thinking and living our teaching experience, which we will discuss ahead.

We recognize the importance of western feminist studies for gender and motherhood discussions, however we believe that we need to advance in these contributions, as we realize that these conceptions are not able to analyze and explain the different forms of mothering that are present in the world, especially as to the impacts that ethnicity and class exert. Therefore, we try to rely on African and indigenous cosmoperceptions to expand our references and perceptions in order to reflect on interspersing experiences between these theories.

5 TEACHING IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND MOTHERHOOD: INITIAL APPROACHES

Directing our focus of analysis on motherhood and its relationship with teaching in PE, we reflect that the historical process of representations of women and their roles in society had a strong influence on the resulting stereotypes that marked the entry

of women into the career of teaching. Teaching was seen as an extension of home, teaching would be an extension of the children's education. "Teaching would then be a space where women would put into practice gifts that were socially believed to be innate and indispensable for teaching: patience, care, sensitivity, education (DINIZ, 2001; LOURO, 2001)" (ARAGÃO; KREUTZ, 2010, p. 13). According to Costa and Barbosa (2006),

[...] a survey carried out by Luiz Pereira in 1964 finds that 93.4% of the 289,865 people affiliated with teaching in Brazil were women and 92.5% of the teachers themselves consider this activity really more suitable for women, stating that the maternal instinct brings a greater dose of certain aptitudes, such as: affection, love, docility, understanding, patience, abnegation, communicability, sweetness, dedication, etc. In addition, they stated that this occupation should be more feminine, as the education system has lower wages, fewer hours of daily work and unsatisfactory occupational prestige [...] (p. 4).

We corroborate the arguments of these authors and the importance of criticizing the construction of teaching linked to the maternal figure. However, we believe that, with the aim of confronting the sexist and patriarchal mindset of our society – which relegates motherhood to a subordinate role in a romanticized way – we end up building a discourse of teacher professionalization, and, many times, we believe that interconnecting teaching to motherhood could only be done in a pejorative manner.

What we problematize at this moment is: which motherhoods would we be able to connect with teaching, since we are indivisible human beings, that is, "[...] she who participates in the labor market is the same individual who has a personal life" (SILVA, 2012, p. 153).

In the case of the teachers who are also mothers that took part in our research, motherhood had a direct impact on teaching and on the way one reflected upon it. Being a teacher, or being an educator, goes through the notions of care, affection and love, which are also characteristics of motherhood and fatherhood. When we think about the role of school and education, we do not think only of content, techniques, planning, assessments, where the teaching and learning processes are not permeated, in the same way, by feelings of affection and love, the last two notions understood, here, as political and ethical actions (HOOKS, 2020).

Reflecting on the concepts of collective motherhood, we are faced with some of our daily contradictions: how do we experience our motherhood? Why can we not live it collectively? Bezerra (2017) helps us think about these issues when he discusses the African proverb that says: "it takes a whole village to raise a child". According to the author,

[...] the proverb presented above may seem simple, however, it requires an extensive reflective exercise. First of all, what makes it difficult for us to think through this bias, as suggested by the saying, is that here in our society, built with its bases on the capitalist system that exalts the individual and stimulates individuality, egocentrism and the ideology of merit, the notions of community, communal and communion have been lost (BEZERRA, 2017, p. 26).

We cannot always live in that sense of community. We are more and more alone, each minding their own business, in their own space. At school it is no different. We end up planning and doing our pedagogical practices, largely, in a solitary and individualistic way. Teaching and collective projects within the school, that is, “education carried out by an entire village”, is still something rare and yet to be built. However, we are proposing approximations with the understanding of motherhood as a collective experience, beyond individual motherhood, which is so recurrent in our contemporary societies. Such an understanding is presented with the idea of the archetype of motherhood, the search for this archetypal mother. For Lillian Pacheco⁴, motherhood is one who is a,

[...] community mother, *mãe de terreiro*⁵, everyone’s mother; I never wanted to create a sense of motherhood in me, the mother of my children, because that is an individual story. *Griô* Pedagogy brings me this concept, teaches me not to be me, it teaches me to seek that totality, to seek the totality of my identity, to seek to be my grandmother, my mother, my ethnic group, my community. So I have another dimension of motherhood, to be a single mother, the oldest mother, a mother... in short... I try to flow through these mothers, so it’s not only me, the mother of my son ... I have to be the mother there, if you have another child, it’s my child too... expanding this motherhood on to the community, on to the *terreiro*, on to my street (excerpt from Lillian Pacheco’s interview, 06/21/2019).

Lillian understands motherhood as an archetypal and mythical experience, as a motherhood that expands, expands and becomes collective. One starts to have not only individual children, conceived and delivered from one’s own body, but in a way, one becomes the mother of the children of the community, of the students:

I have always seen myself as the mother of all the kids on my street. If I’m in the middle of the street and there are some kids fighting, I see myself as the mother of those kids over there, on some level I have to be the mother of those kids. If my student is there in my surroundings, then my motherhood has to expand, it has to expand as something collective. So that’s it, I start from this assumption that time, motherhood and the place of speech are expanded, they spread out. I see in the *Griô* Pedagogy... that the experiences, the lesson plan, bring the story of life of those who had never had their story told in classroom nor had it told as a historical narrative up front. But they see, in the background of their personal story, this place of the collective and of everyone’s story; the lesson plan goes a bit along that way, they will see these concepts of archetype, myth, ancestry and identity (excerpt from the interview with Lillian Pacheco, 06/21/2019).

Each woman feels the impact of motherhood on her life and teaching in different ways. If, on the one hand, teachers realized that motherhood changed their perspective and made them more attentive to the different aspects of children and adolescents with whom they work with in schools, on the other hand, they often think that after the experience of motherhood, they have decided to dedicate less time to the demands of work, school, classes and students. This is because, after the birth of their children, they opted for a reduction in working hours as well as declining taking on any extra commitments. Motherhood slowed down the intensity with which

⁴ Lillian Pacheco, teacher of popular education, idealizer of *Pedagogia Griô*, granted an interview that was part of the methodological process of the research related to this article.

⁵ Translator’s note: *mãe de terreiro* is mother of religiosity, a spiritual leader.

they had been involved in work activities up until then. According to one researcher's account, the relationship between motherhood and teaching is two-way, at the same time that motherhood affected her teaching, teaching affected her motherhood:

[...] the fact of having a baby, of starting this process of motherhood, makes your practice difficult, it gets in the way, [...] many classes that you thought would turn out wonderful did not because you weren't able to gather the right material, because the child had not slept that night [...] but there is also another side to it, the quality of your care for the child decreases when you have to work [...] if you think about it, it is like the Twelve Labors of Hercules (excerpt from the interview with Conceição⁶, 09/03/2020).

Similarly, Kambeba, who is a foster mother, reported that motherhood has changed her practice a lot, making her reduce her workload and redouble her attention to students. "I was already a teacher dedicated to the little ones, but now I have other views in relation to children... I had already been teaching classes according to what I thought ideal for my daughter, now much more" (Kambeba during Discussion Group, 5/3/2019). Potiguara also mentions the fact that she thinks of students as her children: "I was a mother before being a teacher, so I don't know what it's like to be just one or the other. But I think that motherhood makes me think about how I would like a teacher to treat my child, and, therefore, I treat, in every sense, my students as if they were my own children" (Potiguara in the Discussion Group, 06/08/2020).

As to the possible impacts of motherhood on teaching, Molina Neto, in his Doctoral Thesis, (1996, p. 338) presents the account of a research participant who reports how motherhood made her become a better teacher:

I think that after I became a mother, I have become a better teacher. Not as a professional, I became more humane, not that I was inhumane. But before, it was much more professional than maternal. Now I mix a bit the maternal and professional aspects [in the sense of] the one who knows everything, who acts according to the techniques and criteria. One who acts according to what is written in the book ... to the one who has more feelings, more sensitivity... (MOLINA NETO, 1996, p.338).

Being a mother changes our lives and each of us feels these changes in our own way. When reflecting on how motherhood affects her teaching, another research participant describes it as:

Motherhood affected my life, my body, my time, my relationships with everything I experience. It affected my thoughts, priorities, actions, what I eat. It affected consumption, the understanding I had of a possible me, home, space, life. Anyway, it was one of those life changing experiences. Nothing is like before and nothing will ever be like it had been before. A Carolina de Jesus died. Regarding teaching, I realize that I am more attentive to everything that involves the theme of motherhood in the work environments I work in. How these spaces "receive" children. I empathize with students, colleagues, women who are mothers because I know firsthand the struggle of having a child who depends on you. And since I also work with children, I look at them with complete openness, seeing in that being all the potential to learn, to be authentic and to build, know and transform this world (excerpt from the interview with Carolina de Jesus, 09/08/2020).

6 The names of the collaborators were replaced to preserve the identity, except for Lilian Pacheco, as we understand the importance of making her authorship visible in the creation of the *Griô Pedagogy*.

We unfold these reflections and feelings in relation to motherhood, which can be experienced in a more collective way, with what is experienced in relation to teaching, a feeling of being a bit of a mother to the students, a feeling that we often find ourselves fighting in favor of a professional identity when teaching. We often hear and even endorse the discourse that we are not mothers of these students in schools, but teachers and that education should come from home and that school is a place to learn knowledge. But is it so?

Currently, we have reflected that what we want, desire and develop with students in schools is what we also want for our own children. In a way, when we are teachers, we are confronted with the feeling of care that involves worrying and being affected by people, contributing to their autonomy, learning and humanization. And wouldn't that be a form of motherhood? Not the so-called individual motherhood, natural and anchored only in happiness and love, but a collective motherhood, built and focused on human complexity, a policy of care and monitoring of the lives of one or more generations.

Our PE teaching was modified based on our motherhood experiences. And we believe that in order to decolonize our pedagogical practices in PE, we need to decolonize our relationships with motherhood, seeking in indigenous and African epistemologies a more collective and communal understanding of motherhood.

6 TRANSIENT CONSIDERATIONS

Reflecting on motherhood in our current society, we corroborate the ideas of Bezerra (2017) when he highlights that it is not motherhood itself or the experience of having children that torments us, overloads us and, in some cases, even makes us fall ill, but: "it is actually what is done to us women, taking motherhood and children as tools that, if not curtailed, at least weigh on our careers" (BEZERRA, 2017, p. 14). Being a mother cannot and should not stop us from being anything else we want to be. "To experience motherhood does not mean to give up freedom. It cannot and should not mean that" (D'ÁVILA, 2019, p. 115).

We need to reinvent the forms of motherhood, reinvent a world where our affections and the presence of children are not seen under a negative light. "We need a world where women occupy public spaces and where the absence of children is as striking as their presence. Because for every powerful man with absent children, there is a woman locked up in a house working overtime" (D'ÁVILA, 2019, p. 115).

We need to problematize the cost of motherhood for us women. Reflect on how, nowadays, it is still women who are responsible for their children. For example, at school, most of the time, it is the mothers who are called and/or attend the teachers' meetings. To recognize and observe the cost at which women, mothers and teachers remain in the labor market is the first step towards being able to reduce it. According to Bezerra (2017, p. 24), recognizing these elements means: "[...] trying to put an end to the myth of the warrior woman who can handle everything. It is to deconstruct the

idea that the child belongs to the mother. It is to deconstruct the falsely empathetic speech that always says: it will pass”.

Although we currently live in the 21st century and have advanced in scientific studies and in diverse and progressive social practices, motherhood in a woman's life was, and in many aspects, still is socially considered – from a natural perspective – associated with a destination, perceived as one of the fundamental and constituent roles, as if it were a vocation based on unconditional love in favor of the perpetuation of the species (BEAUVOIR, 1980). Finally, we emphasize that our intellectual, academic and daily effort (BINS; SILVA, 2019) has been constituted in the defense of distancing ourselves from these understandings and building new possibilities, understandings and actions of mothering and of exercising motherhood with autonomy, collectivity, with less demands and responsibilities.

We dare to think that some elements of these new possibilities of mothering would be: the importance and need for a care/support network and public policies that allow the experience of motherhood to be lived out in a more collective manner, easing suffering and difficulties; the perception that the experience of motherhood results in a rupture with what we were until then and in the resizing of the different spheres of life, with the need to choose new priorities, choices and conditions that help us reach and remain in the places where we wish to be, and even in our jobs; and an approximation with ancestral values of traditional peoples who excel in this collective and community being.

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Resumo: Este artigo objetiva refletir sobre a maternidade e os modos de viver essa experiência que impactam e são impactados pela docência em Educação Física na Educação Básica e no Ensino Superior, em Porto Alegre/RS e região metropolitana. A temática abordada se fundamenta na análise das interpretações de dois grupos de discussão, constituídos como estratégia metodológica e das informações obtidas que possibilitaram a construção de uma categoria de análise em uma pesquisa de Doutorado. As análises e as interpretações da pesquisa indicam que as professoras participantes do estudo percebem que apesar da maternidade ser uma experiência vivida de modo individual, cercada de exigências sociais e que localiza na mulher significativa responsabilidade pela criação dos/as filhos/as, há possibilidades de se conceitualizar e viver outras experiências de maternar de modo mais coletivo e comunitário.

Palavras-chave: Maternidade. Docência. Educação Física.

Resumen: Este artículo busca reflexionar sobre la maternidad y los modos de vivir esta experiencia que impactan y son impactados por la docencia en Educación Física, de la Educación Básica y de la Enseñanza Superior en Porto Alegre/RS y región metropolitana. El tema abordado se basa en el análisis de las interpretaciones de dos grupos de discusión constituidos como estrategia metodológica, así como de la información obtenida que posibilita la construcción de una categoría de análisis en una investigación de Doctorado. Los análisis y las interpretaciones de la investigación indican que las profesoras colaboradoras del estudio perciben que, a pesar de la maternidad ser una experiencia vivida de modo individual, cercada de exigencias sociales y que enfoca en la mujer significativa responsabilidad por la crianza de los/las hijos/as, existen posibilidades de conceptualizarse y de vivir otras experiencias de maternar de manera más colectiva y comunitaria.

Palabras clave: Maternidad. Docencia. Educación Física.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest in this study.

AUTHORAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Gabriela Nobre Bins: Conceptualization, data collection, investigation, methodology, original text writing.

Lisandra Oliveira e Silva: Conceptualization, data collection, methodology, writing of the original text.

Vera Regina Oliveira Diehl: Data collection, validation, writing, review and editing.

Simone Santos Kuhn: Data collection, validation, writing, reviewing and editing.

Tatiana Martins Terragno: Validation, writing, revision and editing.

Natacha da Silva Tavares: Validation, writing, revision and editing.

Caroline Maciel da Silva: Validation, writing, revision and editing.

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