98 - WOMEN IN SOCCER: OVERVIEWING PREJUDICE AND STEREOTYPES IN THE GENDER'S OPTIC.

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INTRODUCTION:

From childhood, we learned what activities could be performed by men and what could be performed by women. In the pregnancy period, parents begin making the layette and, if they don't know the sex of the coming baby, they prefer some neutral colors, but if they know it's sex they give preference to blue for boys and light pink for girls.

This way, the socio-cultural manifestations about bodies, no doubt, starts at this time, determining which clothes children will wear, which toys are proper for each one and what will be their social roles in the future. Being a man or a woman in Brazil is fundamentally different because there are social attributions defined for each one.

So, a person isn't born a man or a woman, but is socio-culturally formed in a man or woman body. Supporting our opinion, Romero (1990, p. 239) says that "the person gets behavior, believes, rules and reason patterns that are evaluated by its own group or family, in a huge socializing process."

In life's evolution, observing children's growth and development, we concluded that boys are stimulated to perform more motor activities which are considered more aggressive and far from home, such as playing soccer, free piping, playing with marbles. For the girls, however, lasts only some nearer or at home activities, like playing with dolls etc.

Our point of view is supported by Blay (2002 a), explaining that to the Brazilian society, boys aren't allowed to play with dolls because of what is reserved for them. So, since the time children start playing, men's and women's roles in everyday life are being reproduced and perpetuated. Keeping on reasoning, the researcher tells that dolls were always in girls' universe. In the chronological evolution of it's age starts the school process, and it was noticed that school, then media and family help reinforcing the prejudice and discrimination about boys' and girls' social roles.

Romero (2005), with the same point of view, remarks that students, in schools, are often punished by teachers for running out of an expected pattern according to their sex. The author denunciates that girls are requested by their mothers to help around the house, because of some cultural aspects. Almost always they are forbidden of playing some games or sports that require some strength and physical resistance.

We known that this motor behavior of these children has a cultural origin according to stereotype questions, social roles and the gender relations required from each person, from biological differences about men and women.

In these work, gender's knowledge is also supported by Scott (1995, p. 75) considering it as: "social relations between sexes and the way to indicate cultural constructions […]. What is about a way to refer to exclusive social origins of subjective identities of men and women. It's a social category for a sexed body."

In the same way, it was verified that sports are social phenomenas that brought a male predominance from distant past centuries, supporting the patriarchate, and contrasting the chauvinistic aspect. To Romero (2005, p. 72), playing "sports was always impregnated by values that used to restrict women's participation". The Brazilian literature shows that these conditions were guided by biological directions, in other words, the forming difference among the men's body and women's. Anyway, these thoughts were destroyed by Azevedo (1997) when he showed in his presentation that these differences didn't block women's participation in physical activities and that opposite recommendations by some men were prejudice and stereotype questions.

So, the stereotypes are formed of phenomenas that interfere in people's opinion and perception about others, and, sometimes, can act as a negative and prejudicing way about the bodies of female soccer players, because it's part of a pre-judgment, that brings, as consequence, changes in gender relations. The stereotypes, according to researched authors, are pre-built ideas about a person or a group of people (Rodrigues, 2001; Romero, 1990; 2001; Spinelli, 2003).

In the other hand, studies about social representations to understand the images, ideas, conceptions and views of world that these athletes have about the reality they are in, practicing soccer. Contributing to a bettet comprehension, Abric (1998, p. 28) explains that " representation works like an interpretation system of the reality that runs the relations between people and their physic and social worlds, and will determinate it's behavior and acts".

Running through soccer's history, we resort to Reis (1999), who explains that physical activities began in 2600 a. C., in China, called "*Kemari"*, and was used in military training and, seldom for entertaining. In the ancient Greece, in the 5th century a. C., soccer was known as "*Episkiros"*, which symbolized male's youth and was played with the feet. Reis (in referred work) told that in Rome, eight hundred years after the beginning of "*Episkiros"* came "*Harpastun"*, which was used to train militaries and enjoy lords, but was a common activity among soldiers. In the 11th century, the love for soccer starts in Europe, mainly in France and England. This game was marked by violence, representing disputes or fights between two different groups. Strength and courage were the main criteria to establish a virile behavior in soccer and that's why the women's participation was prohibited.

The author says that Charles Miller, after returning from his studies in England, around 1894, brought experiences, rules and uniforms to introduce soccer to Brazilians, and until nowadays the majority of the players of the sport is formed by men. However, we should consider the growth of women's participation in sport activities and their valorization contrasting the male predominance in some kinds of sports, mainly soccer. We attribute these differences to socio-cultural reasons inserted in our society.

The studied material shows some reasons most used by the Brazilian society against women's participation in soccer, like tension, physical effort and contact, incompatible with the female sex. People, mainly, Brazilian men, believe that women can suffer injuries on the genitals and breasts, but some researches show the opposite.

It was easy to conclude that soccer is a national passion. Most of Brazilians are always at the stadiums, or in front of a television or nearby the radio. It's a very diffused sport in Brazil, being considered as a national identity. According to Knijnik and Vasconcelos (2002), soccer is one of the icons of Brazilian culture and is part of passion mobilization.

In this sport, women have conquest, after a long fight and hard efforts in the sport scenery, as in 2004, in their participation in many kinds of sports in the Olympics, in Greece. In this event, the participation of the Brazilian female soccer team was remarkable, getting the silver medal. In Atlanta 1996 and Sidney 2000 they got the fourth place.

These women are different from the other ones because of the space they have in the media, no matter if it's on a field or in a court, and because of the prejudice they suffer, but they stand still, practicing. Is remarkable their courageous way of getting this space, that is dominated by men, but should be everyone's, in equal conditions.

After this exposition, the objective of this study is to investigate the interferences in gender relations and the possibilities of stereotypes in the choice and practice of soccer by adult women. For it's conclusion, the main objective was divided in three other ones: a) identify the main reasons the lead women to play soccer; b) investigate, through the speech of female soccer players, the interference or not in the gender relations, and the possibilities of stereotypes and prejudice in the sport's practicing; c) check, through empiric and theoric articulations how the gender relations are built during the practice of soccer.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

This study is inserted in the phenomenological pattern in human study as an existential being in the historical process. The research consists in an interpretative dimension of the phenomena identified as the practice of soccer by adult women, here called social actresses, in the gender's optic.

Participated in this research twenty women, between eighteen and forty years old, who practice soccer in a city called Barbacena, in Minas Gerais, Brazil. All of them have signed a free and established permission term (TCLE), following the rules to make researches humans, given by the directions 196/96, published in October 10th, 1996, of the National Health Council.

Were used the three instruments that follow: semi-structured interview, direct observation and a field diary. The first one was used in order to obtain information about the reality in soccer's practicing, in the interviewees' view, according to the direct observation of the athletes during their sport activities. These recordings were done in a field diary which is the third instrument.

The material obtained was submitted to speech analysis, what, in Orlandi's opinion (1986) is an strategy with a basic purpose of considering as most important the relation between what the speaker has told and it's reality. According to her opinion, “speech analysis shows, through a superficial examination of the speaker, the ideological, social and historical situation he/she is in” (p. 62).

This opinion is supported in the Social Manifestations, and that is why we remember Wagner (1998, p. 7), when he says that “the body reveals images that reflects the integration between subjective experiences and social relations”.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS OBTAINED

The athletes have presented some personal characteristics, such as: only one is married and receives support from her husband, as observed in the stadium, vibrating for his wife's performance. The others, single, let us conclude that nowadays many women think first of their own realization. This way, marriage and mothering are procrastinated. These women, today, are in much more public spaces, which were, until sometime ago, reserved to men.

All of them have medium financial situation, surrounded by a familiar structure that gave them conditions to study and practice sports since youth. However, the majority of them suffered prejudice from their own family, when started the practicing soccer. In the studied group, we saw, sometimes, some mothers in the stadium, watching their daughters' matches.

About their school level, the following results were gotten: fifteen girls are studying in college, most of them in the medical or health area in Universidade Presidente Antônio Carlos-UNIPAC. The other athletes have finished high school. This way, turned to Blay (2002b), he explains that from the beginning of the 21st century women's presence in school has grown. Analyzing some data from students of Universidade de São Paulo, we were able to conclude that some divisions, in many different courses, between men and women still exist, especially in health and medical caring areas, which, coincidentally are areas where women are more frequent.

Lots of reasons to start playing soccer were found in the girls' speech, like: worry about the future, identity with other male people, as father, brothers, cousins or friends, entertainment or medical recommendation. Most of them have started with their families support.

They've started playing soccer when they were about eight years old. This turns us to Melo and Romero (2003), when they explain that children's bodies suffer socio-cultural and familiar influences of how to behave in society. That's why we believe that, from this identity with closer member of their families they started playing soccer.

We verified that a great number of the interviewed show strict identification, pleasure and self-rewarded by practicing this sport. This satisfaction demonstrates their passion for it, even though they suffer some prejudice, and they didn't give up on practicing. And do it as a way of entertaining themselves.

While examining the speech of two athletes, it was noticed that they started practicing it for entertainment. We know that this entertainment has an important role in children's lives, allowing their social and cultural development, improving their self-confidence. To Spinelli (2003, p. 60-1), “playing is, a learning space where the child goes through the habitual behavior for it's age, representing, symbolically what he/she will fulfill later in life”.

Continuing the analysis, we found in the athletes' speech a lack of identification with dolls. They told that they never liked playing with them and that they always received this kind of toy and put them away. Others told that used to play with balls and dolls, too.

For men, soccer has a huge socio-cultural space, arousing interests that go over than the fields. We observe comments about soccer in bars, schools, in our family or work atmosphere. With our interviewees it isn't different. During the interviews and observations of training, we noticed many manifestations of love to this sport, what has grown since they were younger.

In our observations, we noticed some qualities in the athletes, such as: dedication, enthusiasm, leadership, discipline and a lot of technical abilities. In the interview, each athlete had a particular speech that shows one or more qualities that contributed to her permanence in the team.

To the majority of these women, the contemporary society is still impregnated of prejudice about female soccer, especially when they listen to comments saying that soccer is a sport for men, or that they are homosexual. The social and cultural that happened in the past decades aren't clear yet to many people, mainly in their opinion and acts, they censure women's participation in activities they think are exclusively for men, like soccer.

According to the girls' speech, they suffer prejudice even in their families, from they parents or other relatives. One of them had suffered it from her boyfriend and some friends from college. For her, it's only because she practices soccer and she told that her neighbors relate it to negative stereotypes, considering her homosexual.

The literature studied remarks that these stereotypes had influenced in the perception process that people have about themselves and about others, and that they are the reasons for discrimination between men and women, as the interviewed athletes have denounced.

The athletes' reactions against the prejudice and discrimination they suffer were very positive, and they didn't give up on practicing soccer. Minimizing prejudice, we can say that they overcame this in a very good way, showing that the most important for them is playing soccer.

These players, for their path, represent an advance in the fight against the taboo, prejudice and inequality of

opportunities in the practice of soccer by them. With this point of view, Simões (2004, p. 44) tells that "in the last decades women have practically detonated the wall of prejudice, beliefs and taboos that traditionally let them far away from different work areas".

Here are some of the difficulties we could notice they faced for practicing soccer: lack of sponsorship, prejudice and lack of support from media. Some of them told their parents didn't give money for their trips for matches out of their cities, others told that the teams didn't pay for their trip tickets or food. All of them tell that female soccer matches aren't transmitted by TV anymore, preferring to exhibit male soccer, even if it's from the second division.

About the uniform, they told it is very similar to the male one, remarking the lack of comfort they feel wearing it in a match. In their opinion, there should have made a better designed uniform, according to female shapes.

The relationship between the coach and the athletes, in most of the girls' opinion, in good, but some of them told that they keep a power relation with them, because they're men. After this, we could understand that ender relations indicate power relations. This way, Foucault (2004a, p. 118) tells that body is like a power object and target, and that "in any society, the body is stuck under very strong power, imposing limitations, prohibitions or obligations". The referred author remarks that the excessive power causes oppression and repression in people. In this study, this power comes from the interviewed athletes' coach.

In their speech, the athletes reinforced that female soccer in Brazil still can be considered as amateur, with no media and banking support. They suffer lack of financial valorization, event the ones who were highlighted in international events recently. In the other hand, they remark that, even with these difficulties, female soccer has been growing day-by-day. All of them admit that for an improvement, evolution and consolidation of female soccer, hard marketing, with no discrimination and prejudice is fundamental. They hope sponsors approve them by their technical competence and not for their physical traits.

CONCLUSIONS:

This work shows that the main reasons for practicing soccer, revealed by the athletes, in their speeches, were: worrying about being professionals and receiving money for it; medical recommendation; identification with children and adults from the male sex; and, finally, for fun. The majority of them had received support from parents, siblings, cousins or friends, but suffered sexual prejudice and discrimination from them.

Soccer comes as a Brazilians' passion, including the social actresses. Since they were children, playing with dolls or not, they've started a physical activity with a ball and are still doing it.

The data permitted us conclude that gender questions, prejudice and stereotypes have influenced in their decision to start practicing soccer. The analyzed results made us infer that many women don't practice soccer because of fear of being called homosexual, by family members or by the society, in general.

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WOMEN IN SOCCER: OVERVIEWING PREJUDICE AND STEREOTYPES IN THE GENDER'S OPTIC.

ABSTRACT: We live in a full of prejudice society, that contrasts sexual differences, so, since childhood we learn what are the social roles for men and women. In this context, the goal of this study was investigate the interference in gender relations and the possibilities of stereotypes and prejudice in the choice and practice of soccer by women. The methodology had a phenomenological path in the interpretative dimension of humans. Twenty female players, between eighteen and forty years old, participated in this research, all of them living in Barbacena MG. Were used, as instruments get the needed information, a semi-structured interview, direct observation and a field diary. The data was analyzed under their speeches and social manifestations, in the gender's optic. The results show that most of them received male influence to start playing soccer. All of them had passed through relatives' prejudice, mainly men; in the other hand, they've reacted positively to them. About power, it's concentrated in the coach's personality, generally a man. Is remarkable the courage these players have, insisting on playing soccer, under male's reserve. We concluded that gender questions, prejudice and stereotypes interfere in the choice

and practice of the sport in Brazilian society, based in beliefs, myths and values that still discriminate these women for sexist reasons.

KEY WORDS: female soccer players gender relations prejudice stereotypes

LES FEMMES AU FOOTBALL: DES PRÉJUGÉS ET DES STÉRÉOTYPES DÉVOILÉS SOUS LE PRISME DU GENRE.

Résumé. Nous vivons dans une société pleine de préjugés, qui met en évidence les différences sexuelles. Ainsi, dès notre enfance, nous apprenons à reconnaître parmi les rôles sociaux ceux qui sont réservés aux hommes ou aux femmes. Dans ce contexte, l'objectif de cette étude fut d'établir l'interférence des rapports de genre, des stéréotypes et des préjugés sur le choix et la pratique du football par les femmes. La méthodologie employée est de caractère phénoménologique dans la dimension interprétative de l'Homme. Les instruments utilisés furent une interview à démi structurée, l'observation directe et le journal de terrain. Les données furent interprétées à la lumière de l'analyse du discours et des représentations sociales, sous le prisme du genre. Les résultats indiquent que la majorité des femmes concernées subirent une influence masculine pour commencer à jouer au football. Toutes les athlètes furent victimes des préjugés des membres de leurs familles, surtout des hommes, mais elles y réagirent de façon positive. Le pouvoir est centré dans la personne de l'entraîneur, généralement du sexe masculin. La pratique d'un sport de tradition exclusivement masculine fait ressortir le courage de ces footballeuses. Nous en conclûmes que les questions de genre, les préjugés et les stéréotypes constituent autant d'interférences dans le choix et la pratique du football, et que la société brésilienne, à partir de ses croyances, ses mythes et ses valeurs, exerce encore une discrimination envers ces femmes pour des motivations sexistes.

Mots-clés: footballeuses rapports de genre préjugés stéréotypes.

MUJERES EM EL FÚTBOL: DESVELANDO PREJUICIOS Y ESTERIÓTIPOS BAJO LA MIRADA DEL GÊNERO.

RESUMEN. Vivimos en una sociedad prejuiciosa que destaca las diferencias sexuales. Así, desde niños tomamos conocimiento de cuales son los papeles sociales para los hombres y cuales los reservados a las mujeres. En ese contexto, el objetivo de este estudio fue investigar la interferência de las relaciones de género y las possibilidades de estereótipos y prejuicios en la elección y en la práctica de fútbol por mujeres. La metodología fue de carácter fenomelógico en la dimensión interpretativa de Hombre. Partiparon en la pesquisa 20 jugadoras de fútbol entre 18 e 40 años, viviendo en Barbacena-Mg. Los instrumentos utilizados fueron una entrevista semiestructurada; observación directa y el diario de campo. Los datos fueron intrepretados a la luz del análisis de discursos y de las representaciones sociales, bajo la óptica del género. Los resultados apuntan que la mayoría de las mujeres sufrió influencia masculina para iniciar la pr´´actica del fútbol. Todas as atletas vivenciaron prejuicios por parte de familiares, principalmente de los hombres; por otra parte las jugadoras reaccionaron positivamente a los prejuicios. En relación al poder, éste está centrado en la personalidad del técnico, que geralmente es del sexomasculino. Es resaltado el coraje de esas jugadoras que continúan practicandoel fútbol en una reserva masculina. Concluimos que las cuestiones del género, los prejuicios y los estereótipos interfieren en la elección y en la práctica del fútbol y que la sociedad brasileña, con base en sus creencias, mitos y valores aún discrimina essas mujeres por motivos sexistas.

Palabras llaves: mujeres jugadoras de fútbol relaciones de gênero prejuicios - esteriotipos.

MULHERES NO FUTEBOL: DESVELANDO PRECONCEITOS E ESTEREÓTIPOS SOB O OLHAR DO GÊNERO.

Resumo. Vivemos em uma sociedade preconceituosa que destaca as diferenças sexuais, assim, desde crianças tomamos conhecimento de quais são os papéis sociais para os homens e quais os reservados às mulheres. Nesse contexto, o objetivo deste estudo foi investigar a interferência das relações de gênero e as possibilidades de estereótipos e preconceitos na escolha e na prática de futebol por mulheres. A metodologia foi de cunho fenomenológico na dimensão interpretativa de Homem. Participaram da pesquisa 20 jogadoras de futebol entre 18 e 40 anos, residentes em Barbacena-MG. Os instrumentos utilizados foram uma entrevista semi-estruturada; observação direta e o diário de campo. Os dados foram interpretados à luz da análise de discurso e das representações sociais, sob a ótica do gênero. Os resultados apontam que a maioria das mulheres sofreu influência masculina para iniciar a prática do futebol. Todas atletas vivenciaram preconceitos por parte de familiares, principalmente dos homens; por outro lado, as jogadoras reagem positivamente aos preconceitos. Em relação ao poder, este fica centrado na personalidade do técnico, que geralmente é do sexo masculino. É ressaltada a coragem dessas jogadoras que continuam praticando o futebol numa reserva masculina. Concluímos que as questões de gênero, os preconceitos e os estereótipos interferem na escolha e a na prática do futebol e que a sociedade brasileira, com base em suas crenças, mitos e valores ainda discrimina essas mulheres por motivos sexistas.

Palavras chaves*:* mulheres jogadoras de futebol - gênero preconceitos - estereótipos.