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Male and female (in)tolerance profile in regard to living with diversity in a southern brazilian community

*Perfis de (in)tolerâncias masculina e feminina frente à convivência com
diversidades em comunidade no sul do Brasil*

*Perfiles de (in)tolerancias masculina y femenina hacia la convivencia con
la diversidad en comunidad en el sur de Brasil*

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Abstract: This article examines parents' (in)tolerance in recommending or not their children's coexistence with people situated in a wide diversity range. It is an exploratory research, conducted in a southern Brazilian community, by use of a questionnaire, with 225 participants. The analysed questions started with the sentence: "how do you position yourself when your son or daughter seeks to live with people of the opposite sex, another religion, other ethnicities or races, another social class, with disabilities, homosexuals and children of prisoners?". The analysed results focus on the different postures taken by female and male participants of the sample. The research shows that the female sample appeared to be more prone to encourage coexistence with the multiple categories of people investigated. The study is relevant to understand that living with diversity reveals distinct world views from the female and male populations.

Keywords: coexistence; tolerance; diversity; adolescence.

Resumo: Este artigo aborda a (in)tolerância dos pais ao recomendar ou não a convivência de seus filhos e suas filhas com pessoas que se situam em amplo escopo de diversidades. Trata-se de uma pesquisa exploratória, realizada em comunidade no sul do Brasil, por meio de um questionário, com 225 participantes. Analisaram-se perguntas que foram introduzidas pela indagação: "como você se posiciona quando o seu filho ou sua filha busca conviver com pessoas de outro sexo, de outra religião, de outras etnias ou raças, de outra classe social, com deficiência, homossexuais e filhos de presidiários?". Os resultados analisados focam nas posturas distintas entre os perfis feminino e masculino da amostra estudada. A pesquisa apresenta que a amostra feminina se mostrou mais aberta a incentivar a convivência frente às diversas categorias de pessoas investigadas. O estudo é relevante para compreender que a convivência com a diversidade revela diferentes visões de mundo das populações feminina e masculina.

Palavras-chave: convivência; tolerância; diversidades; adolescência.

Resumen: Este artículo discute la (in)tolerancia de los padres al recomendar o no la convivencia de sus hijos e hijas con personas que se encuentran en un amplio ámbito de diversidades. Se trata de una investigación exploratoria, realizada en una comunidad del sur de Brasil, a través de un cuestionario, con 225 participantes. Analizamos las preguntas que fueron introducidas por la pregunta: "¿cómo te posicio-

nas cuando tu hijo o hija busca convivir con personas de otro sexo, de otra religión, de otras etnias o razas, de otra clase social, con discapacidad, homosexuales e hijos de presos?”. Los resultados analizados se centran en las diferentes posturas entre el perfil femenino y masculino de la muestra estudiada. La investigación muestra que la muestra femenina fue más abierta a fomentar la convivencia en relación con las diversas categorías de personas investigadas. El estudio es relevante para entender que vivir con diversidad revela diferentes visiones del mundo de la población femenina y masculina.

Palabras-chave: convivencia; tolerancia; diversidad; adolescencia.

Introduction

This article addresses the matter of parental tolerance and intolerance in recommending their children’s contact with people situated in a wide range of diversity: social, gender, religious, among others. The research was conducted in a southern Brazilian catholic community, on the context of a larger study about sexuality. That context is relevant for the article, but its core is a finding that was not part of the hypothesis or intents of the initial study. You could state that this article presents occasional findings of the original research: the perception that men and women – as parents – encourage their children in distinctive ways regarding living with diversity. To identify gender differences in the subject of tolerating diversity was not one of the proposed objectives of the initial study, but a brief presentation of the project could help situate those findings and understand their importance.

To pose questions about tolerance for diversity in the context of sexual education is justified based on a vision that sexuality is also characterized by a dialogical aspect, that is, that sexual and emotional education is part of a broader preparation of the human being to be familiarized and respectful with the diverse. In the conducted research, emotional education includes sexuality, not, however, being limited to it. Thus, the initially proposed study presented sexual diversity as one type of diversity between many others, what in turn generated the results here presented, that actually go beyond the scope of a study about sexual education.

The context of the research – a catholic community – also points to an understanding that family and religious community ought to be

understood as co-responsible partners in affective education. That is why, before introducing specific sexual contents in the activities of Christian initiation, it was considered relevant to ask: does the way parents prepare children to live in society also influences affective education? Is empathy part of the social tools that children can more easily develop depending on the parental incentive they received? Is empathy a core value for emotional and affective education?

At last, it was in this sexual education context that the original research was conducted. The part of the research examined in this article discloses the tolerance and intolerance profile of the community that was studied, including a very distinctive profile regarding gender issues.

Methodology

Given the nature of the theme, this is an exploratory research, since it is a preliminary attempt at investigating the way parents view the researched subject, with a quantitative approach.

The research took place in a community located in the suburbs of Curitiba, state of Paraná, southern Brazil. The field research used a questionnaire previously approved by a Research Ethics Committee. The questionnaires were answered in meetings with the parents, who were accompanying their children in religious activities. The research instrument was implemented the following way: a) the research subjects were selected by the inclusion criteria – teenagers' parents, who were not simultaneously pastoral agents at the community in question and who were not expecting another child; b) the research objectives and methodology were explained; c) the informed consent form and the research questionnaire were separately handed out; d) two ballot boxes were available – one for the participants to put the informed consent form in (filled or not) and other for them to put the questionnaires in (filled or not). That way, individuals who did not wish to participate in the research would be free to turn the documents over without filling them up. From 290 distributed questionnaires, 225 were filled adequately enough to be considered valid.

We believe the field research allowed to analyse many aspects of sexual education in the referred community. For the present article, we chose the questions regarding living with diversity, a group of questions introduced with the sentence: "What position do you take when your son/

daughter intends to be friend with people...” followed by the subsequent categories of people: (1) of another sex; (2) of another religion; (3) of another ethnicity/color; (4) of another social class; (5) with disabilities; (6) who are homosexual; (7) whose parents are in prison. The possible answers were all the same: “encourage it”, “accept it”, “tolerate it”, “advise against it” and “forbid it”. This group of questions was designed based on the understanding that when parents embrace different groups of people, they incentive their children to have the same attitude, which is very relevant in the context of affective education.

Results

Among the 225 parents, 135 (60%) were women, 85 (37,8%) were men and 5 (2,2%) didn't answer that question. On table 1 we can see that parents express complete acceptance of their children socializing with people “with disabilities”, “of another ethnicity/color”, “of another social class”, as for these categories the parents were unanimous at not restricting the contact (0% of “advise against it” and “forbid it”). We may notice, however, the scenario changes and worsens when it comes to their children interacting with people “of another sex”, “of another religion”, “who are homosexual” and “whose parents are in prison”.

On table 2, the data mentioned above was crossed with the gender of the participant, and the results revealed distinct postures between the female and male members of the sample. Observing the category “encourage”, it is noteworthy that the part of the sample that identifies itself as female displays more tolerance than the male one, with a difference of over 10%, when it comes to encouraging their children to be familiar with ethnic, class, religion and gender differences. However, with respect to people of another sex or children whose parents are in jail, the difference of “encouragement” diminishes significantly between female and male samples.

By adding up the indicators “advise against it” and “forbid it”, it is remarkable that “homosexuals” is the category of people where the female and male attitudes were the most distinguishable from each other, for in this category the female intolerance is situated at 3,7%, while the male is 16,5%. On the other hand, the category “whose parents are in prison” prompts almost equal intolerance between the female and male parts of the sample.

Table 1. Parents’ tolerance indicators regarding their children’s coexistence with seven categories of people that express diversity in the community

What position do you take when your son/daughter intends to be friend whit people...														
	with disabilities		of another ethnicity/ color		of another social class		of another sex		of another religion		who are homosexual		whose parents are in prison	
	N.	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%
encourage	134	59,6	110	48,9	108	48,0	82	36,4	68	30,2	32	14,2	25	11,1
accept	87	38,7	114	50,7	115	51,1	125	55,6	148	65,8	121	53,8	114	50,7
tolerate	2	0,9	0	0,0%	1	0,4	14	6,2	7	3,1	51	22,7	53	23,6
advise against	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	1	0,4	1	0,4	2	0,9	13	5,8	19	8,4
forbid	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	1	0,4	0	0,0%	6	2,7	7	3,1
NA	2	0,9	1	0,4	0	0,0%	2	0,9	0	0,0%	2	0,9	7	3,1
Total	225	100,	225	100,	225	100,	225	100,	225	100	225	100,	225	100,0

Table 2. Crossed data between tolerance and gender indicators

What position do you take when your son/daughter wishes to be friend whit people...								
		with disabilities						Total
		Encourage	Accept	Tolerate	Advise against	Forbid	NA	
Female	N.	83	48	2	0	0	2	135
	%	61,5%	35,6%	1,5%	0,0%	0,0%	1,5%	100,0%
Male	N.	48	37	0	0	0	0	85
	%	56,5%	43,5%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
NA	N.	3	2	0	0	0	0	5
	%	60,0%	40,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
		of another ethnicity/color						Total
		Encourage	Accept	Tolerate	Advise against	Forbid	NA	
Female	N.	72	62	0	0	0	1	135
	%	53,3%	45,9%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,7%	100,0%
Male	N.	36	49	0	0	0	0	85
	%	42,4%	57,6%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
NA	N.	2	3	0	0	0	0	5
	%	40,0%	60,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%

What position do you take when your son/daughter wishes to be friend whit people...								
		of another social class						Total
		Encourage	Accept	Tolerate	Advise against	Forbid	NA	
Female	N.	71	64	0	0	0	0	135
	%	53,3%	47,4%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
Male	N.	35	48	1	1	0	0	85
	%	41,2%	56,5%	1,2%	1,2%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
NA	N.	2	3	0	0	0	0	5
	%	40,0%	60,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
		of another sex						Total
		Encourage	Accept	Tolerate	Advise against	Forbid	NA	
Female	N.	52	78	4	0	0	1	135
	%	38,5%	57,8%	3,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,7%	100,0%
Male	N.	30	44	9	1	1	0	85
	%	35,3%	51,8%	10,6%	1,2%	1,2%	0,0%	100,0%
NA	N.	0	3	1	0	0	1	5
	%	0,0%	60,0%	20,0%	0,0%	0,0%	20,0%	100,0%
		of another religion						Total
		Encourage	Accept	Tolerate	Advise against	Forbid	NA	
Female	N.	49	82	3	1	0	0	135
	%	36,3%	60,7%	2,2%	0,7%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
Male	N.	19	62	4	0	0	0	85
	%	22,4%	72,9%	4,7%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
NA	N.	0	4	0	1	0	0	5
	%	0,0%	80,0%	0,0%	20,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
		who are homosexual						Total
		Encourage	Accept	Tolerate	Advise against	Forbid	NA	
Female	N.	26	78	25	3	2	1	135
	%	19,3%	57,8%	18,5%	2,2%	1,5%	0,7%	100,0%
Male	N.	6	40	24	10	4	1	85
	%	7,1%	47,1%	28,2%	11,8%	4,7%	1,2%	100,0%
NA	N.	0	3	2	0	0	0	5
	%	0,0%	60,0%	40,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%

		What position do you take when your son/daughter wishes to be friend whit people...						
		whose parents are in prison						
		Encourage	Accept	Tolerate	Advise against	Forbid	NA	Total
Female	N.	16	70	27	12	4	6	135
	%	11,9%	51,9%	20,0%	8,9%	3,0%	4,4%	100,0%
Male	N.	9	42	23	7	3	1	85
	%	10,6%	49,4%	27,1%	8,2%	3,5%	1,2%	100,0%
NA	N.	0	2	3	0	0	0	5
	%	0,0%	40,0%	60,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%

NA = no answer.

Discussion and data analysis

The aim of this article is to highlight gender diversity when it comes to intolerance, considering the research revealed different attitudes among the female and male participants of the studied sample. As mentioned above, the female sample seems to be more tolerant than the male sample with regards to encouraging their children to live with ethnic, class, religion and gender differences.

Certainly, “encourage” shows more openness to contact with people situated in the proposed categories. On the other hand, the lines between “encourage” and “tolerate” can be blurry. For that reason, more attention is dedicated in this article to the analysis of the indicator “encourage”.

People with disabilities

Only in the category of “people with disabilities” the female sample presents a rate of encouragement above 60%, and the male sample, above 50%. In Brazil, the inclusion of people with disabilities gained prominence specially after 2008, with the creation of a national educational inclusion policy that prioritized school enrolment of people with special needs in regular classrooms (BRASIL, 2008). Nonetheless, inclusion still faces great challenges (NEVES; RAHME; FERREIRA, 2019). A systematic review (LEAL; EUSÉBIO; ROSA, 2020) concerning the attitudes towards people with disabilities shows there are some protective factors that might predict positive attitudes, such as information and contact frequency.

Our research points out that, despite the great acceptance shown by parents regarding their children's contact with disabled people, when looking reversely at the data one may conclude almost 40% of participants do not encourage such familiarity. For this category, male and female postures do not seem to differ much, nevertheless the answer "tolerate it" was 7,1% more common among men, indicating an attitude of less encouragement and acceptance.

Ethnic and racial coexistence

On table 1, we may see the parents in our sample do not restrict their children's contact with people of another ethnicity/color, which is an interest finding, given the fact that Brazilian society is considered tolerant in that area. However, these findings also point to greatly complex questions that surround ethnic and racial studies in Brazil. In Brazil, racism is a crime (BRASIL, 1989). Could that be the reason parents manifest a total acceptance of ethnic and racial coexistence for their children? Perhaps we find ourselves before a more complex matter.

The issue of racism in Brazil presents itself camouflaged by the "racial democracy" myth: "Thus, the white, the yellow, the *mulato* [the mix between white and black people], the black, the indigenous, the *cafuzo* [the mix between indigenous and black people] and the *mameluco* [the mix between indigenous and white people] may consider themselves equal. This is told by the white, who are in the political, economic and academical position of establishing truths of occasion" (IANNI, 1987, p. 111). That way, the studies about this theme are confronted with a contradiction: the maintenance in practice of the ideas of white race superiority, and the propagated ideas of a country where racial equality exists (HASENBALG, 1979, p. 238). It is evident in Brazilian society an effort of denying racism, what contradicts studies since the 1950's that state otherwise (MUNANGA, 2003). Therefore, the thesis of racial democracy has been seen more like official propaganda than as an indicator of the absence of racism in the society.

It is important to acknowledge that the questionnaire presented a "category of people" somewhat academic, because scholars talk about "education of ethnical-racial relationships" (BRASIL, 2006). Therefore, questions about "color" are mixed with questions about "ethnicity" – what could lead to a confused perception. That is because the category

could mean, on the one hand, “white”, “black” and “brown”, and, on the other hand, people descending from numerous migratory backgrounds.

In Curitiba, where the study took place, more strongly than in other Brazilian regions, there is a “veiled racism”, as can be observed in a report from a field research conducted on the occasion of the city’s 300th birthday (1993): “Here in Curitiba, discrimination is more camouflaged, but still present in every level. In other places, racism is up front, but here it is camouflaged, it is to be felt, it leaves a psychological mark. The presence of the black is stigmatized, but not talked about” (SANCHES, 1997, p. 39). Scholars from the 1950’s have already identified a tendency in the population not to recognize the existence of black people in the city of Curitiba and in the state of Paraná. That myth was broadly registered and legitimated by famous *paranists* [enthusiasts of the local traditions of the state of Paraná] as Wilson Martins, who, while addressing the theme of black people in his book “Um Brasil diferente”, uses the title “There was no slavery in Paraná” (MARTINS, 1989, p. 127).

If, by one side, the presence of black people is denied, by the other, the presence of migrants is overrated, and Curitiba is presented on the official information campaigns as the “city of all people” (COSTA, 1996, p. 7). That self-understanding points to the city’s desire to coexist with a diversity of migrants that marked its development, also understood as “ethnic groups”: Italian, German, Polish. Ethnic identity has come to be seen as a form of interaction in a society. That identity is “not given or innate” (EPSTEIN, 1978: XIII), but built and many times rebuilt in the concrete context of a society that “has a group of members that identify and are identified by other groups as members of a distinguishable category from other categories of the same type” (BARTH, 1969, p. 10-11).

One may recognize, therefore, that assembling in the same category “people of another ethnicity/color” could be academically correct, but leads to ambiguous results, because racism could discourage proximity among white, black and brown people and, contrarily, the overestimation of migrants’ descendants could encourage interethnic conviviality.

Nevertheless, the difference in encouragement friendship with “people of another ethnicity/color” varied from 53,3% in the female sample to 42,2% in the male sample. Even considering the complex

issues addressed above about including ethnicity and color in the same category, it is patent the female openness in promoting more conviviality and harmony on that area.

People of another social class

In the category understood as “people of another social class” the difference in contact encouragement is large between the female sample, with 53,3%, and the male sample, with 41,2%. It is remarkable that almost 60% of men who participated in the study did not encourage their children to be close to people from this category. There is some controversy about the best way to define individuals who compose high, middle and low classes. Ribeiro (2014) proposes a distinction in seven layers, based specially on the occupations of their members, in which high class would be formed by professionals and administrators, middle class by routine non-manual labourers, technicians, supervisors, qualified manual labourers and small-property owners and low class by manual unqualified labourers, rural small-property owners and rural labourers. The same author (2014) emphasizes the fact that, in Brazil, there is a strikingly deep gap between the high class and the others, whether in economical and educational terms, or in terms of intergenerational mobility.

In Brazil, the class issues and discrimination are deeply entangled. Bastos *et al* (2014) conducted a study among university students that evidenced the following results: when combining the students in the 4th and 5th lower income quintiles, 22.5% stated that suffered from class discrimination, while 16.1% stated that suffered simultaneously from class, race and age discrimination.

Given that the people who were interviewed were predominantly from the middle class, the doubt remains whether the difficulty lies in encouraging their children to be in contact with both high and low classes, or with one of them in particular.

People of another sex

When encouraging proximity with people from another sex, the difference between genders drops to about 3%, since the female sample

corresponds to 38,5% and the male sample to 35,3%, meaning a total of over 60% of parents do not encourage their children's friendship with people of another sex. This could indicate that parents, if given a choice, would not be favourable to mixed-sex schools.

During the 19th century, there was a great debate in Brazil about coeducation. On one side, against it, there was the Catholic Church and the conservative parts of the society, and on the other, protestants and liberal republicans. Only after World War II it became common to join boys and girls in the same classroom, but not guaranteeing the same rights for the two genders (ALMEIDA, 2015, p. 66-77). Before that, in 1882, during the imperial govern in Brazil, from a total of 22 regular schools, 15 were mixed-sex, only 5 were restricted to men and 2 to women, despite the reluctance of many, that gave in for economic reasons, or, so to speak, for a nation project (HAHNER, 2011, p. 470).

That also contributed to the process of school feminization, at a time when the profession of teacher was exclusively male. If in the origin of schools only men taught, contemporary studies show that parents of pre-schoolers don't fully accept men as teachers (GONÇALVES; FARIA; OLIVEIRA, 2015, p. 53).

Even though single-sex education might have benefits, there is a vast literature pointing to the need of coeducation, especially for its capacity to guide many socializing processes. Those are important because they show plural forms of femininity and masculinity (PEREIRA; DIAS; LIMA; SOUSA, 2017, p. 448). The children themselves demonstrate that it is possible to educate producing differences, by transgressing gender borders through their own perceptions (VIANNA; FINCO, 2009, p. 276). Thus, the educational institutions must prepare children, young people and adults to be active and critical individuals, and so living with difference becomes essential.

People of another religion

It is in this category, "people of another religion", that gender difference is the greatest: while 36,3% of women encourage their children's proximity with teenagers of another religion, only 22,4% of men also do the same, adding up to 13,9% of difference between genders. We would like to point to the fact that the study was conducted in a

specific religious context, what could indicate that this is the tolerance profile of that particular catholic community.

Nonetheless, that scenario can be identified in Brazilian society. Since the Federal Constitution of 1891 Brazil is a non-confessional government, that is, it does not have an official religion, and is obligated to respect religious pluralism. In 1988, the “Citizen Constitution” [our current Constitution], in its 5th article, guaranteed freedom of creed and worship. However, more than 30 years later, religious intolerance still persists, and brings along with it other-than-religious motivations, “like ethnocentric, racist, economical, and for the maintenance of *status quo* (FERNANDES, 2017, p. 117).

Thus, the relevant rate of 30,2% of parents that encourage contact with other religions might be explained by the national scenario of fight against religious discrimination. Despite religious intolerance being already criminalized in Brazil, there are still many cases of discrimination, especially against african religions, including destruction of religious symbols and worship sites, as *terreiros*, and aggression against its members. Religious leaderships of these groups state that prejudice would be better defined by “religious racism”, given that other religions do not suffer the same proportion of attacks, and that would be connected to a colonial background and to racism (FERNANDES, 2017, p. 123).

In our research, despite women being more encouraging of proximity with people from other religions when compared to men, it is remarkable that 0,7% of women advise against that contact, while no men advise against or forbid it. This data, while may seem insignificant, is unprecedented in the categories presented so far, and allows us to infer different gender perceptions in regard to religious issues. The brazilian report on intolerance and religious violence (2011-2015) (BRASIL, 2016) brings some data that can help us understand this phenomenon.

The document presents the gender difference between victims and perpetrators in relation to cases of religious intolerance reported by written press and denounced in ombudsman agencies. In regard to cases reported by the press (BRASIL, 2016, p. 52), 17,5% of victims were male, while 28,8% were female and in 54,5% of cases gender was not reported; for the perpetrators, it is the opposite, with 29,1% of men being the aggressors, versus 9,85% of women, apart from 60,1% of people

whose gender was not identified and 1% that identified themselves as from another gender. Despite the high rate of anonymous subjects, in the cases where gender was identified, the males were more related to being the aggressor. However, in the case of reports obtained by ombudsman agencies (2016, p. 53), there was a similarity between the responses of males and females: among the victims, 48% were female, 51% were male and 1% transsexual. Among the offenders, 52% were women and 48% were men. Although in these data the difference between genders was not very relevant, it is remarkable a slight preponderance of women in the role of offender, which contradicts common sense.

What could have led women to display a violence percentage comparable (and a little above) that of men? Could the religious issues be a topic that proves women to certain violence? In a short version, in Brazilian historical development, religion was considered a 'woman's thing', for being one of the most time-consuming and demanding activities, besides being the religious temple one of the few places women could attend (MACHADO; MARIZ, 1997, p. 72). For some authors, like Burdick (1993, *apud* MACHADO; MARIZ, 1997, p. 72), "the pattern of socialization facilitated the congruence between the feminine psychological structure and religious spirituality". That, along with the female subjective notion of abnegation, submission and indetermination, corroborated with the deterministic belief in an association between female gender and a particular religious sensibility.

Nevertheless, Machado and Mariz (1997, p. 5) showed that positive experiences of poor women in religious communities, particularly in the Basic Ecclesial Communities ("Comunidades Eclesiais de Base – CEB"), served as incentive in the search for better life conditions, and in the charismatic Catholic movement, as well as in Pentecostalism, as a form of improving women self-esteem and better integrating them in the labour market. In that same sense, Anjos (2008, p. 531) agrees that the rewards related to the engagement community leaders present could contribute to a change of power dynamics in the familiar and community spheres, by allowing women to appropriate a dignified and positive image of "poor woman". "That identity, for the 'leaders', reverts the stigma of belonging to popular class, expresses their moral superiority towards family and community, and consists even of a payback to their exclusion from other social spheres", says Anjos (2008, p. 531). Besides, adds Couto (2002, p. 365-366), women

and men build their identities through a relational interplay, such that the male comprehension is not limited to a construction built only from the contrast to women's speech.

Thus, as a hypothesis, the percentage of women who advises against contact with other religions in our research (0,7%) and, also, the women who were denounced as aggressors by the ombudsman agencies (52%) could be explained, perhaps, by the incentive of a controlling theological speech, given that the religious experience seems to be really valuable for the women. In a context where ecumenical and interreligious approximations have been happening for decades between religious leaders, those findings reveal the resistance those movements still face, reflecting historical and global-proportion hardships that go way beyond the scope of this article.

People who are homosexual

The intolerance scenario worsens when it comes to allowing their children to socialize with homosexual people, when only 14,2% encourages it and 8,5% advises against or forbids it. In a public university from João Pessoa, in 2001, the results from a study about homophobia divided the participants in three groups: flagrant bigots, subtle bigots and non-bigots. The first group was opposed to the psychosocial explanations about homosexuality and embraced more fiercely the ethical-moral and religious explanations. The second one explained homosexuality from a biological and psychological stand. The third one embraced the psychosocial explanations. This was concluded after the individuals were asked to categorize possible homosexuality causes into the following explanations: a) ethical-moral, where homosexuality would be tied to a subject's lack of character, respect and moral values; b) religious, where the homosexual person is weak, does not resist temptation and does not follow God's word; c) psychosocial, where homosexuality is not a disease and should be understood in its totality; d) psychological, where there is a belief that homosexuality is a result, mostly, of early childhood sexual traumas; and e) biological, where homosexuality is understood as a disease caused by physiological, hormonal or gestational disturbances (LACERDA; PEREIRA; CAMINO, 2002, p. 174-175).

About ten years later, that same classification of social representation was applied to seminarians in Midwest Brazil. The results showed

evangelical seminarians expressed their bigotry in a more flagrant way than Catholics, who are more subtle. Therefore, the author proposes, as an intervention strategy for a non-homophobic clergy formation, the belief in the psychosocial nature of homosexuality, and the disbelief in its moral aspect (PEREIRA; TORRES; PEREIRA; CAMPOS, 2011, p. 81).

Regarding this question of the study, a great gender difference was also identified, with 19,3% of women encouraging proximity against 7,1% of men. On the other extreme of possible answers, adding the categories “advise against it” and “forbid it”, it is remarkable that homosexuals are the category of people who distinguish the most the female and male postures, as for this category female intolerance is situated at 3,7%, while male is situated at 16,5%, a difference of 12,8%. For our research, aimed at the subject of sexual education, those are relevant results because not only does it state that almost 90% of parents don’t encourage proximity with homosexuals, but also that fathers present prohibition levels way higher than mothers.

Concerning factors that contribute to homophobia, on the basis of anglo-saxon psychology, it is consensual that women tend to be less judgmental than men, especially in respect to homosexual men, while homosexual women are victims of similar homophobic attitudes from women and men (COSTA; NARDI, 2015, p. 723). Pereira, Camino e Monteiro (2009, p. 78) corroborate that by pointing out that, in research, women broadly present themselves with smaller levels of bigotry against homosexuals. That tendency could be explained by two main reasons: a) women and men feel less threatened in their social roles, given that they understand them distinctly (WHITLEY, 2001, *apud* PEREIRA; CAMINO; MONTEIRO, 2009, p. 78); b) women interiorize faster normative patterns about sexuality (WOOD, CHRISTENSEN, HEBL *et al*, 1997, *apud* PEREIRA; CAMINO; MONTEIRO, 2009, p. 78).

People whose parents are in prison

The scenario is worse when it comes to the possibility of sons and daughters being familiar with people whose parents are in prison, this situation being the one where most intolerance is seen in our study. When the category “people whose parents are in prison” was inserted in the study, researchers had no idea that would be the category where coexistence would be more difficult in the studied community – only

11,9% of the female sample and 10,6% of the male sample encourage proximity. It is also in this category that genders express the smallest difference of encouragement rate. Nevertheless, when adding up the indicators “advise against it” and “forbid it”, the difference between gender is clearer, resulting in 3,7% for the female sample and 16,5% for the male sample, a difference of 12,8%. This is extremely relevant data, because it reveals a discriminated category that is rarely contemplated in the social debate (RANGEL; BICALHO, 2016). Other authors also bring attention to the stigmatization endured by inmate’s children, who can be considered as secondary victims (TECHERA; GARIBOTTO, URRETA, 2012).

Considerations

It is our hope that this data could instigate deeper examinations about the coexistence with diversity in Brazil. The focus of this article is the male and female differences on the matter of intolerance; the themes remain open to subsequent analysis. We could, however, highlight two perspectives brought to light by the research.

Firstly, the study points to issues that are already present in other Brazilian studies, when it comes to conflicts related to coexistence with diversity: the interethnic and racial relations in the country present themselves under a cover of absence of conflict, but hide a veiled and structural racism. In southern Brazil, particularly in the region of Curitiba, there is incentive to proximity among constituted ethnical groups, especially of European migrants, what could create confusion when the question is studied as “interethnic and racial” relationships. The difficulty in encouragement of contact with homosexual people expresses Brazilian society’s historical moment, with homophobic and bigoted tendencies regarding gender diversity.

Nonetheless, the conducted study presents new data, not identified in other researches in the same region, that could be thus synthesized: the female sample seemed to be more open to encouraging proximity with the selected categories of people. This female openness to conviviality must be better studied, but could already explain why some sectors of society, more commonly led by women, are more tolerant, while sectors predominantly led by men are more intolerant. Some questions still need to be answered, such as: Christian communities

are more intolerant because of its religious identity or because they are predominantly led by men?

Many other questions could be posed, but it is our understanding that this research findings, even though not foreseen in the initial proposal, are relevant to help society understand that diversity studies should take in consideration different world views of the female population in relation to male population.

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