

The art of being a Hummingbird in women's triple-shift workday

A arte de ser Beija-Flor na tripla jornada de trabalho da mulher

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Resumo

Com presença expressiva no mercado de trabalho, as mulheres vêm ampliando continuamente sua participação nos mais diversos cargos e funções, no entanto continuam sendo as principais responsáveis pelas atividades do lar e pelo cuidado dos filhos. A situação agrava-se com a crescente demanda por qualificação, exigindo que essas trabalhadoras cumpram, muitas vezes, três jornadas de trabalho: profissional, familiar e educacional. Este estudo teve como objetivo analisar os mecanismos de dominação refletidos nas ações de mulheres que “conciliam” as atividades profissionais, o cuidado com a família e as exigências da educação continuada, utilizando como referência principal o trabalho de Pierre Bourdieu. Trata-se de uma pesquisa qualitativa, cuja coleta de dados ocorreu através de entrevista, buscando obter as histórias orais temáticas de cinco mulheres. Os relatos foram submetidos à técnica de análise do conteúdo e os resultados revelam que a busca pela qualificação deriva da preocupação com a empregabilidade e que a disputa profissional está ligada não apenas ao gênero, mas também à concorrência com profissionais mais jovens. Apesar de as mulheres fazerem referência ao início de uma revisão da divisão sexual de tarefas do lar, a empregada doméstica ainda se revela fundamental nesse processo de delegação e de conciliação. Para se dedicar aos estudos, elas abdicaram do lazer, não como um sacrifício, mas sim como um ato de nova significação das coisas. Tal qual beija-flor, que conjuga trabalho e reprodução das espécies botânicas, elas esperam conciliar as jornadas com rapidez, mas também com graça e leveza.

Palavras-chave: Saúde da Mulher; Qualidade de Vida; Qualificação Profissional; Dominação.

Abstract

With their significant presence in the labor market, women have continued to expand their participation in many positions and functions; however, they continue to be primarily responsible for home activities and child care. The situation for women becomes more complex with the growing demand for qualification, requiring that these workers often take on three shifts of work: professional, family and educational tasks. The objective of this study was to analyze the mechanisms of domination which are reflected in the actions of women who 'reconcile' professional activities, care of the family, and the demands of continuing education, using the work of Pierre Bourdieu as a principal reference. It deals with qualitative research, using data collected from interviews in order to obtain oral thematic stories from five women. The statements were submitted to the content analysis technique, and the results show that the quest for qualification stems from a concern with employability, and that professional competition is tied not only to gender, but also to competition with younger professionals. Although women refer to the beginning of a revision of the sexual division of housework, hired household help is still vital in this process of delegation and conciliation. To devote themselves to study they have abandoned leisure, not as a sacrifice, but as an act of re-signification. Like the hummingbird, which combines work and plant fertilization, the women hope to reconcile their tasks quickly, but also with lightness and grace.

Keywords: Women's Health; Quality of Life; Professional Qualification; Domination.

Introduction

Women's entrance into the labor market was intense starting with the first Industrial Revolution, when the need to supplement family income forced them to enter the world of compensated employment, where they were obliged to accept difficult and poorly paid work (Girão, 2001).

Throughout the twentieth century, changes in standards of behavior brought about by the birth control pill, the feminist movement and the hippie movement (Hirata, 2002; Hoffman and Leone, 2004; Rocha, 2006; Fraser, 2009) increased women's participation in the labor market, leading them to compete with men for opportunities to attain job posts and professional recognition (Muzart, 2003). Nevertheless, data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2010) reveal that even women with the same level of educational (higher education completed) receive only 58% of men's salaries. Besides suffering from discrimination, the fact that women have entered into the space of social production does not mean they are liberated from domestic tasks. On the contrary, it has generated a great challenge to women's work: the reformulation of family structure.

Girão (2001) explains the representations with regards to differences between the masculine and the feminine as derived from the social conditioning to which individuals are submitted. The psychological structures formed in this manner lead women to feel a certain sense of guilt when they choose to enter the job market, giving up a life exclusively dedicated to the home; on the other hand, they are pursued by a feeling of failure when they opt to be fully realized as women without participating in the world of formal employment. The complexity of the female situation is currently aggravated by growing demands for more qualified workers, requiring women to work three shifts.

The objective of this project is to analyze the mechanisms of dominance reflected in the actions of women who "reconcile" professional activities, family care and the requirements of continuing education. It should be stressed that the goal of analyzing the data was not to highlight the success of these women in balancing these "shifts" in comparison

with other women from other social classes who are not so successful, but to analyze what Bourdieu (1999, 2002a) calls availability for action, which is sometimes socially constructed in a pre-reflective manner. This perspective also allows for the analysis of the mechanisms of dominance which are naturalized in institutional social relations to be analyzed; these include family, school, and the job market, which are locations where social reproduction and relationship transformation take place.

The theoretical perspective which served as the foundation for this project is Bourdieu's (1999, 2002a) *habitus*, which considers that, during the process of socialization, individuals interiorize a system of disposition which guides their choices and actions. In this manner, the so-called "characteristics" of men and women are not natural, but instead are internalized and reproduced by men and women. The *habitus*, first constructed in the family and later in school and in other institutions, is at the root of questions of gender and plays an important role in mediating representations of the masculine and the feminine (Montagner and Montagner, 2010). Another reference which supported our data analysis was related to new configurations of the sexual division of labor, especially the studies by Hirata (2002, 2003, 2004, 2006) and Hirata and Kergoat (2007).

This project is justified because, like Montagner and Montagner (2010), we believe that reflection about gender implies rethinking the relationship between representation of the family and between the sexes, in private and public spaces. Therefore, from a sociological point of view, it has become relevant to understand how these women organize their lives in the dimensions of family, profession, and academics. We stress that we chose to work with mature, middle-class women with adolescent or adult children. This subset does not place limits on the study; on the contrary, it is a differential, as it fills a void left by studies on this topic which have focused predominantly on women of lower social classes with emphasis on the violence which occurs in domestic and public spaces. Nevertheless, women in other conditions, such as those in our study, also need to confront gender-related pressure and discrimination in the social division of labor,

in positioning themselves in the market, and in constructing their careers.

Methodology

This investigation is characterized as qualitative and descriptive; the subjects of this research were five working women who divide their time between professional obligations (regardless of the jobs they hold), academic demands and caring for their families. These women were chosen by criteria of accessibility, in other words, facility of access (Vergara, 1998). All the women were between 42 and 55 years of age, had at least one child, were in the job market, and continued their studies in a private master's degree program in administration.

The women who participated in this study presented specific characteristics which put them in a privileged position compared with the majority of Brazilian working women: they belong to the middle class, have fewer children, and receive better salaries which help pay for school expenses and support networks.

To keep their identities confidential, the interviewed parties were identified in the data analysis by letter M followed by a series of numbers from 1 to 5, which were assigned according to the chronological order of the interviews. Chart 1 shows the data describing the subjects of this study.

Thematic oral history was the method chosen to conduct this survey. According to Meihy (1996), this differs from oral life history because of its very specific nature, which is more interested in personal details of the narrator's life that are directly related to the main theme of the research; in other words, the subjects' personal trajectories with relation to work, family and study, in order to gain an understanding of the universe these women live in and their cultural specifics. One of the prerogatives of this method is that it should include few research subjects, given the need to conduct in-depth interviews. However, what could appear to be a quantitative limitation is a qualitative advantage, given the richness of the narratives obtained. Furthermore, in qualitative research, there is no concern with the generalization of a sample's data for a population as in quantitative studies, given that:

Chart 1 - Characteristics of study subjects

Master's Program Student	Age	Profession	Age of Children	Duration of Master's Program*
M1	55	Project manager	25 and 26	2 years
M2	44	Entrepreneur and teacher	16 and 19	2 years
M3	52	Project manager	22 and 26	2 years
M4	42	Autonomous (Clinic and consultancy)	15	1.5 years
M5	43	Health Assistance Manager	13 and 18	2 years

It is the qualitative researcher's responsibility to offer the reader a "dense description" of the context studied, as well as the characteristics of its subjects, in order to allow the reader to decide whether or not applying the results to a new context would be well-founded. This concept of generalization is known as "naturalistic generalization" (Alves-Mazzotti and Gewandsznajder, 1999, p. 174).

The interviews conducted were of the inductive type, according to Meihy's (1996) concept which states that the topic should be introduced by degrees throughout the interview, offering gradual stimuli to the informant so that the questions are contextualized and follow a determined order of importance. The previously held knowledge about the topic traces the focus, the direction and the path followed throughout the interview.

To analyze the collected data, the thematic categorical analysis technique (Bardin, 1977) was used; this was chosen to go beyond the subjects' statements and create inferences based on the theoretical references. The grouping of interviews allowed for the construction of a *corpus* with common characteristics.

Gender according to Pierre Bourdieu: some considerations

For Bourdieu (1999, p. 23), gender is a relational concept as well as a structure of symbolic domination which constitutes a relationship of power in which "the masculine is used as a basis of measuring all things".

For the author, biological or anatomical differences between the masculine and the feminine serve as natural justification for the socially constructed difference between the genders and, consequently,

the social division of labor. These differences are the product of a collective work of biological socialization and social biologization which is exercised over bodies and minds, the fruit of social relations of dominance which are incarnated in clearly differentiated *habiti* in clear differentiations which cause individuals to view the world according to this principle. The *habitus* is, therefore, a socially constructed cognitive capacity, and systems of perception, thinking, appreciation and action, which occur through internalization of the culture's principles (Bourdieu, 1986; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1975). The body, in turn, is the place where the disputes of power and cultural capital are recorded. It is our first form of identification: man or woman. Consequently, sex defines if we will be dominant or dominated.

The body is the materialization of domination, the *locus* of the exercise of power *par excellence*:

the simple observation of the external organs "diagnoses" a condition which lasts a lifetime. We come to be men or women and the cultural constructions deriving from this difference show innumerable inequalities and hierarchies which have developed and have been competing fiercely throughout human history, producing meanings and witnessing practices from different nuances (Sayão, 2003, p. 122).

This process of socialization and constitution of the gender *habitus* simultaneously constructs the individual and the world, articulately reproducing subjective structures (principles of vision) and objective structures (principles of division). This process of learning is long, informal and implicit, and is subject to physical and symbolic violence. It begins in the family, from viewpoint of individual education, and extends through other institutions

such as school, the church and organizations (Bourdieu, 2002a).

According to Bourdieu (1999), the self-concept which dictates men's and women's behaviors and feelings is registered in the body, molded in and by the sexual division of labor, production, and biological/social reproduction. In this context, the dominated also contribute to their domination, as a connection is established between the dominated and the relationships of dominance through categories constructed from the dominator's point of view. In this way, symbolic power is exercised over the bodies without any physical coercion, and accepted in emotions, passions and feelings. From this comes the eventual conflict between discourse and behavior, intention and action.

The social representations engendered by symbolic capital define the woman as less capable, the fragile sex that needs a protector, while the virility and masculine attributes of strength and protection are conferred upon the men, who are considered to be naturally superior.

Adams (1990) calls the set of widespread and socially accepted beliefs which dictate that women's most important roles should be protection, upbringing and promoting growth in others the "compassion trap". Implicit in this construct is the idea that the woman should subordinate her own personal needs (including those related to development and realization) to the well-being of others. This is a social construct which can make women subject themselves to practical and emotional servitude. This social role of women ends up distorting women's individual identities and limiting their performance. In this way, women take up the role of protector not only at home, where domestic tasks and child-rearing are their responsibility, but also in the social sphere. The so-called helping professions are more commonly staffed by women than men and, despite the fact that these activities have low value in the social hierarchy, women accept this role as protectors in search of social recognition, since the importance of this role is reinforced for the well-being of society. Therefore, according to the author, it is not easy for women to liberate themselves from this social premise where emotional manipulation is embedded.

Results

The interview data were utilized as a single unit, with representative statements selected in order to compose a set of connected meanings. This procedure allowed us to establish three categories of analysis: work as an important component in the women's lives; the family sphere versus the sphere of production; and the advanced degree as a requirement to stay up-to-date.

Work as an important component of the women's lives

For all the women interviewed, work was one of the essential values in their lives. In each woman's history, it was possible to perceive that this conception of work had been molded from infancy as a function of the *habitus* of her reference group, which was responsible for the process of socialization and, consequently, the biologization of the social in the minds and bodies of the women in question (Bourdieu, 1999, 1986).

For M1, work began to be part of her life when she was in high school. Coming from a middle class family, she began to work of her own will and not due to financial necessity. "[...] it is at home where we begin to have that will to work". M1 has been working for 30 years and, for her, work means being productive. The fact that she is approaching retirement has moved her to reflect on how she plans to fill her time in the future. Another fact which demonstrates the importance of work in her life is the form in which she adheres to the companies where she works. "You adopt the place". In her statement, it was possible to perceive that she identifies with the company where she works, treating it as if it were her own business: "[...] we are the shareholders of these companies, we are the owners of these companies. So, underneath our company, there are various enterprises that we have come to acquire over time. I am a part of this team".

According to Bourdieu (2002a), a factor which determines an individual's success is the cultural inheritance which was transmitted in the family; as a consequence, results obtained throughout the scholastic trajectory, including higher levels of

education such as college, are related to the cultural properties which were transmitted by the family. For M2, who came from a lower class family, work represents a necessity for survival, and an indispensable condition to achieving an education, which in turn allowed her to grow professionally and improve her conditions in life. Even considering the difficulties of reconciling her tri-fold responsibilities, she declared that she would not like to have a different life: “For me to feel well, I need to be working”. This statement confirms the successful construction of the *habitus* and the internalization of the culture’s principles. Her model was her father, who began his professional life collecting waste paper and managed to enter the Ministry of Agriculture through a competitive examination. “There is a history of evolution. This is part of our family values about work, about growth, about leaving one situation and moving forward”. A certain ethos also is part of this cultural inheritance: “[a] system of implicit and profoundly internalized values which contribute to define, among other things, attitudes with regards to cultural capital and the educational institution” (Bourdieu, 2002a, p.42). Attitudes and family dispositions as well as scholastic investment itself, such as time of dedication and acquisition of cultural assets, are elements which define an individual’s objective chances of accumulating cultural capital and, consequently, achieving success in school and in a career.

M3 came from a middle-class family and a socialization which also emphasized the importance of work, but not as a means of survival, since this need was filled by the family, but instead as a means of autonomy from men. This teaching came from her father figure who, conscious of the dynamics of gender domination, preferred to see his daughters liberated. M3 related that her father told his daughters that they should not wait for a husband who would support them, they needed to work and build their independence. With this goal, M3 looked for her first job at 18 because she wanted to have her own money. In her perception, the feelings of joy and satisfaction that came from working and studying outweighed exhaustion and responsibility; she did not feel pressured, but instead, stimulated. “[...] Let’s say, 80% joy of achievement, and 20%

responsibility” (M3).

M4 began her interview with the phrase “work is a very important part of my life, it always has been” and repeated this several times. She began to work at 15 because she wanted to, not due to necessity. She repeatedly emphasized the subjective value of work, declaring that she always sought activities which would make sense with and be connected to her areas of training (psychology and pedagogy).

M5 also had an upbringing which stressed work as the only means of gaining merit in life. At age 16 she moved to the capital of Minas Gerais to study, since the university course would allow her to improve her life. The beginning of her professional career was marked by some difficulties which forced her to be underemployed until she could build her own consultancy and pass a public service examination. She considers her work to be connected to struggle and, at the same time, to achievement, through pleasure and the joy of victory.

Jacques (1996) indicates the inseparable connection between identity and work, to the extent that the social role becomes essential to constructing identity. As a result, the author stresses the significance that the role of the worker has in constructing the identity of western men based on the consolidation of the capitalist system in which work is glorified. In this way, work can be seen not only as a source of social recognition, but as a element which constitutes the being, which is at the center of domination, given that women must fit into this field despite knowing that conditions between them and men will always be unequal for access, for career growth, and also for salary (Laufer, 2004). Evident in the discourse is the internalization of a culture’s own values in which the masculine principle is taken to be a measure for all things. It is in the body, in turn, where power disputes will enter, since male or female identification continues to define who is dominant and who is dominated (Bourdieu, 2002a). Material survival, financial autonomy and social status gained through the labor market do not place women on equal footing with men, as it has not freed women from any other feminine roles and responsibilities, such as housewife, mother responsible for raising children, and wife (Hirata and Kergoat, 2007; Kergoat, 2010), as we shall see in the next section.

Family sphere versus production space

This item speaks more specifically about the “sexual division” of work, a term which arose in France to discuss the different distribution of men and women in the job market, but also to analyze the uneven division of domestic tasks between the sexes (Hirata and Kergoat, 2007). Female participation in the job market represents a large challenge to women, since their role in the private sphere continues to be a reference in the affective emotional sphere (Hirata, 2002).

Reconciling the family sphere with production was a central issue for the interview subjects. In this sense, the main responsibility they attribute to themselves is caring for their children and running their homes:

I am the mother of a 15 year old adolescent. So, I make sure to take care of her when I need to. I don't need to cook and clean. I don't have these responsibilities, but I have to coordinate these activities. (M4)

Despite the differentiated socio-economic level of the women in the study, who can contract out some domestic tasks, the unpaid and invisible work of administering/coordinating the household routines and raising children is still seen as a maternal responsibility (Hirata and Kergoat, 2007). Along these lines, a similarity was seen between the interviewed women's statements and Girão (2001) on the subject of attributing the majority of household responsibilities to women, despite possible breaks from the traditional model which places men as responsible for the public sphere and women as responsible for private space. The author also affirms that representation of women as the foundation of the home is so strong that it overpowers complaints regarding the accumulation of tasks, which was equally confirmed in the present study.

An aspect which was shared by the interview subjects as greatly facilitating their ability to coordinate the three sets of work was the “support” of husbands, not only in the division of household tasks, but also in emotional terms.

Household shopping, the supermarket, whoever is less busy does it. When I was doing my master's studies, my husband took care of 80% of the grocery shopping. (M3)

I took 3 subjects at the same time.... and at the city hall, I had to take over the area of management. I thought I was going to go crazy... At the time I wanted to stop, to quit, but I tell you, my husband was my anchor. He sustained me. (M5)

Here we identify the consequences of the social representations engendered by symbolic capital that, according to Bourdieu (2002a), position the woman as the less capable being, the fragile sex that always needs a protector who is considered to be naturally superior. In daily life the symbolic advances towards politics, and objective reality comes to provide a way of experiencing reality.

It is while instruments that structure and are structured by communication and knowledge that symbolic systems fulfill their political function as instruments of imposing or legitimizing domination, that they contribute to securing the domination of one class over another (symbolic violence) [...], in this way contributing, according to Weber's expression, to the “domestication of the dominated” (Bourdieu, 2002a, p. 11).

It was possible to identify in the statements the beginnings of a reformulation of family organization; however, as Girão (2001) observes, the onus of this restructuring continues to be borne by women, since even though they assume technical functions in the labor market, they still feel responsible for running the home and many resist the idea of delegating domestic tasks, which makes it difficult to establish new forms of relating and forces them to define their husbands' actions as “support” and not as sharing. In this case, the “triple shifts”, the “accumulation” or “reconciling tasks” is understood by the women themselves to be “an appendage of salaried work” (Hirata and Kergoat, 2007, p. 599).

Nicolaci-da-Costa's concept of de-mapping (1985, p. 59), which “refers to the subject's survival, on different levels, of two or more sets of values (or maps) which were internalized at some time during formation”, can be observed in the discourse of the women

interviewed while, at the same time, they live out the ideal of feminine independence.

Buying uniforms, school materials was always me, take them to the doctor, always. Now that they are young ladies they ask me to help buy clothes, sew a button, we have to do it. I am tough on myself in this area, as the lady of the house. A mother has to have time to take care of the house. (M1)

Cumbi (2009) warns that all the behavior which seeks to invert the roles of mother and wife, seen as fundamental for conjugal stability, is represented as deviant and can compromise conjugal stability. In this way, dividing tasks can be seen as a loss of space and, consequently, as a loss of power (Coelho, 2005). It is noted that in our sample, perhaps because they have greater acquisitive power, there was a feeling that relative equality was guaranteed, that professional success was possible and that dividing tasks was only a matter of negotiation between the couple themselves.

Another aspect revealed in multiple interviews is that, to reconcile the new roles with the demands of the traditional family model, women continue to adopt the mechanism of seeking the help of a domestic employee, referred to as “a friend”, even “a member of the family”, confirming that the emancipation of these women is tied to the notion of position (Hirata and Kergoat, 2007, Kergoat, 2010).

I've got a fantastic person, who I truly love, because she is the one who helps me, because of course I need to have somebody. (M2)

Hirata and Kergoat (2007) warn that externalization of domestic tasks does not help to advance the struggle for equality; on the contrary, it acts as a mask and denies the fact that the increase in women attaining high-level professions has increased their dependency on women in more precarious situations. Even when delegation is present, according to Hirata and Kergoat (2007), one of its limits lies in the fact that management of the tasks which are delegated always depends on the competency of those who delegate it. In truth, this “conciliation” is accompanied by tensions and conflicts (Hirata, 2006; Hirata and Kergoat, 2007), exemplified in the feeling of guilt expressed in the statements.

Something is missing in this story. It is doing better in my studies, isn't it? That's what's missing. It really is. You can't do everything. I wouldn't want to stop working, because I would be completely unhappy, and I can't, can I? (M2)

I used to feel guilty that I didn't give my daughters the attention that I thought they needed. Even though I gave them attention, it still wasn't enough. Then I felt so exhausted, like a mother who wasn't that mother that we think we have to be. (M4)

Analysis of the women's discourse in relation to reconciling personal and professional life, that is, their *habitus*, reveals that they did not abandon symbolic aspects of this domination; to the contrary, they feel intimately thankful to be working and studying. They are free to make their own choices in their work, and are satisfied in seeing the results of their work. To reflect on the reasons for this, we propose the Bourdian view of the symbolic aspects of domination. The conditioning associated with a specific class of existential conditions, as in the case of the women in this survey, produces the *habiti*, which are principles that generate and organize the practices and their objective representations adapted to their needs, which makes them evade the rules and develop perceptive schemes which are different from those women who live in more severe and restrictive social, economic, and cultural conditions (Bourdieu, 1980).

Despite the many social changes which have occurred in recent decades, the fact is that men and women live in a hierarchical relationship. The dynamics of gender relations are interwoven with domination and power. Power necessarily implies a relationship of domination: in our specific case, of men over women. Nevertheless, we may not commit the error of victimization, since these women also are subjects in this relationship, even dominating subjects.

Master's study as a requirement for being updated

For Bourdieu (2002b), a student's success, even at the highest levels of education, is tied to the cultural capital transmitted by the family, which includes

material contributions such as writing and the arts, as well as that which is related to the body, such as gestures and speech, which are learned in the domestic space. The women in our study decided to enter their master's programs after having completed *sensu lato* graduate courses as a way of staying updated, gaining new knowledge and honing their professional abilities. The master's degree actually represents the conquest of yet another title along the educational journey, or another "certificate of cultural competency" which is usually more exploited by those who already have a higher level of social relations capital (Bourdieu, 2002b).

To continue in the market I need to do something that I perceive as a desire of the company, a necessity of the company. (M3)

It is noted that this cultural inheritance also makes up an *ethos*, that is, "a system of implicit and profoundly internalized values which contribute to define, among other things, attitudes regarding cultural capital and the educational institution" (Bourdieu, 2002b, p. 42), translated by these women as a way of "continuing in the market". Nevertheless, contained in the "desire of the company" is also the desire to establish a relationship of gender inequality accompanied by differentiation with regards to new competitors: young recent graduates.

If I were to leave the company today, I think that they would hire an experienced person to fill my position, but maybe not someone my age. You get a trainee and see that they have fantastic agility. There's just no comparison [with me]. (M1)

Bourdieu and Passeron (1975) help us understand school and its social relations in its ideological, political, and legitimizing function as an arbitrary system of dominance and one which masks the social reality that, instead of transforming society, ratifies and reproduces inequalities. In this way, the master's degree represents to these women a hope of maintaining the *status quo* in today's dispute with the younger set, covering up the relationships of dominance already instituted by gender.

Valuing education in the companies where the women work is contradictory, since in some cases the master's degree is perceived as a threat: "[...]

there is an implicit fear that people who dedicate themselves to the study of theory question tacit learning, disputing power" (M1), in a hierarchical structure where command and subordination are already established. Therefore, it is necessary to continue working at the same pace and fulfill all requirements. So what does one give up? Leisure time, the pleasure of taking care of oneself, the pub at the end of the week, quality of life, being alone, holidays, travel, exercise, being more available to one's own parents, reading, and other things (M2, M4).

The triple set of responsibilities is perceived "a new challenge which women set for themselves. This can become a burden, but it can transform into a choice" (M4), a choice of becoming "a hummingbird, that works very quickly but tries to do everything lightly, without burden, without obligation" (M2).

The hummingbird carries strong significance in various cultures. The Aztecs, for example, believed that the souls of dead warriors returned to life in the form of butterflies and hummingbirds. On the mystic plane, the hummingbird is further related to healing, romantic love, clarity, grace, luck and gentleness. This seems to be the ideal for women, to be successful in the productive space, as well as for men, but to continue to be useful in the family, where they can express their affection, meeting social expectations with regards to the feminine. However, by opting to add a third shift to their daily list of responsibilities, even if it is enjoyable to acquire new knowledge and strengthen their network of relationships on their same social level, women unconsciously strengthen domination.

Final Considerations

The objective of this project was to analyze the mechanisms of dominance reflected in the actions of women who "reconcile" their professional activities, care of the family, and the demands of continuing education. The theoretical perspective which formed the base of the study was Bourdieu's theory of domination and the work of Hirata and Kergoat, which discussed new configurations of the sexual division of labor. The method used was the thematic oral history of five women between 42 and 55 years

of age who had at least one child, were in the labor market, and continued their studies in a master's program in administration at a private institution.

The importance of this study is the fact that it fills a gap in gender studies which, frequently, focus on women in less privileged conditions and victims of violence in domestic and social spaces. The study is also justified because even women of more elevated social backgrounds need to confront pressures and discrimination related to gender in the social division of labor, in entering the market, and in constructing their careers. Supported by Bourdieu, we reaffirm the understanding that during the process of socialization, women internalize an eminently masculine system of disposition which orients their choices and their actions in the areas of family, education, and work. Therefore, the concept of gender reflects a structure of symbolic and relational domination, even if the women are not aware of this fact and do not express it in their statements.

The data reveal that work is one of the essential values in the life of each of these women, the meaning of which was molded from childhood through the cultural inheritance of each family. For those who came from lower social classes, work is associated with survival, the chance to study, professional growth and improving living conditions. For the women from higher classes, work is also associated with a chance of independence and autonomy from the masculine figure. In all cases, these teachings came from their parents, especially the father, and served to orient their professional choices. The discourse showed the internalization of the values of a culture which takes the male figure as a measure for all things. Work, besides being a source of social recognition, is at the center of domination relationships, as women enter the market without even questioning the different conditions between them and men in terms of career growth and salary. The only threat identified is younger entrants to the market who arrive with more energy, more information, and more mastery of new technologies.

With regards to social division of labor, it was concluded that to "reconcile" the new roles with the demands of the traditional family model, women continue to adopt the mechanism of outsourcing domestic activities to other women, except that

these women are in precarious situations, and are identified as "a friend", or even "a member of the family". Also, the reconciliation of the three sets of tasks cannot be possible without the "support" of the husband, revealing the continued presence of one of the social representations engendered by symbolic capital: the women as the less capable being, the fragile sex who needs a protector (Bourdieu, 2002a).

For the women in the survey, a master's degree represents the conquest of one more title along the educational path, for those who already have an elevated level of social relations capital, the fruit of family inheritance (Bourdieu, 2002b). Nevertheless, by opting to include a third set of tasks in their daily list of responsibilities, even if it is enjoyable to acquire new knowledge and strengthen their network of relationships, the women unconsciously reinforce domination. The desire to study is not their own, but that of the company, and the women understand it to be a condition to being employed and differentiating themselves from new competitors besides men: young recent graduates of both sexes.

The women's ideal is the hummingbird: agile, successful in all roles, but light and retaining their femininity. However, this "reconciliation" does not occur without tensions and conflicts. The will to establish truly equal relationships is not sufficient to bring about change, but as Bourdieu explains (1999), the road to true transformation of dominating relationships occurs through radical transformation of the social conditions that lead the dominated person to tend to adopt the point of view of the dominators, through categories constructed from the dominators' point of view, employed by the dominated to be seen and be evaluated, and also to see and evaluate the dominant, in which school is also a co-participant. It is in this way that symbolic power is exercised over bodies without any physical coercion, determined in emotions, passions, and feelings.

We agree with Cumbi (2009) that the fact that women work and study does not allow us to say that they live in a situation of gender equality. For this to truly occur, women and men need to be taught to think and act in a way that demystifies the myths, values, and traditions which produce discourses and practices that perpetuate domination.

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