

GENDER PEDAGOGIES AND THE ENJOYMENT OF LEISURE: A STUDY WITH GIRLS LIVING IN TERRITORIES AFFECTED BY VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN PORTO ALEGRE, RS

*PEDAGOGIAS DE GÊNERO E USUFRUTO DO LAZER: UM ESTUDO
COM MENINAS EM TERRITÓRIOS MARCADOS PELA VIOLÊNCIA
CONTRA AS MULHERES EM PORTO ALEGRE/RS* 

*PEDAGOGÍAS DE GÉNERO Y DISFRUTE DEL OCIO: UN ESTUDIO
CON NIÑAS EN TERRITORIOS MARCADOS POR LA VIOLENCIA
CONTRA LAS MUJERES EN PORTO ALEGRE/RS* 

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Abstract: This article seeks to understand under what conditions girls living in regions with high rates of violence against women negotiate their access to and enjoyment of leisure. The empirical material was produced with 50 girls aged between 9 and 17, from two schools, through participant observation, field notes, semi-structured interviews, and a focus group. The accounts indicate that the risks and the imminence of violence ensure the effectiveness of gender pedagogies that allow them to be present in leisure spaces. By avoiding dark places, seeking busier times, and modulating their presence according to perceived risks, those girls operate a reading of urban space forged through everyday experiences that teach them to live under surveillance and to self-regulate. Violence, in this sense, does not appear as an isolated event, but as a structuring mechanism that shapes women's use of public and leisure spaces.

Keywords: Gender-based violence. Leisure. Territoriality. Gender pedagogies. Women.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The enactment of the 1988 Federal Constitution recognized leisure as a social right to be guaranteed and promoted by the State (BRASIL, 1988). Since then, leisure has been formally understood as part of the set of rights that support citizenship alongside education, health, housing, and work. However, the realization of this right in Brazil, according to Raquel da Silveira¹ *et al.* (2022), is marked by discontinuities and inequalities, revealing a gap between legal recognition and the actual conditions of access.

Even with progress in reducing social inequalities in recent decades, the country still faces structural challenges in making social rights universal (UNDP, 2017). Leisure, in this context, remains barely institutionalized in public policies, often subordinated to sports, tourism, or culture agendas, which weakens its implementation and prevents the creation of a specific social protection system.

These gaps affect different social groups in different ways. Leisure enjoyment, according to Jéssica Pereira (2019), is influenced by factors such as gender, race/color, class, disability, and generation, which create inequalities in opportunities for participation and belonging. For women, leisure is heavily shaped by gender inequalities and the context of violence that affects their daily lives.

As Cláudia Bonalume and Hélder Isayama (2018) point out, women face multiple barriers to accessing leisure ranging from domestic and caregiving overload to insecurity in public spaces. From childhood girls are raised under norms that limit their movement and bodily autonomy, creating a symbolic and material control over their time and spaces. As Miriam Abramovay *et al.* (2002) discuss, this reality seems to get worse in areas marked by high rates of violence against women, where constant fear and threat limit leisure activities and the use of public spaces.

Gender-based violence, therefore, is not only a domestic or interpersonal phenomenon but also a structuring element of urban organization and access to the city, as Cathy McIlwaine *et al.* (2021) point out. According to Gabriela Rodriguez and César Martinez (2024), women living in socially vulnerable situations tend to limit their movements, choosing ‘safe’ routes and restricted times, which reduces their opportunities for socializing, leisure, and a sense of community. Research conducted in partnership by the Patrícia Galvão and Locomotiva institutes indicates that in Brazil women regularly face violence and fear when going out for leisure activities at night. The data show that 98% feel afraid; nine out of ten have experienced some form of violence—from persistent catcalling to sexual harassment, robbery, and even rape—and 63% have refrained from going out because of safety concerns. This sense of violence, therefore, is not an individual perception but a structural problem that restricts women’s right to leisure and full participation in urban life².

¹ Inspired by a growing movement in academia, on first mention we provide the full names of cited authors to challenge practices of erasure and affirm the central role of women authors in knowledge production.

² 9 OUT OF 10 women... Violência contra as mulheres em dados. São Paulo: Instituto Patrícia Galvão, 2025. Available at: <https://dossies.agenciapatriciagalvao.org.br/violencia-em-dados/9-em-cada-10-mulheres-ja-sofreram-alguma-violencia-quando-se-deslocavam-a-noite-para-lazer/>. Accessed on: Oct. 15, 2025.

Thus, considering that (a) gender inequalities are reproduced not only in private relationships but also in public policies and in ways of occupying public space; (b) violence against women intensifies outside the context of work-related obligations (Cerqueira *et al.*, 2025); and (c) girls and women have less access to and enjoyment of sport and leisure than boys, this article asks how these issues unfold in territories marked by high rates of gender-based violence. The aim of the study, therefore, was to understand how and under what conditions girls living in two areas with high rates of violence against women in Porto Alegre/RS negotiate their access to and enjoyment of leisure.

2 THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK: A LOOK AT THE RESEARCH

The methodological path of this research is anchored in the post-structuralist perspective, which understands knowledge as a situated construction intertwined with power relations and discursive practices. Therefore, I draw on gender as a theoretical framework, as it enables an analysis of the social dynamics that shape these girls' leisure experiences.

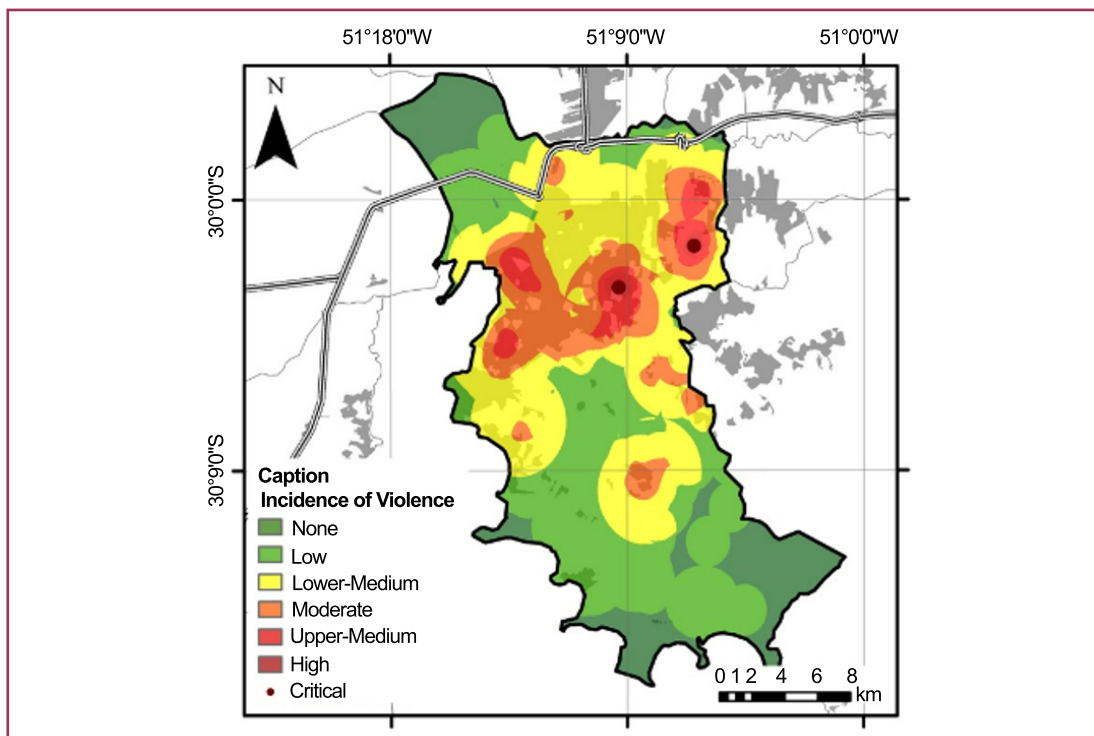
In this sense, gender, according to Dagmar Meyer and André Silva (2020), is a social and historical construct aimed at organizing individuals, a norm whose mechanism assigns meanings to bodily differences, establishing guidelines on how to be, act, and exist in society. From this, practices and discourses are created that produce differences and inequalities among individuals.

As Guacira Louro (2018, p. 11) stated, “gender and sexual identities are, therefore, composed of and defined by social relations; they are shaped by the power networks of a society.” Judith Butler (2022) explains that gender is not something we are, but something we do repeatedly and tirelessly, until, in a way, it becomes natural—a process she calls gender performativity. These gestures, ways of speaking, acting, and dressing, while responding to social norms, are also produced by them. So, what we understand as “masculine” and “feminine” are practices we learn, internalize, and culturally naturalize.

From this perspective, the methodological approach adopted in this article begins with the violence maps of Porto Alegre, RS, which identify the areas with the highest rates of domestic violence and the schools located nearby. This study is part of the research project “Violence against women and its intersections with bodily and leisure practices” – Gender Relations, Education, and Violence Study Group (GERGeV/UFRGS).

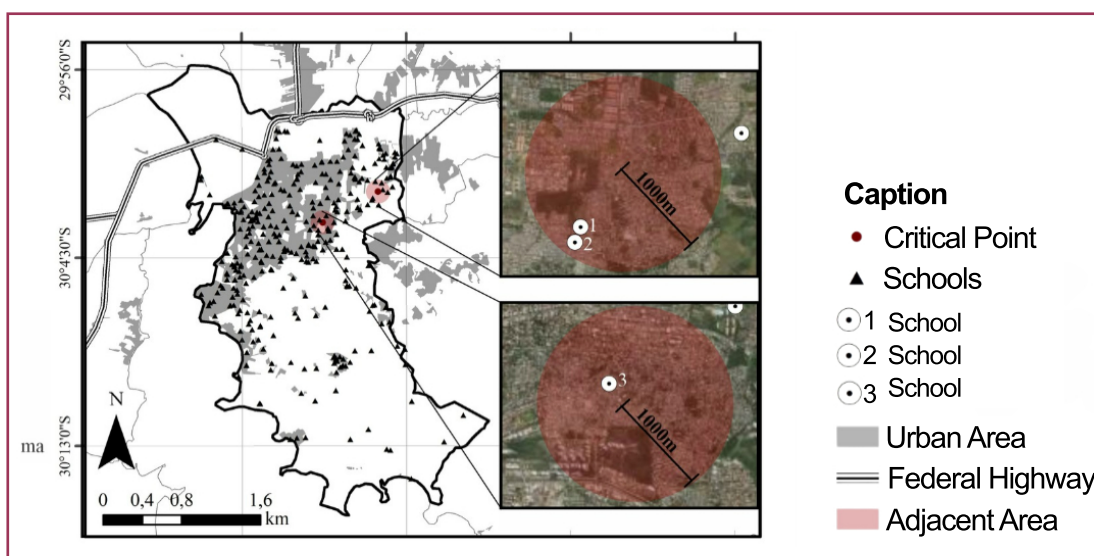
² 9 EM CADA 10 mulheres... Violência contra as mulheres em dados. São Paulo: Instituto Patrícia Galvão, 2025. Available at: <https://dossies.agenciapatriciagalvao.org.br/violencia-em-dados/9-em-cada-10-mulheres-ja-sofreram-alguma-violencia-quando-se-deslocavam-a-noite-para-lazer/>. Acesso em: 15 out. 2025.

Map 1 - Map of the incidence of violence against women in the municipality of Porto Alegre/RS.



Source: Produced by the research project "Violence against women and its intersections with bodily and leisure practices" – Gender Relations, Education, and Violence Study Group (GERGeV/UFRGS).

Map 2 - Map of schools located in the area with the highest rate of violence against women³.



Source: Produced by the research project "Violence against women and its intersections with bodily and leisure practices" – Gender Relations, Education, and Violence Study Group (GERGeV/UFRGS).

The empirical material that supports the analyses of this research was produced in two moments and in partnership with two different schools, one located on the east side (school A) and the other in the northeast region (school B) of Porto Alegre/RS. These are, therefore, two geographically separate locations, but with many similarities regarding daily life and socioeconomic reality.

³ The schools included in the study are 1 and 3.

From October 30 to November 22, 2023, we observed girls at school A involved in futsal during after-school hours. This took place in the evening from 6 PM to 7 PM. The project included a fluctuating group of 30 girls, aged 9 to 15. This dynamic gave rise to the Field Diary, whose entries provided the basis for developing the semi-structured interview guide. However, during the interviews, the girls appeared reserved and had considerable difficulty sharing what was asked of them.

Recognizing the relevance of the data but aware of the need for greater depth, it was essential to collect additional empirical material for the research. Thus, based on the data collected at School A (the Field Diary and semi-structured interviews), a focus group was organized with the girls from School B. The focus group was adopted as a data collection tool in the expectation that it would enable the girls to participate more spontaneously and share their experiences.

This second stage of the research was carried out with approximately 20 girls from the 7th grade through a focus group activity held at School B. These girls were between 11 and 14 years old, an age similar to the girls from the first school.

The data produced during the research⁴ (the field diary, the semi-structured interviews, and the focus group transcription) were analyzed using thematic analysis, which, according to Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke (2006), divides this approach into five steps: familiarization with the data, initial coding, theme grouping, reviewing and defining the themes, and preparing the final report. This approach helps identify discursive patterns in narratives of individuals' experiences and perceptions. With this perspective it was possible to interpret the themes that emerged in the research. Given this, by cross-checking the data collected, the work focused on analyzing the results to see how well they answered our research question.

The two neighborhoods where the research was conducted have contexts that sometimes overlap since they are adjacent areas and share similar social dynamics. They are neighborhoods that have historically been shaped by processes of social exclusion and signs of gender inequality, particularly affecting vulnerable populations.

These two regions, separated by just a few kilometers, played an important role in the formation of Porto Alegre. Because they were farther from the city center, both areas played a significant role in the relocation of low-income populations. According to Marion Nunes (1998), the municipal government sought to remove these people from central areas because it considered them unsuitable for remaining there; they did not fit the idealized image of Porto Alegre, RS, in the 1960s. The removals, therefore, were seen as a way of "cleaning up" the city.

The displacement of unwanted populations began with the 1959 master plan with the removal of low-income families and homeless people who were living in central areas and other neighborhoods considered upscale in the city. These

⁴ Regarding the ethical aspects of the research, the project was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS) under protocol 67399723.2.0000.5347. In addition, the parents were given the Informed Consent Form, and the students received the Assent Form. The girls could participate in the research only after both documents — the form signed by their parents and the form signed by the girls themselves — had been presented.

populations were pushed into more remote areas, which already had some residents, but the structural situation was one of neglect by the public sector. Many families were transported along with their homes and left on plots of land without any infrastructure. Others waited in makeshift warehouses while the city hall built substandard housing. These places had no electricity, drinking water, nor basic sanitation. In addition, industrialization brought migrants from other cities in the state who, because of their low purchasing power, sought housing in lower-cost areas (Nunes, 1998).

From the beginning, both the residents of the northwest and east zones organized themselves into associations and started demanding their rights, fighting for their own security, health, basic sanitation, and so on. Gradually, some achievements were made such as opening streets, improving street lighting, providing healthcare, and creating parks and schools. Some of these victories were won after protests and mobilizations (Nunes, 1998).

Starting from collective organization, the communities created a sense of belonging and managed to get around some of the difficulties, establishing survival mechanisms such as leisure spaces and discussions about issues affecting the neighborhood. The community located in the east zone, for example, relied on associations as their strength to enable both discussions about improvements for the community and *carnaval* parties and soccer tournaments.

Today, the communities studied are affected by disputes over the drug trade and are marked by urban violence, a low Human Development Index (HDI), and a lack of public investment. They face difficulties accessing healthcare, education, infrastructure, and leisure. Juliana Nunes (2018), in her doctoral thesis, noticed the dissatisfaction with violence in the community when she heard from residents of these neighborhoods that they live every day as if they are in a war.

Despite this, looking at the history of these neighborhoods is to recognize a rich tradition of struggle, resistance, and solidarity action that is evident in the organization of numerous social projects.

3 THE SILENCE: ECHOES BETWEEN WHAT REMAINS UNSAID AND WHAT IS REVEALED

During the research, we experienced moments of dialogue with two groups of girls at the two schools. Between the semi-structured interview and the focus group, various meanings about gender relations and the possibilities of enjoying leisure were being produced. Beyond what was mentioned, we also saw silence, hesitations, and things that could not be said. What was initially seen as an obstacle for the research quickly came to be read as a powerful clue for analysis. We were, therefore, prompted to stop, reflect, and reorganize our view of what was being said and, above all, what remained unspoken. Silence, the unsaid, and the pauses between words came to be understood as constitutive of the meanings produced by those girls.

By addressing women's access to and continued presence in leisure spaces, we examined how those girls moved through the neighborhood, questioned the

clothing norms imposed on them, and discussed what was considered appropriate or inappropriate for women. The shyness shown in their gestures and restrained laughter turned out to be connected to the fear of being exposed. This behavior can be understood as the insecurity that people feel in front of others, especially regarding the judgment that their behavior might cause. As Sandra Nunes, Ana Faraco, and Mauro Vieira (2012) point out, shyness is always tested in social situations where a person comes face to face with others. In our interactions with the girls at the two schools, we noticed that their answers were concise and made up of short sentences, which limited the depth of the interactions both in the interviews and in the focus group. Many times we needed to rephrase questions or rethink our reflections in an attempt to create closeness and expand the dialogue.

The intervention with the first group was carried out through semi-structured interviews. The girls gave their accounts individually: we sat in a space in the schoolyard and started talking. We set up the recorder and reassured them that they could speak freely as we would not disclose their names nor share the recordings. Even so, they spoke little.

At the second school, the focus group took place in one of the classrooms. It was a small room with big, heavy desks that were hard to move, which made it difficult for us to form a circle or semicircle for conversation. That day, there were four of us from the study group. We arrived and set up the camera so that all the participants could be seen. We organized the recorders and the slide presentation. From the girls' arrival until the activity began, they were curious: they asked what the activity would involve and observed the room as though trying to guess what was about to happen. Some reacted with quiet giggles, while others whispered to each other.

During the introduction activity, when we asked them to state their names and ages, the girls began speaking more quietly, and it became very difficult to understand what they were saying, even when they were asked to speak louder so everyone could hear.

Silence was a constant presence in our conversations, but this did not mean they were disconnected from what we were proposing. Overall, they remained focused and attentive to what was happening, even though they did not speak. Not speaking might have, in that context, been a way of processing what they were experiencing. Maybe sharing more about their experiences in the context of fun and leisure activities could, in some way, affect how they were seen by teachers and classmates.

Throughout the activity, the girls showed insecurity not only in the laconic way they behaved, but also through gestures and body movements such as shrinking back or turning their faces away, as a way of not wanting to be seen or noticed. The way they arranged themselves in the room, sitting close to their friends and marking out spaces, highlighted possible rivalries between the girls, which may have amplified the incomplete sentences, restrained laughter, exchanged glances, and whispers.

Amid possible conflicts with other participants and difficulty addressing certain topics, shyness emerged in the production of the research's empirical material as a

kind of regulator of action. The concern with image and the judgment of others seems to have made silence a way to feel safe in that context.

Even though Gabriel Knott-Fayle and Michael Kehler (2026) found that high school teens responded with silence when asked to discuss issues related to gender and sexuality, the meaning given to incomplete thoughts, broken sentences, and silence was different. In the case of those boys, the authors found little reflexivity, arguing that they lacked the critical repertoire needed to articulate their experiences and feelings. In the context of our research, however, both at school A and at school B, they were aware of what it means to be a girl in a society marked by gender inequalities. There, in those spaces, even though they spoke little, they showed an understanding of the difficulties of being a woman in contexts marked by violence and lack of safety. Aware of how that community is organized in terms of what is appropriate or inappropriate for women, those girls seemed sure of a set of gender and sexuality rules that needed to be considered in the way they are and behave.

4 BETWEEN FEAR AND TRANSGRESSION, GIRLS LEARN EARLY ON WHAT TO DO TO KEEP THEMSELVES SAFE

In our observations at the first school, when producing the Field Diary, we described the girls' routine in the project. The group was divided between older and younger girls⁵, precisely so that everyone would have the opportunity to play on an equal basis. We noticed that those who had the power of choice had a larger sports repertoire, which also made it clear that they set the tone for conflicts not only when the ball was rolling, but also when they were off the court.

Within this complex tangle of relationships, one of the girls takes center stage in a scene that shapes the course of the ongoing research. On one observation day, during a hot late afternoon in November, two groups of girls were playing a futsal match. During the game, emotions were running high; the heat in that setting was felt both in the physical sense of exhaustion and in the stress of the game environment. Carol, after finishing a play at the baseline, without thinking much, takes off her shirt, staying only in her sports bra. Noticing this, the teacher reprimands her and asks her to put her shirt back on before continuing to play. Immediately, the situation returns to normal, and the girl apologizes as she puts her shirt back on. It's worth noting that Carol is a determined girl during her plays on the court and quite strong-willed in her interactions with the teacher and her teammates. Despite this, she remained calm and obeyed the order (Field Diary, 2023).

Used as a trigger for the interviews with the students from School A and the focus group with the girls from School B, the scene described above highlights a common point among the girls living in that context of high rates of violence against women: the codes of conduct expressed through the girls' clothing. Recognizing that

⁵ The girls who make up the group are between 9 and 17 years old. Over the course of an hour, the teacher alternates between the younger group, aged up to approximately 12, and the older group, aged 13 to 17, who then play against one another. At times there was a mix of some girls, as we mentioned throughout the text.

it's impossible to go without a shirt at school, Laís (9 years old)⁶ points out: it's because the "boys are really messy [...] they keep staring, analyzing, and then calling the girls things we don't like." Similarly, Paula also gives her opinion on wearing a sports bra: "Kids do not go to school wearing only a sports bra. They have to wear [...] a shirt. It's not cool to just wear a top because then the boys will start looking, and it's not cool to be like that, showing off to others" (Interview with Paula, 12 years old, 2023). At one point in the focus group, when we asked who might perpetrate harassment, Bia said it could come from the boys, but Renata interrupted to say that teachers could also perpetrate abuse (Focus Group, 2024).

It is worth noting that when Carol took off her t-shirt and was just in her sports bra, there were no boys at school as boys were not allowed in until the girls' futsal session was over. However, even if they weren't on the court, the wall separating the school from the street, as well as the presence of teachers, would be enough to make the girls feel self-conscious (Field Diary, 2024).

Given that context, it was possible to notice the presence of gendered pedagogies (Louro, 2014), which work by organizing the school space, disciplining and regulating female bodies, especially during moments when bodies are exposed in movement. Carol's situation, when she took off her t-shirt because of the heat and stayed in just her top, becomes an important piece of evidence for analyzing gender relations and girls' access to and participation in leisure activities. Her action, when immediately reprimanded, reinforces the rule that girls shouldn't expose themselves; after all, according to Silvana Goellner (2013), the female body, especially in sports, is governed by norms of restraint and scrutiny.

In this way, the teacher's intervention shows the idea that the visibility of the female body is always at risk of being sexualized and, therefore, needs to be hidden. Even though the normative mechanisms of gender showed themselves through the teacher's actions, the context of high incidence of violence against women seems to place that gesture in a position of caring for and maintaining the well-being of those girls.

Widely shared among the girls, the expectation that they may experience violence appears to inscribe in their bodies obedience to the norms governing participation in after-school futsal. According to Carol herself (14 years old): "I recognize my mistake, I was wrong, in the middle of the court [...] and she's right to ask me to put [the shirt] back on." What comes through is not just acceptance of a rule, but recognition of her own vulnerability in that context, as well as her responsibility for the risk of being targeted by violence. Her words make clear how control mechanisms operate over female bodies, normalizing the possibility of abuse, especially when they are in spaces shared with boys. This is a kind of gender pedagogy that quietly teaches that girls' presence requires vigilance, proper behavior according to social norms, and modesty regarding the exposure of their bodies as a way of survival and control.

⁶ It was decided to indicate participant ages in parentheses because it was understood that this data contributes to reading the discussions carried out in the research. Age differences may suggest that some reflections were made by the older girls; however, the research showed that even the younger girls in that context were already producing and articulating understandings based on their everyday experiences.

At School B, despite the geographical distance between the two schools, it became clear that gender-based violence against women affects these girls in similar ways. They also recognized the risk that the female body faces when walking through violent environments. Living in communities where violence is part of everyday life, these girls, however, learn how to navigate these spaces to stay at least somewhat safe during leisure time.

The testimony of Laís (12 years old) makes this process clear. Justifying why she plays with a t-shirt on, unlike the boys, she says: “They are boys, they [...] have nothing to show.” Her words convey how the female body is invested with meanings that make it permanently visible and, therefore, vulnerable. For them, wearing just a top is like being half-naked or in underwear, which would not be appropriate for a girl in their context. As a form of agency in response to the dangers of violence, always wearing a T-shirt, even over a sports bra, therefore becomes a necessity.

During the focus group held in November 2024, when we asked how girls should move around the school, they responded:

Laís: (12 years old): [At school] you can come however you want, but [there’s a girl who] keeps showing almost her entire butt.

Amanda: (13 years old): She wears shorts halfway up her butt.

Renata: (14 years old): Then she comes wearing a short crop top.

Mediator: So, if it’s too short, is it not allowed?

Renata: She shakes her finger to indicate no.

Mediator: Do you think wearing something very short justifies anything that might happen?

Amanda: No, but like...we have to respect ourselves.

Amanda: Like, you shouldn’t come here with almost everything showing, right?

Amanda: If you want to wear a normal top, go ahead, but not a top with everything showing.

Laís: [The boys think] just because the girl is there, wearing short clothes, she’s trying to throw herself at them.

Mediator: And for a party, is it okay? For a party, is it okay to wear shorts that barely cover your butt?

Amanda: No, not then either.

Renata: (14 years old): No, miss, but some people still do, right?

Renata: Wow, those girls from the streets.

When discussing the short clothes of some classmates, they brought up the important need for girls to maintain their own self-respect. After all, depending on the type and size of the clothing, “the boys think [...] she’s trying to throw herself at them”. In these statements you can see how deeply the idea of blaming women for the violence they experience is ingrained.

These girls, in their daily lives, reported that they get around alone, both during the day and at night. This happens when they are going to school, attending parties, or walking around the community in recreational spaces, such as the park, for example. To stay safe, though, they avoid walking in places where there aren’t many people or where there’s poor lighting. When we asked if they were afraid to walk alone, only five girls answered yes; the others immediately said no. But when asked why they didn’t go to the park at night, they contradicted themselves, pointing out the dangers they might face.

Amanda (13 years old) said: “[...] we only stay until late afternoon [...] because I get scared. It’s just that the park, at nighttime, everything gets really dark, you know?” Angélica (15 years old) adds: “Stories are told about that park [laughs]. It is really overgrown.” “They’ve already found several bodies and all sorts of things there.” Amanda (13 years old), adding to her classmate’s sentence, says: “It’s really dark there, and hilly, you know?” “It’s quite big also.”

The contradiction between claiming not to be afraid of walking alone and, at the same time, admitting that they avoid the park at night out of fear of violence shows how these girls normalize both the strategies they use to stay safe and the violence itself. By avoiding dark places, choosing busier times, and adjusting their presence according to perceived risks, these girls interpret urban space through a reading forged from an early age by everyday experiences that teach women to live under surveillance and to self-regulate (Louro, 2018). Violence, in this sense, does not appear as an isolated event, but as a mechanism that operates as a constant horizon of threat, shaping women’s access to public spaces and even to leisure itself.

As André Silva, Dagmar Meyer, and Roberta Riegel (2021) point out, the threat produced by everyday violence that these girls face teaches them ways of being and acting, making violence a mechanism that ends up regulating behavior and bodies, shaping individuals based on gender norms. Violence, therefore, is understood as a technology of power that disciplines and marks differences, functioning as a producer of social inequalities. In the leisure experiences of the girls who participated in this study, gender pedagogies emerge precisely from the imminence of violence, naturalizing and normalizing certain ways of being (Silva; Meyer; Riegel, 2021).

Being aware of the gender mechanisms that organize life, these girls, at different times and triggered by different situations, told us about the dangers of not putting into practice what they had learned. Violence, as a predictable manifestation in that context, comes to be seen as a kind of punishment aimed at those who disobey the rules and neglect self-care. If “[...] it is within gendered and sexual power relations [...] that violence becomes possible,” then, within the specific gender dynamics of the territories where these girls live, abusive practices targeting women’s bodies and well-being serve to warn, hold accountable, and punish (Meyer, 2009, p. 218).

By indicating that, depending on their clothing, they could be misjudged by the boys, by pointing out the ways they would be labeled for not showing self-respect, by anticipating the kind of abuse they might face in certain places at certain times, these girls are talking about a process of holding themselves responsible. Women, therefore, are made responsible for their own safety or complicit in the violence they suffer.

Amid gender pedagogies and mechanisms for regulating behavior that produce gendered expectations, inequalities between men and women are becoming entrenched in the enjoyment of leisure. Within these unequal positions occupied by gendered subjects, violence becomes a threat that constrains women’s presence, even as they devise strategies to navigate it. So, the delimitation of access to this constitutional right necessarily involves understanding how these mechanisms that

affect their bodies shape daily life and take away the possibility of fully exercising citizenship.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In a geography where space does not have the same meaning for everyone, women face numerous challenges every day just to stay alive. So, in these contexts with high rates of violence against women, being alert is a first step not only to understand the obstacles but also to challenge, within this logic, the violence that permeates even the most ordinary relationships.

Like a dagger, violent spaces cut through the lives of these women and girls, whether at home, through violence from partners and family members, at work, in school, or when they walk around their neighborhood. Within these territories marked by violence, women develop their own ways of enjoying leisure activities while staying safe. From a very young age they already know what they need to do to keep themselves safe.

Faced with the possibility of violence, girls develop strategies that enable them to participate in leisure while placing responsibility for self-care on their own bodies. Under constant watch, they come up with strategies such as avoiding isolated places, organizing support networks made up of friends, and thinking carefully about how to dress in certain situations to avoid exposure or harm.

Throughout the research, it became clear that violence, as a mechanism for regulating behavior, helps explain how norms are structured, particularly for girls. Based on their own reflections, we can see how much gender norms affect their behavior, influencing their experience in leisure activities. So, by self-monitoring, keeping an eye on their peers, or breaking the rules, they are, in a way, creating meaning from their own process of subjectivation.

So, the experiences of these girls showed that leisure is far from being a neutral space; it's deeply influenced by power relations and gender norms. Even though they expressed shyness because of possible judgment from their peers, these girls shared the challenges they face every day. As a form of resistance, they engage in sports and leisure practices and negotiate access to them despite gender inequalities.

Moreover, gender pedagogies in the context studied serve both to maintain inequalities and to challenge and subvert them. Acknowledging this requires more than just access to sports and leisure activities; it calls for a historical and structural change that does not control their bodies nor restrict their freedom, allowing them to move around safely and have the same opportunities for experiences as boys.

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Resumo: O presente artigo busca compreender em que condições meninas residentes em regiões com altos índices de violência contra mulheres negociam seus acessos e usufruto do lazer. O material empírico foi produzido com 50 meninas de 9 a 17 anos, em duas escolas, por meio de observações participantes, registros em diário de campo, entrevistas semiestruturadas e grupo focal. Os relatos indicam que os riscos e a iminência da violência garantem a eficácia das pedagogias de gênero que lhes permitem estar no lazer. Ao evitarem locais escuros, buscarem horários de maior movimento e modularem suas presenças conforme a percepção dos riscos, aquelas garotas operam uma leitura do espaço urbano, forjada por experiências cotidianas que as ensinam a viver sob vigilância e a se autorregular. A violência, nesse sentido, não aparece como um evento pontual, mas como um mecanismo estruturante que incide no usufruto dos espaços públicos e de lazer pelas mulheres.

Palavras-chave: Violência de gênero. Lazer. Territorialidade. Pedagogias de gênero. Mulheres.

Resumen: El presente artículo busca comprender en qué condiciones las niñas que residen en regiones con altos índices de violencia contra las mujeres negocian su acceso y disfrute del ocio. El material empírico se recopiló con 50 niñas de entre 9 y 17 años, en dos escuelas, mediante observaciones participantes, registros en diario de campo, entrevistas semiestruturadas y grupo focal. Los relatos indican que los riesgos y la inminencia de la violencia garantizan la eficacia de las pedagogías de género que les permiten estar en el ocio. Al evitar lugares oscuros, buscar horarios de mayor afluencia y modular su presencia según la percepción de los riesgos, esas niñas realizan una lectura del espacio urbano, forjada por experiencias cotidianas que les enseñan a vivir bajo vigilancia y a autorregularse. La violencia, en este sentido, no aparece como un evento puntual, sino como un mecanismo estructurante que incide en el disfrute de los espacios públicos y de ocio por parte de las mujeres.

Palabras clave: Violencia de género. Ocio. Territorialidad. Pedagogías de género. Mujeres.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that this work involves no conflict of interest.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Mariana Mirapalheta Insaurriaga: Data curation, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, visualization, writing of the original draft.

Juan Kal Rosa Romero: Writing: review and editing.

André Luiz dos Santos Silva: Conceptualization, formal analysis, funding acquisition, investigation, methodology, project administration, supervision, writing – original draft, writing – review and editing.

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The research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee (CEP) of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, under opinion no.: 67399723.2.0000.5347.

RESEARCH DATA AVAILABILITY

The research data is only available upon request.

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