

# A gendered reading of child and adolescent domestic labor: impacts on schooling processes<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

Child and Adolescent Domestic Labor (CDL) impacts the schooling process and is more present in the lives of students living in poverty. It was discussed that this problem, which is still silenced in schools, produces school failure and is crossed by gender issues, particularly affecting adolescent girls. In the methodology, an Instrumental Case Study was used, aiming to illustrate the repercussions of child labor on the schooling of a high school student. In the discussion, the adolescent's repositioning in her school career was emphasized, based on the support she received from the psychology department at the educational institution. Finally, the need for this issue to be debated more in schools was highlighted, as well as the importance of psychologists working in this context in a way that involves social and gender issues, involving all school actors, without neglecting a listening space for those who are suffering in educational institutions.

**KEYWORDS:** Child and Adolescent Domestic Labor. Gender. School Psychology. Psychoanalysis.

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*Uma leitura gendrada do trabalho infantojuvenil doméstico:  
impactos nos processos de escolarização*

**RESUMO**

O Trabalho Infantojuvenil Doméstico (TID) impacta o processo de escolarização, sendo mais presente na vida de estudantes em situação de pobreza. Discutiu-se que tal problemática, ainda silenciada nas escolas, produz o fracasso escolar e é atravessada pelas questões de gênero, afetando, em particular, as adolescentes. No método, utilizou-se um Estudo de Caso Instrumental, objetivando ilustrar as repercussões do trabalho infantojuvenil na escolarização de uma estudante de ensino médio. Na discussão, destacou-se o reposicionamento da adolescente em seu percurso escolar, a partir do acolhimento que recebeu do setor de psicologia na instituição educativa. Sublinhou-se, por fim, a necessidade de essa questão ser mais debatida nas escolas e a relevância de que os psicólogos atuem nesse contexto de forma implicada com as questões sociais e de gênero, envolvendo todos os atores escolares, sem prescindir de um espaço de escuta voltado aos que estejam em sofrimento nas instituições educacionais.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Trabalho Infantojuvenil Doméstico. Gênero. Psicologia Escolar. Psicanálise.

*Una lectura a partir del trabajo doméstico infantil y adolescente:  
impactos en los procesos de escolarización*

**RESUMEN**

El Trabajo Infantil-Juvenil Doméstico (TID) impacta el proceso de escolarización, en especial de los estudiantes en situación de pobreza. Se discutió que tal problemática, aún silenciada en las escuelas, produce el fracaso escolar y es atravesada por cuestiones de género, afectando en particular a las adolescentes. Se utilizó un Estudio de Caso Instrumental, objetivando ilustrar las repercusiones del trabajo infantojuvenil en la escolarización de una estudiante de enseñanza media. La discusión destacó el reposicionamiento de la adolescente en su recorrido escolar, a partir de la acogida que recibió del sector de psicología en la institución educativa. Se subrayó, por último, que esa cuestión necesita ser más

debatida en las escuelas y la relevancia de que los psicólogos actúen, así, de forma implicada con las cuestiones sociales y de género, involucrando a todos los actores escolares, sin prescindir de un espacio de escucha dirigido a los que sufren en las instituciones educativas.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Trabajo Infantil-Juvenil Doméstico. Género. Psicología Escolar. Psicoanálisis.

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## Introduction

The role of the school goes beyond mere content acquisition, as it is also a space for socialization and the construction of social bonds, which is why its importance for the processes of subjectivation during adolescence is indisputable as it enables the construction of new identifications and of other social ties. In other words, the school institution favors the encounter of the adolescent subject with other identification poles, with which they can identify and recognize themselves in the social field, as well as enabling an opening, through the appropriation of knowledge, to new ideas and conceptions arising from of the Other of culture (NASCIMENTO, 2002), that is, those arising from the set of definitions to which the subject resorts when attributing meaning to external reality.

However, despite the subjective operations inherent to adolescence presupposing this openness, the love and maternal devices remain rooted in the subjectivation processes of girls and adolescents. Through the love device, they internalize the idea that they must present themselves as an object in the eyes of a man to be chosen by him. Through the maternal device, they subjectify themselves by assuming that they must prioritize caring for others, in many cases even at the expense of themselves, including taking care of the house, that is, domestic work (ZANELLO, 2018).

Thus, the aforementioned devices constitute the Other of our Culture, that is, they circulate incessantly in the discursive field of both families and

school institutions, which persist, in many cases without question, in reproducing gender technologies, which, according to Lauretis (1994), they would be what creates, challenges and reaffirms gender scripts – that is, they would be what predicts how to act, feel, position oneself and behave according to gender (ZANELLO, 2018). From this perspective, social discourses about gender performances can place girls and women in a crystallized place, as they are constructed and validated as a naturalized truth and not as the result of power relations situated in socio-historical and cultural contexts.

As emphasized by Almeida et al. (2020), the school, when not addressing these issues, has the potential to reinforce gender stereotypes and perpetuate biases. Detecting and highlighting this issue is a crucial first step to prevent school practices from perpetuating what is referred to as gender technologies for students (CARVALHO, 2004), and, by moving away from this recurrent social discourse on gender performances, these actions can come to produce other possibilities for the processes of political subjectivation of girls and adolescents.

Castro and Mattos (2009) and Castro (2008, 2009) emphasize that political subjectivation is a process that occurs in a dialogical context and can be initiated from childhood, as its ethical principle is not to silence words regarding contradictions surrounding the ideal of equality in the creation of the civilization pact. In other words, according to these authors, there would not be a kind of “boundary” between the adult world and the children's world, due to the perception that this segment would be unprepared to reflect on the intricacies of social pacts. Legnani and Almeida (2015) corroborate this conception, pointing out that we experience permanent social tension and, therefore, the processes of political subjectivation must be enhanced in the school institution, so that all subjects have an opinion on the contradictions present in social and institutional agreements, and know how to position yourself in front of them. However, the authors emphasize that, due to the fear of losing disciplinary control, schools commonly cover conflicts, and when these conflicts are silenced, they tend to resurface in the form of violent acts

because they have not been addressed through dialogue in the face of the inexorable malaise found in contemporary educational institutions.

A reality that is still not widely discussed in these institutions but certainly contributes to school dropout and conflicts is the burden of domestic work experienced by many economically vulnerable female students. Therefore, the topic under consideration here is the intersectionality between gender, race, and socioeconomic class issues that are present in child and adolescent domestic labor. It should be noted that Child and Adolescent Domestic Labor (CDL) can be defined as the activities carried out by children and adolescents up to 18 years of age, historically, it is women who have taken on the role of responsible for household chores, or more precisely, domestic work (ALBERTO et al, 2005). In this sense, the aim of this study is to understand the difficult repercussions of domestic labor on the school experience of adolescent girls in poverty, as well as to discuss the role of school psychologists in addressing this issue, which is intertwined with gender issues.

### **The Intersectionality between Class, Gender, and Race in the Issue of Child and Adolescent Domestic Labor**

The term "domestic chores" encompasses a variety of activities ranging from what are known as manual tasks such as cooking, washing dishes, cleaning the house, and doing laundry, to those considered non-manual, such as shopping, caring for people, and managing household organization. However, it's important to note that the term "chores" obscures the work involved in domestic activities and indirectly reinforces the idea that these services are a natural function reserved for women (ALBERTO et al, 2011), disregarding the historical and social context that produces such gendered relationships. For this reason, in this article, we will use the term "domestic labor."

In the reality of our country, it is still clear that domestic labor is not restricted to adult women, since children and adolescents also engage in it. Child and Adolescent Domestic Labor (CDL) involves taking care of people, domestic animals, and household tasks for their own family or for third

parties. An important step in addressing CDL, as highlighted by Silva (2009), is defining the phenomenon and distinguishing between what truly qualifies as such and what are regular and reasonable household tasks that can be performed by children and adolescents without compromising their time, educational process, leisure, and the rights of childhood and adolescence, such as making their own bed and tidying up their toys. Thus, we can basically speak of three types of domestic child labor: paid work, assistance work and socialization work (ALBERTO et al, 2005).

The first is work done in exchange for remuneration, occurring in third-party homes and in which there is a working relationship between employee and employer. The second is characterized by the child or adolescent assuming responsibility for taking care of the home and/or people, such as younger siblings and elderly relatives, and is carried out mainly in their own home, but can also be in the homes of third parties. It's important to emphasize that, in this type, the nature of assistance often conceals the exploitative situation because we must remember that there is a significant expenditure of time and effort on the part of the child or adolescent to perform this assisting work, which, despite not receiving payment, it often enables the adult to pursue paid work outside the home (ALBERTO et al, 2005).

The third type is socialization CDL, which would be work carried out at home, in which the child or adolescent assumes small responsibilities, without compromising their time and activities. The nature of this type of labor is characterized by contributing to the family's daily routine, and household chores are typically divided among family members (ALBERTO et al, 2005).

Prominent characteristics of CDL include domination and an unequal power relationship between the child or adolescent and the adult. This relationship is evident when we think about paid work, which subordinates the children and youth segment to the employer(s), however, it is also present in the CDL of assistance, in which the house itself is marked by power relations in which the adults are in charge and the children and teenagers obey (CAL, 2016). Therefore, in our conception, socialization CDL differs from

the other two types, since, in this modality, tasks are performed and not labor, as the child or adolescent collaborates, but does not become responsible for domestic activities, which are exercised by all family members.

With regard to specifically gender issues, as well as adult domestic work, there is also the naturalization of domestic work carried out by girls (ALBERTO et al., 2005; CAL, 2016; NOVAIS; KITAGAWA; BERTOLDI, 2016), as the differentiation by gender is clear if we consider the three types of CDL: girls primarily exercise paid CDL (43.4%), followed by socialization (38.2%) and assistance (18.4%). Boys, on the other hand, concentrate on socialization (87.2%), followed by assisting (10.3%) and paid work (2.6%) (ALBERTO et al, 2005).

The prevalence of socialization-related work among boys indicates that the process of becoming a man often involves becoming less responsible for domestic work and prioritizing paid employment outside the family environment. In contrast, the process of becoming a woman involves precisely the idea of taking on the responsibility for domestic labor (ZANELLO, 2018).

In addition to these issues, there is another aspect that deserves attention: the gender-based distribution of tasks. In the research conducted, activities typically performed by girls were identified, including mopping the floor, cooking, washing and ironing clothes, cleaning the refrigerator, and waxing the floor. The activities typically carried out by boys are taking care of dogs and sending messages (ALBERTO et al, 2005; OIT, 2003). Supporting these findings, 81.4% of girls make their own beds, while only 11.6% of their brothers do the same task; 76.8% of girls wash dishes, whereas only 12.5% of their brothers engage in this activity; and 65.6% of girls clean the house, with only 11.4% of their brothers doing the same household chore (PLAN BRASIL, 2014). In this way, the role taught to the boy is that he is responsible for contributing to domestic activities, but preferably he must carry out tasks outside the private environment.

From this perspective, it is necessary to problematize gender performances related to the labor field. Man, in our society, subjectifies

himself through the device of efficacy, based on labor virility and sexual experiences (ZANELLO, 2018). In other words, in the adolescent's cultural process of becoming a man, domestic work is not valued and when it occurs it is linked to remuneration status, just as sexual performance is important for the assumption of masculinity.

In the case of women, there is a clear relationship between the maternal device and CDL through the association, and naturalization, between procreation and the ability to provide care, placing the responsibility of caring for others on women through the valorization of maternal love. It is worth noting that the term “maternal device” can lead to the false impression that only women who are mothers are subjected to this device. In fact, women without children also subjectify themselves and are challenged to perform in this way, since it is the naturalization of women's ability to care that is at stake. However, the form and intensity of exploitation may vary, especially when considering social class and race (ZANELLO, 2018).

Poor, black women and/or women living in the most impoverished regions of our country are those most exploited by this device. They, for the most part, take care of others without being taken care of and without having time to take care of themselves. The daughters of these women are also expected to take on household and sibling care responsibilities from an early age so that the adults can go out to work (ZANELLO, 2018).

### **Child and Adolescent labor, poverty and schooling: reflections on the work of school psychology professionals**

CDL is mainly found in families living in poverty, especially in the so-called aid and paid work modalities. According to data from the Fórum Nacional de Prevenção e Erradicação do Trabalho Infantil (2015), the average income of these families is lower than that of other families in which CDL does not occur. As already mentioned, the domestic work of children and adolescents operates to increase the family income, either to



enable adults to work or to contribute to the household income, and even provide for it. Additionally, there is the dimension in which working in third-party households supposedly would provide better living conditions for the child or adolescent worker, as housing, education, food, and access to consumer goods would be provided by the employing family (NOVAIS; KITAGAWA; BERTOLDI, 2016).

When considering the circumstances leading to the occurrence of CDL, one can observe a lack of social protection, to the extent that the state is inefficient in providing public services that guarantee social rights (NOVAIS; KITAGAWA; BERTOLDI, 2016), which encompass "education, health, nutrition, employment, housing, leisure, security, social security, maternity and childhood protection, assistance to the helpless" (BRASIL, 1988).

It is also known that CDL hinders the school career of girls, especially poor and black girls (ARTES; CARVALHO, 2010), often leading to school dropout. In this regard, it is essential not to stigmatize and label families living in poverty as dysfunctional or lacking in affection when it comes to caring for children and adolescents. Therefore, intervention strategies should be drawn up to tackle CDL through public policies and by guaranteeing social rights for families living in poverty (NOVAIS; KITAGAWA; BERTOLDI, 2016).

The blaming of impoverished families within schools has been the subject of widespread discussion for at least four decades in our country, but it still seems far from clear how this issue will be addressed in everyday school life. Numerous studies have looked at how schools receive poor students and their families and how this relationship (between school and family) is generally based on prejudice and exclusion, contributing to these children and adolescents' school trajectories being marked by failure, repetition and various difficulties in the process of learning and socialization (DIAS SOBRINHO, 2010; DUARTE, 2013; FREITAS, 2007), resulting in dropout rates, low performance and educational exclusion (NOVAIS; KITAGAWA; BERTOLDI, 2016).

The studies also highlight the effect of this blaming to produce an abdication of the school's role in tackling the issues highlighted above, since teachers attribute the causalities of the problems to the family sphere, therefore "outside" the field of teaching actions (MORAES, 2018). This resignation, in turn, opens a repetitive cycle of non-solution of these problems, worsening the malaise in educational institutions and crystallizing the discursive productions around school complaints regarding students and their families. In these circumstances, one of the strategies still used by teachers is to demand psychological counseling for children and adolescents considered to be deviant and problematic. It is also common for students themselves to internalize teachers' complaints and see themselves as the culprits for poor school performance (ASBAHR; LOPES, 2006). In this regard, it is important to reflect on the social role of psychologists in educational institutions.

Law No. 13.935/2019, recently enacted and currently being implemented, stipulates that public basic education networks must have psychology and social support services, so that professionals develop "actions to improve the quality of the teaching-learning process, with the participation of the school community, acting in the mediation of social and institutional relations to address the needs and priorities defined by education policies" (AGÊNCIA SENADO, 2019, online).

From this point of view, it is necessary to reflect, from a historical perspective, on how these professionals have been working in daily school environment, particularly in relation to the socio-economic and cultural problems that affect the schooling process of students from impoverished backgrounds. From the 1960s and 70s onwards, psychologists took up their roles within schools, where they engendered indiscriminate practices to diagnose and treat the various configurations of school maladjustment in an individualized clinical approach that was disconnected from institutional relations, thus ratifying the responsibility for what is understood as academic failure on the student or their family.

As a result, these professionals diverted their attention away from the school's own issues and contradictions. It was, therefore, a social practice, devoid of a critical analysis of the political, social and ideological variables that permeate Brazilian school education, especially when focused on students from impoverished backgrounds. These analytical elements, for example, were easily found in school psychological reports, in which the references to the causalities of the problems were either tied to the student's faulty internal mechanisms, such as attention deficits, self-esteem, motivation, etc., or anchored in explanations about family breakdown.

Based on discussions, reflections and the consolidation of the field of school psychology, it is currently advocated to work from a preventive perspective, focusing on school success rather than failure, and emphasizing the promotion of psychological health (GUZZO, 2001; MARINHO-ARAÚJO, 2005). Additionally, there is a significant emphasis on the importance of a contextualized approach that takes into consideration social (including gender), economic, political, and institutional factors. Another review points out that action in schools should involve all school actors, not restricted exclusively to the student, or the teacher, or the family, or the management, but considering all the individuals involved in the educational processes (DIAS; PATIAS; ABAID, 2014).

Returning to the theme of this study, we will illustrate, through a Case Study, the repercussions of CDL in the "assistance" category on the school experience of a teenage girl living in poverty at a public high school institution. We will also highlight the work of the school psychology department in enabling the teenager to re-dimension her path marked by school failure.

### **The research paths**

An Instrumental Case Study approach (STAKE, 1995) was employed due to the purpose of a methodological strategy to illustrate and facilitate the understanding of the research problem. The research was conducted within a

public high school institution in the Distrito Federal, located in an Administrative Region (RA) with a population of 35,000 residents. This region has an average monthly income lower than the minimum wage, with limited access to clean water and sanitation services.

All the names in this case study are fictitious and any data that could identify the subjects has been omitted. Jaqueline, the student, was 17 years old and, given that her family lived in conditions of socio-economic vulnerability, she carried out domestic labor so that the adults (father and mother) could work, to guarantee the family's livelihood. Lia, the school psychologist who conducted sessions with student Jaqueline, had been working at the public educational institution for 5 years. Access to the records of these sessions was only authorized for the psychologists who authored this article and are registered with the Conselho Regional de Psicologia (Regional Psychology Association). The subjects were provided with explanations about the research objectives and consented to the development of the Case Study through an informed and voluntary consent form.

### **Jaqueline's Case**

Jacqueline sought the School Psychology Service on a spontaneous basis, and her main complaint was that she had difficulty understanding the content taught by the teaching staff. At the time, as reported by Lia, the student was seen as someone who had serious learning difficulties due to individual limitations. Jaqueline's previous school career was marked by several interruptions and changes of school, even during the same school year, as she showed difficulty adapting to schools and classes - sometimes she changed of her own accord due to conflicts with classmates and other times her family withdrew her from school because they considered her male friendships to be inappropriate.

Furthermore, the student had failed twice in previous years, which, in her perception, further reinforced the belief that she had learning difficulties or,

more to the point, that she was "dumb". Her mother and father also had this understanding of their daughter; in the family, she was labeled as "weak" in her studies; "lazy" for not fulfilling all her obligations; and "difficult" in interpersonal relationships, for not handling disagreements and frustrations well. When we reviewed the student's psychology records regarding her school performance, we noticed that Jaqueline was unable to complete her homework and assignments, and that she didn't have an established study routine. These difficulties were seen by some of the teaching staff as demotivation and lack of interest on the part of the student, as highlighted by Lia.

However, during the sessions offered by the school psychologist, some issues began to emerge: Jacqueline was the main person responsible for keeping the house clean and in order, and she also had the obligation to look after her two younger sisters. It is observed that, in Jacqueline's case, the initial demand came from the student herself, because she had introjected a learning difficulty that prevented her from progressing in school, when in fact it was a social and gender issue. Therefore, there was a clear naturalization of gender devices in the student's own speech and subjectivation processes, in other words, what was causing her suffering was outside her initial scope of analysis. From this perspective, it is only through an approach committed to social issues that the school psychologist can transcend the initial complaint - Jacqueline's reported learning difficulty - to bring to light the social and gender issues that affected her schooling, opening perspectives for other reflections.

It's worth noting that domestic work is the kind that never ends, and is therefore invisible (ZANELLO, 2018). In one of the homes where Jacqueline lived, the floor was compacted earth, which required her to clean it multiple times throughout the day. Only the student knew how many times she swept, mopped and washed the dishes and the bathroom to keep the house clean. Additionally, the three sisters shared the same room, which made her study routine difficult, since there was no space in the house where she could concentrate and organize her schoolwork in the little time she had left. Jaqueline also performed CDL in the "assistance"

category at her grandmother's house. Because she was elderly, and especially when there was a conflict between the family members who lived there, Jaqueline was asked to look after her grandmother because of the emotional bond they had, showing the affective nature of assisting CDL, which hides the labor involved.

During the sessions at the school psychology department, Jaqueline was gradually able to observe the impact of this overload on her schooling journey. In this sense, according to Lia, the first issue addressed was the displacement of the stigmas she carried around failing grades, supposed learning difficulties, demotivation and lack of interest. In addition, this process called into question the labels that the student received from family members based on pejorative adjectives, such as "dumb" and "lazy", so that she could reflect. The student also realized that these "explanations" about her low academic performance were also adopted by the school, which disregarded her tiredness because of accumulated demands of studying and domestic work.

When listening to some of the teaching staff, it was even possible to realize that the topic of CDL was barely present in daily school life. In this way, this showed the school's tendency, at first, to reproduce gender stereotypes, to the extent that it naturalized girls' CDL, without considering its impact on school performance. Therefore, it was a reality that was possible given the students' family income, but it was still often disregarded by teachers as a form of protection against disrupting the rhythm of planning of curricular activities. In other words, Jaqueline wasn't the only student at the school who was overburdened with domestic work, and based on these cases, the school psychologist also carried out interventions with the teaching staff on this issue, which until then had been silenced in the school context.

The process of supporting the student continued, and in the beginning, as per the psychologist's notes in the record, it seemed that Jacqueline was following a script of how women should behave in our society: taking care of

the home and people. In this way, she was completely subjectivized by the maternal device. It should be noted that gender technologies also perform a pedagogy of affections, colonizing them (ZANELLO, 2018), which is why they become powerful in preventing any kind of questioning around the tensions and contradictions that appear in gender inequalities.

Guilt is always a sign that the maternal device is operating (ZANELLO, 2018), and in Jaqueline's case, this feeling appeared alongside a sense of insufficiency. The student's statements at the School Psychology Service always referred to fights with her mother, who assumed the role of overseeing her daughter's housework so that her partner - Jaqueline's father - wouldn't get upset. It's important to note that the father only enjoyed the tidy house and took no responsibility for caring for his daughters. As Cal (2016) points out, it is usually an adult woman who accompanies and guides the child's or adolescent's domestic work, whether in her own home or in the home of others.

Through the listening space provided by the school psychologist, Jaqueline began to question the fact that, despite being seen as an adult responsible for domestic work, her father did not allow her to date and restricted her friendships. Thus, the student began to problematize the naturalized role of caring that fell exclusively to the women in the family, in other words, she began to question the maternal device and the division of domestic tasks in her home.

As mentioned, it is not up to the school psychologist to adopt an individualized clinical stance that is disconnected from the school context, but rather to act by listening in a welcoming way, so that students can reshape their schooling processes. It's important to emphasize that this space can be understood as a caring strategy, primarily involving a genuine willingness to listen to others (RESENDE, 2015). Through this process, it is possible to rescue the uniqueness of the student in their relationship with the school, so that they can take ownership, as subjects, of their own learning process. Being able to speak, be heard, and received

with support in the school environment is transformative because it brings subjectivity and one's life story to the forefront, breaking away from the homogenization and erasure of differences that are still so prevalent in schools. It's also important to mention that listening is different from hearing. Listening is active, and it is up to the student, as Bastos (2009, p. 94) points out, "to give consequences to it, such as meeting the satisfaction and pleasure of discovering new knowledge; new knowledge that positions us before a reality in which we want to participate and in which we want the right to have an active voice".

Giving consequences to what she heard in her own speech, Jaqueline's first strategy was to stay at school all day, as this would allow her to concentrate and keep up with her homework. However, upon returning home, domestic work had piled up, and despite being tired, she was still responsible for performing it. Gradually, with the help of the psychology department and other school professionals, the student managed to argue with her parents about her difficulties in conciliating so many demands, and her stance led to a family decision to divide the housework between the three daughters.

Following this change, the student's records showed a significant improvement in Jacqueline's performance and her engagement with the school, and she also began to establish good relationships with her classmates. When faced with interpersonal difficulties, the student would seek out the Psychology Center or another space in the school to talk and find solutions, even if she eventually considered the possibility of dropping out of school. By the end of the school year, Jaqueline already saw herself in a different place at school: she was learning, she got her grades back and passed, thus deconstructing her self-judgment that she had difficulties in learning.

As for domestic work, a change in family dynamics was perceived, but there was a perpetuation of the naturalization of caregiving tasks for women. The new dynamic was closer to the so-called CDL of socialization, as the sisters also had tasks to perform. However, Jaqueline began to clash



with her sisters, reproducing the same gender technologies she had internalized; she also called her sisters, for example, "lazy" when they didn't do the housework and turned to her mother in an attempt to get support so that her sisters would obey her.

It is observed, at this point, that the processes of subjectivation related to the subversion of the maternal device were still contradictory for Jaqueline. Affirming this difficulty, however, does not imply that there were no consequences in her process of rethinking gender inequalities in her family, in the social field, and analyzing the effects of socioeconomic inequalities on school performance. This position allowed the student to move away from an introjected individual guilt, helping her to rethink her own schooling process, as well as the place of "dumb and lazy" that she occupied based on the nominations she received from others.

The role of the psychology department in this process, according to psychologist Lia, was to problematize, through active but non-directive listening, in order to denaturalize, (de)sentimentalize and dislocate from the gender stereotype the ability to care foreseen as a script only for women. In subjective experiences, there is always the social-historical-political field, and as they are shared and listened to, ways are opened up for suffering and malaise, which are supposed to be the result of an individual difficulty, to be put into words, enabling a subjective re-dimensioning with the potential for each person to perceive themselves as a social subject who can transform their concrete reality.

It is important to emphasize that interventions based on listening, within educational institutions or in collective spaces, are similar, from a theoretical point of view to the listening carried out in the clinic by the psychoanalyst. For this reason, these interventions cannot be directive, because in order to have an effect, the school psychologist must not respond from a "ready-made knowledge" about the person asking for help, which would make it impossible for them to listen, or beyond what the subject themselves can mean and make sense of in their own discourse (STAZZONE, 1997). According to the author, the same

ethical care should be taken when intervening with teachers, since one should not intervene, listen and speak from a place based on specialism, in which one supposedly has "all the knowledge" about the problems affecting the school, which ends up placing itself as knowledge above the institution and, consequently, the teachers who are part of it.

Based on this ethics, the Jaqueline case allowed the school psychology department to also speak at meetings with the teaching staff, so that the school could discuss and think about the effects of the domestic work done by most of the students, whose impact on school performance was undeniable. As the psychologist pointed out, the institution broadened its perception of the political, social, cultural and economic complexity that befalls the usual term "school failure", linking it to gender issues, and set out to create educational strategies that were more compatible with the students' living conditions. However, as mentioned, despite the broadening of the debate in the school context and some changes in Jaqueline's life, we know that deconstructing stereotypes and prejudices and discussing gender issues are tasks that schools need to carry out on an ongoing basis. That's why, in our view, it's up to the school to promote and bring these processes to the fore, as a guiding axis of educational practices, so that students can rethink a series of issues that affect them directly on a daily basis; in other words, it's up to the school, in its daily routine, to enhance the processes of political subjectivation.

## **Conclusion**

The aim was to demonstrate the importance of educational institutions being attentive to the intersection between gender and school phenomena, at the risk of falling into simplifications and institutional violence. Broadening the view of gender devices and understanding how they intersect with institutional relationships is an initial step towards a better comprehension of the repercussions of CDL in academic failure.

These actions also represent the possibility for the school to reflect on whether it operates as a gender technology.

The student's case, analyzed in the light of gender studies, gave us the opportunity to think about how the process of subjectivation of girls and adolescents is still heterocentric and thus permeated by power relations that make it very difficult for them, as subjects, to build and carry out their own choices, including whether or not they want to care for others; in other words, for them to be in the subjective position of building ethical care for themselves and others.

Regarding the role of school psychologists, it is essential that these professionals listen to the students, problematizing and raising questions about the privileged modes of subjectivation of men and women in our society, as well as pointing out that, in many cases, the suffering they complain about with regard to school difficulties is not only gendered, but is also linked to the impact of socio-economic inequalities on their schooling processes. Thus, the focus is on contextualized action that is involved with social issues. Rosa (2016) points out that it is necessary to think about and intervene considering the socio-political dimension of suffering, which, as the name implies, is related to the suffering arising from the political and social relations that cross subjects in contemporary times.

As Kupfer (2017, p. 49) points out, the psychology professional "spreads out in all corners of the school: from the psychologist to the students, the teachers and the administrative staff". In this way, the psychologist doesn't confine themselves to an office, it's their role to engage in a comprehensive approach involving all school actors, this includes participating in meetings, occupying communal spaces, and engaging in dialogue with the administration. Furthermore, this professional cannot ignore the need for a listening space to support students and other social actors within the institution, enabling everyone to find and perceive themselves as a subject within the school environment. To conclude, within the school context, the psychologist must act in a movement from the

singular to the collective and from the collective to the singular, because the instituted and instituting discourses that permeate the network of relationships in the school system, when embraced through active listening, provide benefits to each person through the power of significance and the sense that can be produced.

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