

Suicide as an Effect of Moralizing Learnings: a conversation with Durkheim, Foucault, and LGBTI+ students¹

Breno Rafael da Costa²

Vagner Matias do Prado³

Welson Barbosa Santos⁴

ABSTRACT

In this text, we aim to weave provocations regarding possible relationships that can be established between learnings in gender and sexuality stemming from school experiences and the suicide of LGBTI+ youth. To this end, we draw a somewhat strange, yet possible, dialogue from post-structuralist and queer perspectives. This strangeness lies in placing, in the same conversation, Émile Durkheim, Michel Foucault, queer writings, and narratives about the school experiences in Basic Education of LGBTI+ university students. Finally, we problematize whether we could not understand the suicide of LGBTI+ youth, contrary to Durkheimian theorizations in which ordered morality is a central element of education, as a result of the violent modes of subjectivation orchestrated by school education in moralizing and heteronormative molds.

KEYWORDS: Schooling; Suicide; Normalization; Subjectivation.

¹ English version by Hederaldo Pessoa de Araújo. *E-mail:* hederaldoaraujo@gmail.com.

² PhD Candidate in Education. Federal University of Uberlândia, Uberlândia, Minas Gerais, Brasil. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7668-4029>. *E-mail:* b.rafacosta@ufu.br.

³ PhD in Education. Federal University of Uberlândia, Uberlândia, Minas Gerais, Brasil. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8662-2833>. *E-mail:* vagner.prado@ufu.br.

⁴ PhD in Education. Federal University of Uberlândia, Ituiutaba, Minas Gerais, Brasil. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6118-2296>. *E-mail:* welson.santos@ufu.br.

O suicídio como efeito dos aprendizados moralizantes: uma conversa com Durkheim, Foucault e estudantes LGBTI+

RESUMO

Objetivamos, neste texto, tecer provocações a respeito de relações possíveis de serem estabelecidas entre os aprendizados em gênero e sexualidade oriundos das experiências escolares e o suicídio de jovens LGBTI+. Para tal, traçamos um diálogo algo estranho, mas possível, a partir das perspectivas pós-estruturalistas e *queer*. Essa estranheza reside em colocar, na mesma conversa, Émile Durkheim, Michel Foucault, os escritos *queer* e narrativas sobre as experiências escolares na Educação Básica de jovens universitários LGBTI+. Por fim, problematizamos se não poderíamos compreender o suicídio da juventude LGBTI+, contrariamente às teorizações durkheimianas em que a moral ordenada é elemento central da educação – resultado dos violentos modos de subjetivação orquestrados pela educação escolar aos moldes moralizantes e heteronormativos.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Escolarização; Suicídio; Normalização; Subjetivação.

El suicidio como efecto de los aprendizajes moralizantes: una conversación con Durkheim, Foucault y estudiantes LGBTI+

RESUMEN

Nuestro objetivo en este texto es plantear reflexiones sobre las posibles relaciones que pueden establecerse entre los aprendizajes sobre género y sexualidad provenientes de las experiencias escolares y el suicidio de jóvenes LGBTI+. Para ello, entablamos un diálogo algo inusual, pero posible, desde las perspectivas posestructuralistas y *queer*. La peculiaridad radica en reunir en la misma conversación a Émile Durkheim, Michel Foucault, los escritos *queer* y narrativas sobre las experiencias de escolarización en la Educación Básica de jóvenes universitarios LGBTI+. Finalmente, problematizamos si no podríamos entender el suicidio de la juventud LGBTI+, en contraposición a las teorías durkheimianas, donde el orden moral es un elemento central de la educación, como resultado de los violentos modos de subjetivación orquestados por la educación escolar bajo marcos moralizantes y heteronormativos.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Escolarización; Suicidio; Normalización; Subjetivación.

* * *

Introduction

Schools in Brazil have, in recent decades, become more diverse in terms of bodies, experiences, and desires. In the country, what was once a space occupied primarily by white, wealthy, Christian men, in short, the privileged, became, following the promulgation of the Constitution (Brazil, 1988), a place of right for all citizens. Black men and women, Indigenous peoples, Umbanda practitioners, atheists, Romani peoples, single mothers, people with disabilities, young lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender individuals, intersex people (LGBTI+), and so many other groups and subjects now occupy the school grounds in our time, and with them emerges the democratic challenge of plural coexistence among distinct customs, dreams, and demands.

Émile Durkheim (1962), one of the exponents of positivist Sociology, argued in the mid-19th century in favor of public, secular, and republican schools. In the Durkheimian perspective, schools have the function of socializing the youngest, binding them to social ties and thereby ensuring a common morality for all citizens who, by each performing a role in the division of labor, can collectively achieve the harmony necessary for social happiness (Durkheim, 2004).

In Durkheim's work (1962, 2004, 2000), social bonds and the exercise of a common morality hold centrality, including in the prevention of suicide. For the sociologist, if the individual is not properly bound to social ties, absenting themselves from the moral logics that construct them as a "good citizen," inserted in the social division of labor, without vices and dedicated to maintaining social order, it may be that self-inflicted death appears as a response to this disconnection (Durkheim, 2000). In this nexus, it falls to schools to strengthen, through their teachings, the social glue that binds us in the condition of citizens, preventing the fragilities of social ties, potentially dangerous when certain lives do not follow the prescriptions of order, from resulting in an increase in suicide rates.

Would not the Durkheimian school, however, by acting coercively in the construction of a unique moral learning for all citizens, instead of strengthening the social bonds necessary for the maintenance of life, be producing exclusions directed at bodies that do not fit into the socially conventional moral logics? In other words, could schools not produce, under the justification of the "unified" aspect of education, experiences of social exclusion and violence? Furthermore, is it possible that such institutions corroborate, counter to suicide prevention, in the fabrication of a process in which the desire to end one's own life emerges as a possibility?

It is in the Wake of these interrogations That this work is situated. We intend, objectively, to weave provocations about possible relationships that can be established between learnings on gender and sexuality stemming from school experiences and the suicidal process of LGBTI+ youth. To this end, we draw a somewhat strange, but possible, dialogue from post-structuralist and queer perspectives. To begin, in the section A Factory of Normals, we propose a conversation between Durkheim's work, since we understand it to be one of the theoretical foundations of modern conceptions of education, suicide, and the imbrications between the two themes, Foucaultian studies, and the statements of cis-heterodissident youth interviewed regarding the theme of schooling and suicide among LGBTI+ youth.

In this section, we argue about how schools, by producing a unified life Project, in this case, the cis-heterosexual one, render students unrecognizable to themselves, causing them to self-perceive in a negative way. Following this, Subjectivities at Risk dialogues with the research interlocutors and the queer perspective. In this section, we problematize the ways in which schools, by producing normalizations of conduct through teachings that moralize bodies in service of scientific norms, subjectivate LGBTI+ lives in a violent manner and corroborate scenes of suffering in which suicide appears, in the impossibility of dreaming futures that are not those of violence, as an option. Finally, we provide

Some Considerations, questioning above all the Durkheimian, and positivist, interpretations of education, morality, and suicide.

Methodological Procedures

Upon considering our main objective, we saw potential in walking alongside the qualitative approach, particularly because it carries within itself the possibility of immersion in the cultural universe of the research subjects. In contrast to quantitative data on suicide, represented by work that inherits from Durkheim (2000) and his procedures for measuring social rates of self-extermination, our gaze is turned toward schooling experiences in which learnings on gender and sexuality occurred, even though these purport to be neutral and detached from society's demands (Bento, 2011).

To access these experiences, we issued an open invitation via social media to self-declared LGBTI+ university students, in the age range of 18 to 29 years, who wished to grant an interview on the theme "schooling of LGBTI+ youth and suicide." This universe was selected considering that both youth aged 15 to 29 years⁵, as well as trans and heterodissident subjects, are identified as "at-risk groups" for self-extermination (World Health Organization, 2019; Teixeira-Filho; Rondini, 2012).

Throughout the year 2023, seven interviews were conducted. However, in this article, only four of them will be analyzed: Ada, Apollo, Diego, and Pietro (fictitious names adopted by us at the suggestion of the participants). We prioritized, in this perspective, the statements of these four young people solely because it would be unfeasible, in a single text, to group all the narratives and their denunciations.

In this sense, it was possible to dialogue with Ada, a journalism student, cisgender woman, bisexual, and white. With Apollo, a Philosophy

⁵ Since suicide is a sensitive topic, we chose not to interview minors. We emphasize that all research procedures were previously approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Uberlândia-MG.

student, non-binary⁶, pansexual, and of East Asian descent. Diego, a Physics student, transgender man, bisexual, and Black. Finally, with Pietro, a Philosophy course student, cisgender man, gay, and brown.

In the interviews, the young people told us about their school experiences, and some of them were traversed by situations of suffering. Of the four interviewees, Ada, Apollo, and Diego stated that their school experiences were intimately linked to their respective suicide attempts. Pietro, on the other hand, indicates that, despite the suffering, schooling can also be a place of belonging.

Given the complexity of the theme, we recognize, in the wake of Evangelista's (2010) argumentation, the impossibility of reconstituting the interview scene with 100% precision due to the inherent complexity of life narratives. Interviews are, for the author, "a moment in which distinct points of view meet" (Evangelista, 2010, p. 178).

In this logic, we made use of transcreation⁷, a form of interview advocated by Evangelista (2010). Transcreation enables the researcher, during the conduct of the interviews, to note in a field notebook their feelings in order to incorporate them into the research. We also used this "field notebook" to record all obstacles, difficulties, and strategies adopted throughout the research. We also drew on Fisher (2021) for analysis support, which does not focus on presenting its results in just one separate section, as a conversation.

Considering self-extermination a sensitive theme, the dialogues with Evangelista (2010) and Fisher (2021) bring us closer to a more careful research practice. During the interview, we sought to make explicit that the young people could speak only about what they felt comfortable with and withdraw from the interview whenever they wished. They were previously

⁶ During the conduct of the interview, Apollo referred to themselves sometimes in the feminine, sometimes in the masculine. Therefore, in some moments of the text, we will refer to Apollo in the masculine, in others in the feminine.

⁷ Originally, the concept is part of the field of Oral History investigations, of which this work is not a part. However, we borrowed such conceptual mobilization considering its possibilities for dialogue.

alerted about the interview content and the possibility of recalling uncomfortable situations.

Among the numerous statements present in the produced transcriptions, this article selected excerpts that contextualize the relationship between the participants' school experiences with suffering and suicide. With the exception of Pietro, who teaches us that dissident school experiences are not solely painful, the chosen speeches illustrate the background of the approximation that the young people establish between their school trajectories and self-extermination. These school experiences are one of the vectors; however, there are several others that could not be addressed here in detail, such as family and religion, which make living in a certain way unsustainable.

Finally, our intention here, however strange it may seem, is precisely to provoke a conversation about dissident schoolings and their relationship with suicide. We consider, moreover, just as the queer perspective does, the strange as an investigative potency against normalizing analytics (Miskolci, 2009).

A Factory of Normals

So, in elementary school, there were always little jokes, but not much. People didn't care that much. When I started figuring it out at twelve, thirteen... that's when I heard some things. But it was always just comments and little jokes, I never had anything physical, at least. Then I dated a girl, because they started saying I was gay, right. [...] The bad thing is that since the school was civic-military, no dating was allowed, right, any demonstration of affection, no matter if it's a heterosexual couple or a homosexual couple. But I never had a problem, I just didn't show it because no one could, in that case (Pietro, 2023).

We begin our reflections from Pietro's statement, who narrated his experiences in a "civic-military" school. In this institution, Pietro discreetly reported being the target of "little jokes," "comments," and "little pranks." Such occurrences resulted in the young person hiding his sexual orientation in the social environment. His declaration "I dated a girl" reveals the attempt to protect himself from the mockeries of the other colleagues, which contrasts with the institution's stance that condemned "any demonstration of affection" or any expression of sexuality. In light of this, one questions: why does a school institution prevent or inhibit the exercise of affections? And why, even under the prohibition "whether of a heterosexual couple or a homosexual couple," does Pietro decide to date a girl?

Louro (2000), by stating that it falls to school education the following task: to postulate heterosexuality as an a-historical truth, to the same extent that it tries to contain – and tries because it always fails – any and all expression of sexuality in childhood and adolescence, helps us to provoke the discourses that traverse and sustain Pietro's narrative. These are discourses that seek, ultimately, to educate all subjects through a single standard, thereby normalizing them in the face of certain rules of conduct.

Durkheim (1962) is a pioneer, in the sociological field, in defending an educational element common to all citizens, although educational forms are understood as socio-historical phenomena and distinct from each other. In such a way, the author starts from a unified and diverse educational ideal, in which the "unified" configures a common base for all. "There is no people in which there does not exist a certain number of ideas and practices that education instills in all children, indiscriminately, regardless of the social category to which they belong," says Durkheim (1962, p. 39).

For the author, we need to have some similarities that permeate the entire society. In his speculation on how the social division of labor should be, increasingly specialized, education becomes a contradiction: on one side, it is necessary for each one to occupy a particular function in the social fabric; on

the other, there exists the need to obey common rules for harmonious social development (Durkheim, 2004, 1962).

This common background would be a "certain balance of both organic and psychic functions, without which the individual's health would be compromised, without prejudice, at the same time, to social cohesion" (Durkheim, 1962, p. 34). In such a way, education configures itself as an action carried out by older people on the younger generation with the intent of socializing them. The idea is to incorporate the morality of society so that it can fulfill its path toward civilized humanity. In this logic, social deregulation could be remedied through moral education. Such education would correct all social corruptions, among them, egoistic suicide – that occasioned by the fact that the subject is not truly bound to social ties (Durkheim, 2000).

Foucault, according to Gallo (2004), already drew attention to the problems arising from the influence of Kantian moral thought. Durkheim (1962), by approaching the Kantian proposal of moral education, understood it to be aimed at the development of human perfection, which ended up reverberating in institutions. An example of this can be observed in Brazilian medicine of the 19th century, which bet on education, the authority of "men of science," and moralization as strategies for social regulation and reduction of risk factors related to suicide (Lopes, 2013).

The Foucauldian reading, for Singer (2013) and Gallo (2004), provides elements to think about institutional education from other logics. In this conception, the school acts in the production of singularizations, or processes of subjectivation (Gallo, 2004). The idea is to create procedures and disciplinary strategies to forge obedient individuals from the domestication of their bodies. However, differently from Durkheim (1962), there is no praise in the Foucauldian analytics for the apparatuses of normalization, on the contrary, these are responsible for the complex network of discourses that produce truths (regime of knowledges) about life. In such a conception, power permeates the entire social fabric; it is the fruit of relations between people.

For Singer (2013), power is active, dynamic, and linked to school institutions and the existing relations in this space with the objective of forging an obedient individuality. In summary:

[...] it was in the constitution of modern science, an exercise of a powerful machine of power, that it was a matter of instituting an indubitable scientific truth, that the educational process articulated itself into pedagogy, as a way of constructing a truth about teaching and learning. But this same process was closely linked to the mechanism of the exercise of a power: the political technology of discipline, which consisted in seeking the domination of the social body through its most basic elements, the individuals (Gallo, 2004, p. 91).

The proximities between Durkheim and Foucault reside in the very conception of the role of school institutions over our bodies. Although in distinct ways, both authors maintain that school processes shape us through mechanisms of control. Durkheim (1962), responsible for believing in a certain "psychic" control for the advancement of society; while Foucault problematized the production of docile bodies through the disciplinarization promoted by school institutions.

Sanctions, awards, the arrangement of chairs, and even the architecture are, in this school model, disciplinary tools capable of domesticating bodies (Gallo, 2004; Louro, 2000). But school institutions are not only a privileged locus of a certain internalization of rules of conduct; in such a way that the person feels "guilty if they violate it even before being accused" (Singer, 2013, p. 35); such institutions are also producers of social norms, capable of teaching us "truths" about genders and sexualities.

For Gallo (2004), one of the main technologies exercised by schools is examination. Such a technique allows institutions to produce a relationship

between power and knowledge, responsible for standardizing, classifying, and surveilling students who dare to escape the norms. In other terms, the hierarchical power exercised by school institutions manufactures knowledges about good/bad, correct/incorrect, normal/abnormal, and other dichotomies (Prata, 2005).

According to Foucault (1999b), the examination constitutes one of the spheres of power that corroborates the exercise of "good training." In his reading, disciplinary power produces effects from the instruments of surveillance, punishment, and, finally, the combination of both: the examination. This has the function of both measuring, selecting, and scrutinizing singularities, while at the same time producing sanctions:

[...] the examination is at the center of the processes that constitute the individual as an effect and object of power, as an effect and object of knowledge. It is this that, by combining hierarchical surveillance and normalizing sanction, performs the great disciplinary functions of distribution and classification, of maximum extraction of forces and time, of continuous genetic accumulation, of optimal composition of aptitudes (Foucault, 1999b, p. 216).

Prata (2005) states that the power relation manifested through the examination is an expression of the panopticon. This "was a closed space, segmented and surveilled at all its points. In it, individuals were inserted in a fixed place, with the smallest movements and events controlled." (Prata, 2005, p. 110). The control of bodies appears from the constant surveillance that intends, through distinct technologies, to produce the imperatives of health, qualification, politics, and morality (Foucault, 1999b). On this point, we turn to Ada's statement to continue the discussion:

Since I started, I think it was in high school, that I began to have more, to have awareness, you know, of my sexuality. Before, I was very much in that standard, you know. I was always trying to follow the heteronormative standard, so I didn't even think about the possibility that I could like girls. [...] And I remember that the first time I really discovered that I truly felt attraction to girls, I felt guilty about it, as if I were wrong. And I also hid from people at school because I was afraid my friends would think that I would, how can I say, feel attraction to them, and then they would stop being my friends. So I didn't show it much at school (Ada, 2023).

Ada reported that it was only in high school that she began to understand her "bisexuality." Even without having suffered direct aggressions in the school institution, she observes that this environment ensured the functioning of a certain standard, in this case, the "heteronormative" one. The interviewee, by stating that she felt "guilty," also evidences the effectiveness of disciplinary apparatuses in introducing certain moral logics into the body. It was, for the young woman, as if she "were wrong." In school, guilt mixed with the "fear" of being alone, and this led Ada to seek to hide something that constitutes herself, omitting her desire for girls.

In this vein, schools, hospitals, and prisons act as "institutions of sequestration," removing subjects from public life with the intention of normalizing them, forcing them to follow certain conducts (Gallo, 2004; Prata, 2005; Singer, 2013). Not by chance, Louro (2000, p. 14) points out, school technologies make students self-disciplined and cautious people: "A schooled body is capable of sitting for many hours and probably has the ability to express gestures or behaviors indicative of interest and attention, even if false."

Schooled bodies, like those of Ada and Pietro, begin to omit their desires, out of fear of jokes and isolation within the institution. School learnings are potent to the point of making some subjects become, even, unrecognizable to themselves. Deviant subjectivities, as we will discuss next, can also undergo a process of depotentialization in which the violence of school technologies in their normalization assaults is so great that suicide is desired, attempted, and consummated.

Subjectivations of Risk

And there were some teachers who really made jokes about me, you know. It started to really affect me after I entered high school, when I came out. Before, these things didn't affect me as much, like suffering 'bullying', because they weren't very potent yet, but when I came out, when I had my first relationship and it spread through the school and I became a laughingstock, because that's what happened, it was a very difficult phase (Apollo, 2023).

As we begin this discussion, we bring a fragment of speech in the epigraph that assists us in locating the object of study intended here. We refer to the process of suicide and the way in which schools, in our time, play a role of relative weight in this social phenomenon. But how does this occur? What and who are the active agents in this process and action so personal and private? The fragment "some teachers who really made jokes about me" illustrates the constitution of the issue, as well as its complexity. And when does this occur with greater emphasis? "It started to really affect me after I entered high school, when I came out." It is exactly there that the teachings become painful and vulnerabilizing, perceptible in the statement: "it was a very difficult phase."

By listing Durkheim (2004) again as an important theoretical representative of this educational model that was experienced, in the flesh,

by Apollo, we need to recognize, first, the counterpoints present in his work. The sociologist attests, for example, to the diversity of cultural experiences, of multiple family configurations, and of ways of experiencing gender roles (Durkheim, 2004). Durkheim (1962) also says that happiness is something subjective and not the object of education. However, this does not overshadow the fact that his conceptual premises consider any other experience that is not congruent with his civilizational ideals as something inferior, uneducated, and, particularly, distant from the social ties necessary for the construction of order. In the words of Durkheim himself (2004, p. 24):

If, on the contrary, conjugal society lacks cohesion, if the relations between man and woman are unstable and intermittent, they cannot acquire a well-determined form, and marriage is thus reduced to a small number of rules without rigor and without precision. The state of marriage in societies where the two sexes are little differentiated attests, therefore, that conjugal solidarity itself is very fragile in them. On the contrary, as we advance into modern times, we see marriage developing. [...] It is enough, moreover, to take a look at our codes to see what an important position marriage occupies in them

From Foucaultian references, theorists of the so-called queer perspective find in education, schools, and universities spaces that produce discourses forging life projects framed by (cis)heteronormative logic (Louro, 2000; York, 2020). In this perspective, lives are inaugurated from a cultural matrix in which a line of continuity between sexed bodily morphology, gender expressions, and desire is postulated as a universal truth (Butler, 2017). If male (born with a penis), one must obligatorily "be" masculine and heterosexual. There is no other option without sanctions or at least tensions.

Education, for Foucault (1999a), always initiates us into prudence, never into experimentation. The "educated sex," says César (2009), is that which passes through moralizing discourses capable of hierarchizing lives based on a heterosexist prerogative, that is, gays, bisexuals, and lesbians have, not uncommonly, their lives ignored, sanctioned, and punished by the impositions of the (cis)heterosexual regime. The school discourse that, according to César (2009, p. 47), endorses and/or legitimizes the lives of homosexuals and bisexuals, conceives "the experience of transsexuality" as something "truly unbearable from the point of view of the school institution, because, faced with their transformed bodies, the competent speech of the institution sees no hope of return to the heterosexual norm." Diego corroborates this discussion:

But in elementary school, none! None! All the teachers knew something was happening, they knew... I've had my notebook vandalized with stuff, those things... I've had little notes, I've had a lot of things related to bullying. But, even though everyone knew, no one ever did anything (Diego, 2023).

Diego's statement evidences his experiences "in elementary school," in which he was daily assaulted, as expressed in "I've had a lot of things related to bullying." Faced with the violences that targeted Diego's trans, black, and bisexual body, "the teachers" remained silent. And, "even though everyone knew," no one combated the school teachings in service of gender norms; on the contrary, school agents, such as teachers and students, corroborated the maintenance of violent pedagogies of gender and sexuality.

In this sense, schools can operate from a pedagogy capable of undermining subjectivities, exercising a "single" life project in which difference is not valued. Not by chance, teachings about sexualities and genders need to be continuously repeated to sediment, illusorily, a truth (Louro, 2000; Bento, 2011). Such illusion is revealed, at every moment, by students like Ada, Apollo, Diego, and Pietro, by showing that not all teachings result in learnings.

In such a way, the discourses uttered by schools subjectivate the subjects and the meaning of their lives (Braga; Caetano; Ribeiro, 2018). For Duarte (2016, p. 159), there exists "a considerable intersection between school and sexuality in the construction of subjectivation processes." Such processes, not uncommonly, are marked by experiences of LGBTphobic violence; often "disguised," says York (2020), as bullying.

From the idea of "bullying," or even "homophobic bullying," as conducted in the work with 184 Portuguese students by António et al. (2012), there are researches that have constructed data indicating how such violence generates "psychological" effects on victims, even if these students were not victims of attacks in a direct way. In this research, it was verified that 42% of the cis-heterodissident respondents had already felt attacked in the school space, and in 57% of the aggression situations – physical or verbal, explicit or "disguised" as a joke – were witnessed by other subjects, "with 32% of the people doing nothing, 22% laughing at the situation, and only 17% asking the aggressor to stop" (António et al., 2012, p. 33).

In this sense, the daily presence of LGBTphobic speeches in the school environment is common, under the premise of maintaining a certain moral/social order. The research conducted by Teixeira-Filho and Marreto (2008, p. 143), with 106 students, indicated that a significant portion of the respondents, 73%, stated that they would accept having classes with gay teachers or lesbian teachers and that they are not bothered by the presence of non-heterosexual colleagues in the classroom; however, this acceptance "decreases to 57 (55.9%) when the gay friend displays feminine mannerisms." The rejection rates increase when questioned about the acceptance in the school space of trans people. In the same research, "34 (33.7%) expressed that they would not like to have a classmate who was a travesti and 22 (21.8%) are not sure." (Teixeira-Filho; Marreto, 2008, p. 143).

The LGBTphobic school daily life, by producing silences and preventing teachers from discussing life-related issues, such as gender and sexuality, can make LGBTI+ subjects not find in the school and in the

teachers safety to share situations of suffering (Teixeira-Filho, Rondini, 2012; Duarte, 2016). These people often start pretending not to be bothered by jokes, remaining silent and/or participating in discrimination scenes so as not to be the targets themselves (Teixeira-Filho, Rondini, Bessa, 2011; António et al., 2012). Diego weaves comments, about his schooling experience, that dialogue with such researches:

I took a long time to come out because I heard a lot of comments, for being a trans man, you know, I heard a lot that I was a lesbian, but that wasn't something good, I was called a dyke and all that. And it wasn't in a good way... so I always hid that, you know?! I stopped wearing a lot of clothes that I liked at the time, I wore clothes that I didn't even want, that I never liked. I stayed like that for a long time (Diego, 2023).

We see in Diego's narrative the effects of a school daily life permeated by experiences capable of negatively affecting, subjectively, cis-heterodissident lives. The reiterated offense on school grounds, expressed in phrases such as "I heard a lot that I was a lesbian" and "I was called a dyke" and, of course, "it wasn't in a good way," denounces how gender norms can gain ground in schools, suppressing LGBTI+ subjectivities. As an effect of these apparatuses of normalization and moralization of conducts, Diego takes a long time "to come out" and "for a long time" starts using clothes that were uncomfortable for him, which he "never" liked. We perceive, from Diego's narrative, how school experiences produce subjectivities marked by violence.

Nas considerações de Teixeira-Filho, Rondini (2012) e Bessa (2011), as violências direcionadas às expressões de vida destoantes da matriz cis-heterossexual resultam em situações de sofrimento emocional. Tanto que as instituições escolares e seus/suas agentes são convidados/as, em inúmeros momentos, a repetir a norma, conforme sinalizam Bento (2011), Picchetti e Seffner (2017). No entanto, também são criadas possibilidades de tencionar a

norma. É nesse lócus privilegiado de formação para relações sociais que somos subjetivados e vivenciamos experiências, ou para normalizar as diferenças ou para potencializá-las (Seffner, 2020).

In this way, schooling processes can be translated, in a certain way, from the experiences arising from the formal school daily life (Duarte, 2016). This process can be marked, when thinking about groups of LGBTI+ people, by school trajectories in which LGBTphobia is present and, not uncommonly, triggers a process of emotional suffering.

In summary, the attempts to adapt oneself to protect against violences and, in this way, live an undesired life; as well as isolation, non-recognition, and explicit discriminations are still elements that mark the schooling of homosexuals, bisexuals, and trans people (Bento, 2011; York, 2020; César, 2009). Not by chance, this plot of suffering opens the margin for LGBTI+ students to conceive suicide as an option. Diego, when asked if he believed that schooling experiences were related to his desire to "kill himself," helps us, once again, to provoke other views on these processes:

[...] there was a time when I stopped going to school, I think it was in ninth grade, I wasn't receiving so many attacks like that, but I still felt a bit out of place, the little I received was already enough, sufficient because of past things, so I started missing school a lot, I don't know how I didn't repeat the year, you know?! And it was the time when I started doing some little things there, I started taking some non-prescribed medications, I used a lot of meds, I would stay really high all day long high, especially when I went to school. It's a time in my life that like, remembering the events I don't remember. I don't remember what happened very well, because I was always like that, I'd take sleeping pills, mix them with something else and stay high all day (Diego, 2023).

The young Physics student recounted that, at the end of elementary school, although he did not receive "so many attacks" as occurred in other moments of schooling, his subjectivity had already been marked by experiences of past discriminations, making him feel "out of place." The phrase "the little I received was already enough" also indicates that the violences did not cease. Diego stops "going to school," starts "taking some non-prescribed medications," and "would stay really high." Can we affirm, in the wake of Diego's statements, that experiences of violence, especially gender violence, when taking shape in the school daily life, can make cis-heterodissident students seek other paths to try to circumvent this reality? Staying "high," especially "when going to school," would be one of those paths? Wouldn't this plot in which the school daily life acts in defense of gender norms be the plot in which suicide emerges as a possibility? The obstruction of the subjective potency of LGBTI+ students, in this logic, can corroborate the constitution of a suicidal process?

Ada, just like Diego, told us that yes, having her subjectivity affected by the heterosexual norm was one of the many other reasons that made her suicide attempt possible: "And I had an overdose on medication, then I ended up in the hospital," she said after recounting how she felt alone at school, at home, and even with her boyfriend at the time. Such a report does not stray far from Apollo's speech, "It was when I had the suicide attempt," is what the young man told us when speaking of the injuries reported at the beginning of this section.

It is also necessary to consider that the understanding of schooling processes involves, according to York (2020), reflection on all levels of schooling. The conceptions, views, and problems, such as the absence of trans people in Higher Education, are issues resulting from the other stages of education. Diego and Apollo, even though Ada and Pietro are cis people, find fissures to pass through Basic Education and manage to reach the university, indicating, perhaps, that schooling is not exclusively a violent process or only violent to LGBTI+ students.

The assertion that schooling can occur amidst fissures is also a principle of divergence between a Foucaultian perspective and the Durkheimian one. For the sociologist, moralization emerges as a principle of the educational process (Durkheim, 1962), since socialization and education are indissociable and indispensable processes for framing subjects in society. Such framing is the basis of the Durkheimian interpretation of suicide, that is, escaping norms is an aspect of "suicidal risk." Foucault, on the other hand, helps us understand that the social production of norms generates its difference, the "abnormality" (Prata, 2005). Thus, being marked as different creates the conditions of subjectivities so that the subject recognizes themselves as such: different, abnormal, sinner. The "suicidal" person here is not someone, as in Durkheim (2000), who escaped the so necessary moral bonds of society, but rather a subject who was subjectivated by the discourses produced by institutions, which define who can live and how to live.

When considering the analytics of power in Foucault (1999ab), it is also necessary to understand that, as power is dispersed and circulating among social relations, it is never merely verticalized (another contrast with Durkheim's work). In such a way, where power exists, it is presupposed that resistance exists, which is also a possibility for creation (Singer, 2013; Gallo, 2004; Picchetti; Seffner, 2017).

The experiences of LGBTI+ students are, within such assumptions, marked by resistances and subversions. For Bento (2011), the very repetition and reiteration of normative teachings in school spaces open the margin for contesting the norm. That is, insults, injuries, and other gender technologies actually evidence the fragility of the norm in framing all lives within such a regime. In the words of Picchetti and Seffner (2017, p. 722), "The existence of these pedagogies does not lead to a determined end, because, while they act by showing directions and insisting on knowledges and positions, they allow the individual to refuse, partially adhere, subvert, modify." Therefore, schooling can also be potency, emancipation, and destabilization of norms (Duarte, 2016). Thus, it is possible for teachers, students, and other educational agents to provoke the norm (Picchetti;

Seffner, 2017). Therefore, experiences in Basic Education potentialize LGBTI+ subjectivities, positivizing differences and questioning the normalizing teachings that permeate the school space.

Some Considerations

Suicide, as Durkheimian studies teach us, is a notably social phenomenon. Therefore, we move towards understandings that suicide, from a social perspective, is a complex event, traversed by markers of class, race, gender, sexuality, generation, and religiosity, and produced throughout life, from experiences. These compose the ways of becoming a subject and, thus, being recognized by society. In other words, there are existences that can only be recognized and legitimized, or not, through certain social norms.

From this synthesis, our objective, in the text, was to weave provocations about the possible relations between learnings in gender and sexuality stemming from school experiences and the suicidal process of LGBTI+ youth. Based on semi-structured interviews, we established a dialogue between two distinct epistemological currents, but which deal with the themes of school, education, suicide, gender, and sexuality: Durkheimian writings and Foucaultian studies. From the latter, we invited queer writings to the conversation, which, not infrequently, absorb Foucault's formulations. At first glance, this conversation may seem strange – in fact, it is. But our intention consists in building dialogues about school experiences and suicide, and the intersection between them, particularly of LGBTI+ youth. In such a way, Durkheim was taken both as a theoretical representative of positivist conceptions of school, education, and suicide, and as a social fact.

The interviews dealt with experiences in which schools act, on different fronts, in defense of the cis-heterosexual norm, producing subjectivities affected by anxieties, exclusions, isolations, jokes, and aggressions. Subjectivities like Diego's, who does not positively recognize his expression of sexuality and gender, seeking, just like Pietro and Ada, to hide it in the school space. Subjectivities taught, as Apollo recounted, by peers and teachers, from

the tenderest age, that the only possibility of being and existing in the world is from cis-heterosexual codes. Students with LGBTI+ life expressions are obliged, in this logic, to adapt to the standards of conduct of the "good citizen," always healthy and happy. What happens even when all the "rest" adapts to the precepts of social morality and when desire diverges?

It is here that suicide can, perhaps, be interpreted. As a process in life, which approaches through modes of subjectivation and is traversed by experiences, such as schooling experiences. It is through jocosity, isolation, non-naming, impossibility of identification, omission by teachers, and so many other school technologies, that LGBTI+ subjectivities are inserted into a process of suffering, in a plot where suicide may come to be desired, planned, attempted, and consummated.

References

- ANTÓNIO, R. *et al.* Bullying homofóbico no contexto escolar em Portugal. *Psicologia*, Lisboa, v. 26, n. 1, p. 17-32, 2012. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17575/rpsicol.v26i1.260>.
- BENTO, B. A. M. Na escola se aprende que a diferença faz a diferença. *Estudos Feministas*, 2011, v. 2, n. 19, 549-559. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0104-026X2011000200016>.
- BUTLER, J. *Problemas de gênero: feminismo e subversão da identidade*. 13 ed. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2017.
- BRAGA, K. D. S.; CAETANO, M. R. V.; RIBEIRO, A. I. M. Lesbianidades e educação: interrogando a produção acadêmica. *Cadernos de pesquisa*, São Paulo, v. 25, n. 3, p. 127-145, 2018. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18764/2178-2229.v25n3p127-145>.
- BRASIL. *Constituição da República Federativa do Brasil de 1988*. Brasília: Senado Federal, 1988. Disponível em: Acesso em: https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/constituicao/constituicao.htm. 05 de dez. 2024.
- CÉSAR, M. R. A. A diferença no currículo ou intervenções para uma pedagogia queer. *Educação Temática Digital*, Campinas, v. 14, n. 1, p. 351-362, jan./jun. 2012. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.20396/etd.v14i1.1257>.

CÉSAR, M. R. A. Gênero, sexualidade e educação: notas para uma “Epistemologia”. *Educar em Revista*, Paraná, v. 35, 2009, p. 37-51. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0104-40602009000300004>.

DUARTE, F. E. B. *As representações sociais de universitários de sexualidades LGBT sobre seus processos de escolarização e as implicações em seus projetos de vida*. 2015. 307 f. Tese (Doutorado em Educação) – Universidade Federal do Pará, Instituto de Ciências da Educação, Belém, 2016. Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação. Disponível em: <https://www.repositorio.ufpa.br/jspui/handle/2011/8380>. Acesso em: 28 de fev. de 2023.

DURKHEIM, É. *Da divisão do trabalho social*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2004.

DURKHEIM, É. *Educação e Sociologia*. São Paulo: Melhoramentos, 1962.

DURKHEIM, É. *O Suicídio: Estudo de Sociologia*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2000.

EVANGELISTA, M. B. A transcrição em história oral e a insuficiência da entrevista. *Oralidades*, São Paulo, ano 4, n. 7, 2010, p. 169-182. Disponível em: <https://diversitas.fflch.usp.br/sites/diversitas.fflch.usp.br/files/2019-09/Oralidades%207.pdf>. Acesso em: 30 de mar. de 2022.

FISCHER, Rosa Maria Bueno. Por uma Escuta da Arte: ensaio sobre poéticas possíveis na pesquisa. *Revista Brasileira de Estudos da Presença*, Porto Alegre, v. 11, 2021. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/2237-2660100045>.

FOUCAULT, M. *História da Sexualidade I - A Vontade de Saber*. Edições Graal Ltda: Rio de Janeiro, 1999a.

FOUCAULT, M. *Vigiar e punir: nascimento da prisão*. Tradução de Raquel Ramallete. Petrópolis: Editora Vozes, 1999b.

LOPES, F. H. Reflexões históricas sobre os suicídios: saberes, biopolítica e subjetivação. *ArtCultura*, Uberlândia, v. 14, e. 24, 2013. Disponível em: <https://seer.ufu.br/index.php/artcultura/article/view/22130>. Acesso em: 30 de abr. de 2023.

LOURO, G. L. *O corpo educado: pedagogias da sexualidade*. 2000.

MISKOLCI, R. A Teoria Queer e a Sociologia: o desafio de uma analítica da normalização. *Sociologias*, Porto Alegre, v. 11, n. 21, jan./jun. 2009, p. 150-182. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1517-45222009000100008>.

PRATA, M. R. S. A produção da subjetividade e as relações de poder na escola: uma reflexão sobre a sociedade disciplinar na configuração social da atualidade. *Revista Brasileira de Educação*, n. 28, p.108-115, 2005. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1413-24782005000100009>.

PICCHETTI, Y. P.; SEFFNER, F. Em gênero e sexualidade aprende-se pela repetição com diferença: cenas escolares. *Linhas Críticas*, Brasília, v. 23, n. 52, p. 717-739, 2017. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/s0102-6992-202035010004>.

SINGER, H. *República de crianças*: Sobre experiências escolares de resistência. São Paulo: Hucitec; Fapesp, 1997.

SEFFNER, F. Cultura escolar e questões em gênero e sexualidade: o delicado equilíbrio entre cumprir, transgredir e resistir. *Retratos da escola*, Brasília, v. 14, n. 28, jan./abr., p. 75-90, 2020. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22420/rde.v14i28.1095>.

TEIXEIRA-FILHO, F. S.; MARRETO, C. A. R. Apontamentos sobre o atentar contra a própria vida, homofobia e adolescências. *Revista de Psicologia da UNESP*, Assis/São Paulo, v. 7, n. 1, 2008, p. 133-151. Disponível em: <https://pesquisa.bvsalud.org/portal/resource/pt/psi-53131>. Acesso em: 30 de abr. de 2023.

TEIXEIRA-FILHO, F. S.; RONDINI, C. A. Ideações e tentativas de suicídio em adolescentes com práticas sexuais hetero e homoeróticas. *Saúde Soc.*, São Paulo, v. 21, n. 3, p. 651-667, set. 2012. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0104-12902012000300011>.

TEIXEIRA-FILHO, F. S.; RONDINI, C. A.; BESSA, J. C. Reflexões sobre homofobia e educação em escolas do interior paulista. *Educ. Pesqui.*, São Paulo, v. 37, n. 4, p. 725-741, dez. 2011. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1517-97022011000400004>.

WORDL HEALTH ORGANIZATION. *Suicide in the world*: global health estimates. 2019. Disponível em: <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/326948/WHO-MSD-MER-19.3-eng.pdf>. Acesso em: 13 de set. de 2023.

YORK, S. W. *TIA, VOCÊ É HOMEM?* Trans da/na educação: Des(a)fiando e ocupando os "cistemas" de Pós-Graduação. 2020. 185 f. Dissertação (Mestrado em Educação) – Faculdade de Educação, Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 2020. Disponível em: <https://www.bdttd.uerj.br:8443/handle/1/16716>. Acesso em: 10 de abr. de 2022.

Received in May 2025.

Approved in October 2025.