



JULIETA YADIRA ISLAS LIMÓN

ORCID

Universidad Autónoma
de Baja California
yaislas@uabc.edu.mx

NORMA OJEDA

ORCID

Universidad Estatal
de San Diego
nojeda@sdsu.edu

DEYSY MARGARITA
TOVAR HERNÁNDEZ

ORCID

Universidad Autónoma
de Baja California
margarita.tovar@uabc.edu.mx

BERTHA MARGARITA
VIÑAS-VELÁZQUEZ

ORCID

Universidad Autónoma
de Baja California
margarita.vinas@uabc.edu.mx

TRADUCCIÓN
Norma Ojeda de la Peña
Universidad Estatal
de San Diego



COPE



Contradictions in the incorporation of the gender perspective in teaching in Tijuana, México

ABSTRACT: This work analyzes the discourses on gender socialization among female teachers of basic education in public schools in Tijuana, México. The study is theoretically guided by the gender perspective and a qualitative-interpretive research approach. It is based on information obtained through the technique of focus groups. Research findings indicate a gap between the teachers' speeches about gender categories and their behaviors and/or attitudes toward the gender roles and identities that their students manifest. On one side, there is an acceptance speech towards gender diversity that do not corresponds to what is socially expected about gender roles associated to sex. On the other, the exercise of gender diversity is rejected both among the student population and among the teaching staff. Evidently, there is a need of creating and implementing new strategies in the professional training and development growth programs on gender aim to educators in Baja California.

KEYWORDS: Gender; social roles; socialization; teaching; education.

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Contradicciones en la incorporación de la perspectiva de género en la práctica docente en Tijuana, México

RESUMEN: Este trabajo analiza los discursos relacionados con la socialización en género entre maestras de educación básica en escuelas públicas de Tijuana, México. Se recurre al enfoque teórico de la perspectiva de género bajo el paradigma de investigación cualitativo-interpretativo y se utiliza información obtenida mediante la técnica de grupos focales. Los hallazgos indican un desfase entre los discursos de las docentes sobre las categorías de género y las conductas y/o actitudes de estas hacia los roles de género que sus estudiantes manifiestan. Por un lado, se presenta un discurso de aceptación hacia la diversidad de género que no corresponden con lo socialmente esperado con los roles asociados al sexo y, por otro, se rechaza el ejercicio de la diversidad tanto entre la población estudiantil como entre el personal docente. Se requieren nuevas estrategias en los programas de formación y actualización docente en materia de género en Baja California.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Género; roles sociales; socialización; docencia; educación.

HOW TO QUOTE

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Introduction

In Mexican society, as in other societies, the contributions of gender studies from different disciplines, the implementation of public policies on gender (Salas & Salas, 2016) and feminist and sexual diversity movements have made possible the gender construct to be increasingly included in social discourses. This has been particularly important in some of the social institutions that are key in the socialization processes of the younger generations, such as school. However, there are still important imbalances, confusions, and contradictions in the incorporation of the respective analytical categories, as well as in their practical application in daily life and in the educational task, as will be shown later in this paper.

Gender as a category of analysis is of great utility because it allows a critical look at how sex and sexual difference have historically been defined, and how their contextual specificities carry implications (Scott, 2016) and psychic, social and cultural dimensions of the gender construct. Aspects that allow understanding the last one as one of the organizing axes of the social and cultural structures in the relations between the sexes and the development of gender identity, as well as the normative models of femininity and masculinity (García & Freire, 2000; Rocha, 2017).

However, gender roles are determined by the culture and values that societies attribute to the differences between sexes and their respective expected behaviors. Consequently, these roles are cultural referents of what societies not only value and expect from the different sexes, but also contribute to reproducing a given socio-cultural order between generations (Ojeda & González, 2019). On the other hand, gender roles and stereotypes are going to be incorporated and constructed in the process of constituting people's identity through socialization devices, mediated by the cultural context (Rocha, 2009; 2017). According to Inkeles (1968, p. 76), from a sociological point of view, socialization is understood as the process of

[...] through which a person acquires the attitudes, values, ways of thinking, inclinations and other personal, yet social, attributes that will feature them in the next phase of their development [...] In interacting with a child, parents and other socializing agents generally

have in mind a certain conception of what the child is supposed to become and the role that a given parenting practice may play in either achieving or hindering the desirable end product.

Therefore, gender socialization refers to the learning by means of which minors are reinforced to carry out behaviors that adults consider appropriate according to their sex and are repressed and/or punished for behaviors considered inappropriate (Elkin & Handel, 1984). Children will learn through communication, observation, and play, among other practices, what adults expect from their behavior. As part of the same process, girls and boys learn by observing the behaviors of both sexes from those around them, but soon they also learn that they will be rewarded for one type of behavior, but not the other.

Family and school are the institutions with the greatest impact on the subjective formation of individuals as providers of socialization processes during childhood and adolescence (Moso-Mena et al., 2017). These represent sociopolitical platforms for the submission of the other, reinforcing gender roles and stereotypes that ensure patriarchal hegemony, as established by Bustos (1999) and Colazzi (2006). Each of these two institutions adopt socializing practices that are important to study for better understanding on changes and continuities that are occurring in the social construction of gender identities, stereotypes, and roles among the new generations.

It is for this reason, and with the interest of contributing to the latter objective, that this article focuses on the study of the role that schools are currently playing in the socialization of children and adolescents in Mexico in terms of gender, through teaching practice. The school system is considered a participant in a broad way in the processes of gender socialization (Martínez, 2018) through language, curricula, texts, access to spaces and academic opportunities at all educational levels (Díaz A., 2003).

Based on the above, this study focuses its attention on the figure of the teacher and on the discourses and interactions that sustain teaching-learning practices and mediate the socialization processes of children and adolescents with respect to gender identities and roles at school. Specifically, the purpose is to identify and analyze the discourses that

occur in the process of socialization of girls and boys related to gender identities and roles, in the school environment and by teachers in public elementary schools in the city of Tijuana, in the state of Baja California, Mexico. This is a qualitative study based on the analysis of information gathered from conducting focus groups with teaching staff in these types of schools during the spring of 2014.

Theoretical and contextual framework

The school as a gender normative platform

According to Lamas (2000), gender is a cultural attribution made to sexed bodies marking, from a biological sexual dimorphism, what is proper to women and men, including a series of practices, beliefs, representations, and social prescriptions. Likewise, gender is related to the distribution of power and resources that each culture makes and to the demands that a given society attributes by gender (Martínez, 2006; Bourdieu, 1997). The truth is that this form of social organization increases inequality and allows conditions of marked asymmetry of opportunities that negatively impact women; therefore, it is pertinent to identify, question and rethink these assignments (Flores, 2022; Alberdi, 2011; Alcoff, 1993; Yoder & Kahn, 2003) in the different levels of daily life.

In this sense, it is important to examine the processes and social agents responsible for the social and cultural reproduction of gender inequalities in societies. In this regard, the family, and consequently parents, has historically played a central role in the process of gender socialization of children and teenagers (Ojeda & González, 2019). Currently, this process cannot be understood without the participation of other social agents such as the school and its teachers. For that reason, it is necessary to consider the role of this institution as being, after the family, the social institution that has the greatest impact on the subjective formation of people during childhood and teenage, through its participation in the socialization process. In addition to this, the school, as already mentioned, represents a socio-political platform for the *submission of the other*, reinforcing gender roles and stereotypes that ensure patriarchal hegemony in societies, as in the case of Mexico.

In accordance with Butler (2007), gender dictates norms that rule people's behavior through a hegemonic cultural discourse based on binary sexual structures. This is internalized to give rise to an appropriation of reality that promotes specific gender roles because of public discourse, and which allows to discuss the political character of gender, as well as to analyze the punitive aspects that are directed at those who are not in conformity with their gender. The dominant reality can be generated when a class or group attributes to its own perception a character of universal logic, necessary to understand, control, define and constitute (Colazzi, 2006). In this sense, sexuality and gender could be understood as a continuum that, when politically and socially regulated, deploys normative modalities in favor of control, of the masculine and of heterosexuality. People are therefore defined in terms of these socially imposed norms and even subversive acts, comments Foucault (2007), are still in function of existing norms.

In this way, society stipulates expectations about femininities and masculinities that turn out to be ideal models difficult to fulfill and sustain. They become part of the collective daily life. Within the hegemonic culture that is used to identify what it is to be a man or a woman, there is an advantage for the masculine gender and for heterosexuality. As these characteristics are the norm, the man is a man, and the woman is not a man (Despentes, 2007). And within the system there is a search for self-regulation, which seeks to maintain the status quo and reject everything that by way of differentiation is outside the norm, rejecting it in the other, but also, in some cases, rejecting it, strengthening hegemonic identities, and avoiding social sanctions such as ridicule and exclusion (Despentes, 2007; Butler, 2007).

For their part, people play an active role in innovating the cultural meanings they receive, which they construct themselves and introduce a questioning of the biological determinism of sexual binarism (Butler, 1990, as cited in Lamas, 2000). The recognition of gender inequality has come to question traditional roles, thus propitiating their rupture and the beginning of a society with hybrid subjects and a multicultural context, where men and women, regardless of their biological sex, can oversee multiple tasks related to the home, work, children, and others (Martínez, 2006).

Now, the bridge between public discourse and the practices and behaviors that define the gender roles that a society demands for each person is language. Language merits a totality, which is presupposed and created implicitly so that every term has a meaning, the terms are linked in this totality, one does not exist without the other. Discourses coexist in a certain temporality and are related in coincidences that generate concrete modalities of discursive possibilities. This organizes language without a stable logic. It is a form of domination itself (Butler, 2007).

Language is a social construction and agreement, it is used to interpret, emulate and apprehend a reality, in turn these constructions form the internal reality that will be expressed and reproduced through it. Stereotypes are used as prejudices against minority groups and continue to reproduce the traditional social scheme and popular custom (Fernández, 1996). Hence the importance of understanding how discursive formations impact on the socialization of gender roles within educational spaces. Differences in the treatment of teachers based on binary sexual structures promote the establishment of gender roles, reproducing conditions of disadvantage (Bustos, 1999; Charles, 1997) and social inequity.

About the gender perspective in the Mexican educational system

In 1980, the Mexican State signed the agreements resulting from the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (United Nations, 2018); which contains indications for the prevention, punishment and eradication of discrimination and violence against girls and women. This is with the purpose of benefiting the evolutionary process of gender equity, by protecting and respecting the human rights of women in all areas. This will result in a series of actions directed in the same direction.

In 2003, the updating course for teachers "*Construyendo la equidad de género en la escuela primaria*" was published, developed by the *Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres* (INMUJERES) in collaboration with the SEP, within the program "*El Enfoque de Género en la Educación Preescolar*" to promote gender equity through teaching (Bustos, 2003) and in

2004 the text *El enfoque de género, una perspectiva necesaria en la reforma curricular de la educación inicial y preescolar* edited by INMUJERES was published (Valenzuela et al., 2004).

A little later and to give continuity, the *Secretaría de Educación Pública* (2015), together with the *Programa Universitario en Estudios de Género* (PUEG) of the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* created the book *Equidad de género y prevención de la violencia en primaria* as a support material for teachers to promote equitable and violence-free environments (Leaño, 2010). In this same direction, it was thought that the involvement of teachers was essential to achieve educational transformation with a gender perspective, as established, by the *Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres* (INMUJERES, 2013).

It is considered that the educational institution is the ideal place for the transformation of gender socialization, where it can be redirected towards equity, respect and healthy coexistence in gender diversity. In accordance with this purpose, in the state of Baja California, training is provided to elementary school teachers through the *Programa de Capacitación al Magisterio para Prevenir la Violencia hacia la Mujer* (PREVIOLIM), which aims to prevent violence against women.

It should be noted that this program was instituted nationwide by the federation in 2008. New advances in the gender perspective in the guidelines, to the letter, of the state's educational policy, will be reflected in the *Programa de Educación de Baja California, 2015-2019* (SEE-Baja California, 2015). For its part, the Normative Guidelines for Institutional, School and Pedagogical Management 2019-2020 also include training for teachers in order to disseminate the gender perspective and bring it into the classroom. There have been several strategies to permeate the gender perspective in teaching practices in educational institutions. In Mexico, in the current government, education with a gender perspective is contemplated in the legislation in force in the third article of *the Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos* (Political Constitution of the United Mexican States) from 2019 in the *Diario Oficial de la Federación* (*Secretaría de Gobernación*, 2019).

This set of public policy efforts is undoubtedly an important advance in the visibility of the problems of gender inequality and gender violence. However, unfortunately, research on teaching practices and such gender issues is still scarce; so, it continues, within

school spaces, sexism and an androcentric perspective that reproduces other issues, such as the division of professions by sex and gender biases in the approach of scientific content in the country (Montes et al., 2017; Delgado, 2003; González & Villaseñor, 2010; Moso-Mena et al., 2017; Vázquez, 2001).

The last point makes it essential to carry out more research aimed at analyzing the social praxis of public policies regarding gender in school spaces, particularly in classrooms, since this is the place where children and teenagers are subjected to the processes of gender socialization on a daily basis. With the interest of contributing to this purpose, the present study focused its attention on the figure of the teacher and on the discourses and interactions that sustain teaching practices and mediate the socialization processes of children and adolescents in relation to identities and gender roles at school.

Methodology and information source

This paper derives from a broader research project on gender socialization and early sexual education of children and adolescents in the social spaces of family and school in the urban-popular sectors of Tijuana, Mexico,¹ which was based on different methodologies and data collection techniques. The study presented here refers only to the gender socialization that students receive in basic education schools and taught by their teachers. For this purpose, qualitative information collected through focus groups with teachers of both sexes in two elementary schools and four high schools was analyzed. These were public schools of the *Sector Educativo del Estado de Baja California (SEBC)*, whose authorities gave their authorization to participate in the study in exchange for the research team giving training workshops to all the teaching staff of the schools on the issues of gender, sexuality and violence at the end of the fieldwork. To wit, four workshops were given on these topics.

It is important to point out that it was chosen to carry out this study using the information obtained through focus groups because this technique generates a discursive

¹ "Socialization of children and adolescents regarding gender roles and early sexuality in young families in Tijuana, Mexico", funded by the Programa de Ciencia Básica del CONACyT, 2012-2017, under the responsibility of Norma Ojeda, and with the inter-institutional collaboration of El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, San Diego State University, and the Sector Educativo de Tijuana, Mexico.

unit that reflects the collective experience of the participating teachers under a representativeness that, as Alonso (2003) points out, is structural since it arises from the saturation of discursive signifiers. Likewise, the methodological approach used to fulfill the purpose of the study is qualitative and seeks the identification of a common plane for the understanding of the relationship between social and gender phenomena (Ragin, 2007) from an interdisciplinary approach. An interpretative approach is used because it is considered that the interpretation of the discourse recovers the links with the social context of the participants that give a broader framework of understanding to the results obtained (Tamayo, 2006). In this study, the information from the focus groups with female teachers was analyzed, recognizing the epistemic privilege as subjects that produce knowledge and at the same time as the object of study (Tena, 2012), separating from the analysis the narratives of males to be analyzed in another paper under the light of critical studies of masculinities.

A total of 6 focus groups were formed with the participation of 29 female and 19 male teachers of different ages (between 25 and 55 years old) and each group consisted of about 7 to 10 teachers. The groups of female teachers were 4, led by a female researcher, and the 2 groups of male teachers were led by a male researcher, with the aim of creating a space of trust for group dynamics and communication. The dynamics of all the groups were in charge of the researchers participating in the project. The contents of the focus group guides focused on gender equity, gender expressions, sexual education, sexual preferences, homophobia, discrimination, violence and gender relations between students and teachers, between teachers themselves, and between authorities and teachers.

The fieldwork for the groups was carried out from January to May 2014 and they were conducted in the SEBC facilities, outside the schools and without the presence of school authorities. Each group had a duration of approximately four hours with coffee breaks. And, following the ethical protocols of scientific research, the voluntary participation of the teaching staff was guaranteed and their informed consent was obtained beforehand. Likewise, it is important to emphasize that the participation of the

teachers was totally independent of the authorities of the schools in which they were currently working.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the information obtained in the focus groups was transcribed, coded and categorized through a qualitative content analysis (Cáceres, 2008), using the "Atlas.ti" program and following the analytical axes Gender, Sex education and Experiences of violence to examine the content of the participants' responses (Ragin, 2007) (Chart 1).

Chart 1. Codes that were fed into each category.

Category	Code
A. Gender	A1. Equity
	A2. Handling of discrimination cases
	A3. Homophobia
	A4. Special situations
	A5. Behavior protocols
B. Sex education	B1. Sexuality learning
	B2. Sexual expression
	B3. Official sex education programs
C. Experiences of violence	C1. Violence at school
	C2. Domestic violence

Source: Own elaboration (2023)

Results

A triangulation of the researcher (Izcara, 2014) was carried out by crossing the readings of the results of the participating researchers, which allowed the construction of the two interpretative categories presented below. First, the practices around gender equity are analyzed. That is, the discursive formations on the distinctions in treatment based on gender at different levels of interaction between students, teachers and senior staff, as well as the discourses found on the sexual expressions of students and the acceptance of diversity in the campuses studied. Secondly, the correspondence between teaching practices and the subjective constructions of gender of female teachers is examined. Correspondingly, the results obtained in each case are the following and in the same order.

The effects of the search for gender equity: rhetorical adhesions and exclusionary violence of difference.

The incorporation of the gender perspective in teaching practice depends on various factors, from cultural to personal. However, teacher updating programs, through the School Technical Councils, have included gender equity in their curricula, and obligatorily expose teachers to the theoretical exploration of the topic, these efforts are insufficient in the face of polarization regarding the recognition of gender inequity that appears disseminated in positions that mark a gap between discourse and behaviors or attitudes towards gender roles. Moreover, there is a discourse of expressly manifest acceptance of attitudes and behaviors of children and adolescents that do not correspond to the socially expected conventions according to their gender. On the other hand, diversity is clearly rejected, as we can see in the following discourse in which a female teacher describes a boy as effeminate to refer to the fact that he possesses attitudes typical of women:

I had a boy in fourth grade, I mean, effeminate boy and then they were assigned to bring dolls so [...] and then I talked to the lady [she refers to the boy's mother] and I said "you know what? "I told her "we are going to talk about a somewhat delicate subject with all due respect, I need to tell you this", I told the lady and she said "no teacher, don't worry, we noticed this a long time ago" [...] We talked about it in the group... well, what is wrong with it? because there is a worksheet [referring to an activity assigned in the curriculum] in elementary school where they bring toys and the boys take toys from the girls and there is a reflection where what's wrong with it? [...] it's not bad, because in the future he will have children and he will have to comb his daughters' hair, right? so [...] it's for gender equity (Focus group 1).

Some forms of opposition to the inclusion of diversity were sustained by teachers recognizing that in some of the cases the school group does not show tendencies to exclude expressions of affective-sexual diversity; however, it is the adult who overshadows the emerging acceptance among young people, participating in the process of repetition that strengthens the settlements of the hegemonic culture (Butler, 2007; Salas & Salas, 2016).

[...] what I observed, specifically in a fifth-grade elementary school, is that an effeminate boy [a term that refers to gestures typical of women] was treated normally [...], I think that our new generations are not so surprised now; I think that other children with other characteristics are more vulnerable. [...] homophobia does not occur so much in adolescents and I think it is for two reasons: one, because it is allowed, because it is a border, I believe (Focus group 1).

The homophobic expressions found, directed towards the student and teaching community, can be analyzed from the differential categories of cognitive homophobia and affective homophobia (Agustín, 2009; Borrillo, 2001).

The extensions of cognitive homophobia are based on stereotyped ideas about homosexuality (Borrillo, 2001) and give way to a partial acceptance of homosexual persons, an acceptance that finds its limits when issues such as adoption or the rights of couples of diversities are raised. In the following excerpt we can observe a female teacher's rejection of homoparentality:

[...] the child lives with a couple of women [...] so I think, this is my point of view, I respect others very much, but I say, a normal thing is for a man and a woman to raise a child, that's what I think, I don't think two men or two women should adopt a child, [...] how do they raise that child? I don't know, I don't understand (Focus group 1).

Agustín (2009) analyzes from an intersubjective perspective, as sequels of socialization, an affective rejection that can be manifested through various negative feelings towards homosexual persons. The discursive formations identified "he is homosexual but shameless", "we can respect as long as they also respect" seem to expose an avoidant behavior "let them be like that (homosexuals), but out of school", exercising violence by pretending no to make visible those who transgress the norm of heterosexuality.

In the discursive strips identified, there is a lack of recognition of inequity, nor space for reflection. This position produces a double effect of a receiver of violence and re-editor at the same time, where on one hand, as Bourdieu (1999, p. 173) points out, "that violence

is introjected, that violence that extracts submissions that are not even perceived as such, based on collective expectations, on socially inculcated beliefs", and on the other hand, this historical experience incorporated in the subjectivities detonates the reproduction of scenarios of male domination that maintain gender inequalities (González & Villaseñor, 2010). This group was characterized by questioning the leadership actions of the young female students, it can be inferred that they are considered to be transgressions of gender roles, as can be noticed in the following discourse:

It is a matriarchy that is taking place and I have been observing the dominance of girls for several years now. The girls are the ones who always determine the roles to be followed in the groups; they organize the activities in teamwork, "you do this". They assign the activities, the boy sometimes [...] is repressed and limited. The opportunities that men, in this case boys, have to develop themselves in the same way as their female classmates are not the same (Focus group 3).

As Despentès (2007) points out, there is an unconscious incongruence in the valuation of certain behaviors associated with gender stereotypes, in this case some behaviors seem to be tolerated in men and rejected in women, as can be seen in the following excerpt:

The girls are going down the wrong direction in terms of equality, gender equity, and they want to behave just like boys, and sometimes they even act more violently, as the teacher said, and they hit, snatch, demand, shout, so they are wrong. The role is reversed, the girl looks for him, the boy is the shy one who does not know where to hide (Focus group 4).

On the other hand, the generalization of traditionally imposed characteristics and conceptions that teachers attribute to men or women such as "girls are not good at sports", an expression that may have implications not only in healthy styles for women to practice physical activities but also in the lack of integration, promotion and recognition of women in sports (Sauleda *et al.*, 2021); other expressions found in the participants' speeches, such as "the last one is a girl", "be careful of the serious girls", "women know how to get things done without being authoritarian, playing with men's egos" contribute to the construction

of gender stereotypes (Lamas, 2000; Rocha, 2009), generating a platform prone to the reproduction of prejudices that end up legitimizing expressions of verbal or psychological violence.

In the discourses it is observed that the exchanges between teachers and students contain gender prejudices and transgression is perceived as a mismatch and punished, as Colazzi (2006) warns. Thus, it is essential to rethink the need to establish new modes of social interaction, impregnated with the recognition of otherness (Flores-Gómez, 2022).

Subjectivities and teaching processes

With the background described so far, it becomes evident that teachers are socializing agents who, through pedagogical resources and their own subjective configurations, participate as a founding device for the subjectivation of others and promote social action patterns (Colazzi, 2006; Bustos, 1999).

Concerning teaching practices and coinciding with what has been reported by González and Villaseñor (2010), Delgado (2003) and Vázquez (2001), some teachers identified gender biases in the campuses, describing marked differences in gender expectations in academic activities such as the choice of workshops and in daily activities such as cleaning common areas. An example of this can be identified in the following paragraph, in which a female teacher refers to the discourses of other teachers who are in charge of coordinating training workshops for students:

The carpentry teacher said, "no, not girls with me". It was not the director's but the custom of "I don't want only girls or I want only boys". Influence of the teachers, who, based on years of tradition, give girls' activities and boys' activities. [...] We have the secretariat workshop that for years was formed by all girls. For some time now, boys have been integrated and the boys have even been asked if they are aware that it is a workshop where girls predominate and if they want to be there and they say "yes, I want to be there" [...] now in the schools they are tending to respect the decision of the boys. We intervened with them because maybe they chose it without knowing that they were going to be surrounded by all girls and that this could make them feel uncomfortable at some point, but there they are (Focus group 5).

One might think that the level of awareness of gender inequalities motivates actions to counteract them. However, the possibilities of change are suffocated by institutional inertia (Rebollo et al., 2011 cited by Valenzuela-Valenzuela & Cartes-Velásquez, 2020) and justified by the uses and customs of the traditional models of femininity and masculinity clouding the possibilities of mobilization to change as reflected in the following verbalization:

In the spaces you realize that the boys have more opportunity to be in the yard and the girls are more protected and more relegated. Being watchful of the girls, taking care of their skirts and hairstyles, as if they were the provocateurs. If a boy attacks them, "it is because you are wearing a very short skirt or because you want to use makeup". [...] These situations are very noticeable. When it is time to clean up, it is rare to see a boy doing it because it is a conflict and maybe the girls are the ones who can get into it (Focus group 1).

Regarding sex education, it was found, as Caricote (2008) points out, that teaching practices are invested with different degrees of censorship in the handling of content clearly related to sexuality; attempts to exclude the approach to topics such as anatomy and the use of contraceptives were mentioned, where some teachers even "stapled the sheets". The above can be interpreted as a displacement of responsibility as teachers for the sexual education of students to the guidance or prefecture departments, and focusing the task of educating on sexuality to the review of certain texts and not as a cross-cutting topic as we can see below:

When I am going to teach the subject, I already have many years in the sixth grade, I will have thirty years of service, and I have seen that it is better for me to separate boys and girls when I am going to talk about the matter of nature in the changes that boys and girls are experiencing (Focus group 4).

Retrieving Caricote's (2008) idea of subjective influence as something inherent in the teaching processes, this censorship can be understood as a product of the negative evaluation characteristic of the history of repression of female teachers' sexuality, as illustrated here:

[...] I saw behind me a young boy with a little cap, even quite handsome, and when he finished talking, I saw him coming towards... and I said: "oh, wow!", I noticed he was very bulky, it was the mom-dad, and with his little cap, pregnant, with a pack of cigarettes here, still with a stale breath of alcohol, and logically is a drug addict. And the colleagues commented to me: "oh, no, teacher, I would really drop the girl". So, they gave them an induction on sexuality and everything (Focus group 1).

At the same time, the teachers identify, on one hand, a void in the teacher training courses; they find the topics repetitive and, on the other hand, they find an area of opportunity in the planning of the programs, and refer that there is not enough time to cover the topics properly. This results in a contradiction in the discourse. In Argentina, Páez (2021) mentions something that could be seen as a contradiction, which is that in the analysis of the curriculum of teachers of Dance and Physical Education, gender issues are low, however, when interviewing students and teachers in their experience, gender issues are in force and invite them to a constant reflection. In Grenada, Díaz (2005) states that gender issues should also be addressed in the training of music teachers since music is often used as a means of transmission and perpetuation of stereotypes.

Discussion and Conclusions

The analyzed discourses allow us to detect the presence of contradictions, confusions and gaps that cloud the integration of the gender perspective in teaching practice, which could favor unequal opportunities for young women, since "they are the ones who transmit and reproduce the stereotypes and traditional roles that maintain inequalities" (Delgado, 2003, p. 500).

According to what was found, teachers perceive that young girls seem to show a more open attitude to break with gender stereotypes, however, in accordance with Butler (2007) and Despentés (2007), female teachers tend to reject actions outside the norm, missing an organic opportunity to build a reality that, as we have been reviewing in the psychic dimension of gender, affects the subjective positions of male and female students (Tubert, 2012).

In an examination of the above, the search to maintain the status quo seems to be part of the complex process of assimilation of the gender perspective in teaching practice that is blocked by deeply established stereotypes in the particular ways and customs of teachers, since they do not demonstrate an open rejection of the implementation of the gender perspective, but rather go beyond its scope in terms of deconstructing the old binary and heterosexual molds, by counterbalancing the effects of the patriarchal system. Hence the contradictions that can be interpreted as a desire to welcome the gender perspective and at the same time a difficulty in addressing students' concerns.

To think of the educational system as an act of social transformation, as Delgado (2003, p. 469) refers:

Dimensioning the importance of education in its proper measure, as more than processes of quantitative accumulation of information -already solved by computer technology- it should be oriented to the development of processing, restructuring and critical recreation capacities that allow for the formation of flexible and lucid minds.

To achieve what is mentioned above, the need to implement new strategies in teacher training and updating programs is emphasized, where the mainstreaming of the gender perspective reaches the processes of education in sexualities and identities (Salas & Salas, 2016), beyond the stipulated binary categories that are managed in terms of power and the lack of it (Despentes, 2007).

Due to inertia, to the repetition of what has already been learned, which makes personal updating on gender issues difficult, Gómez (2009) (cited by Valenzuela-Valenzuela & Cartes-Velásquez, 2020), mentions that teacher training should be transversal, where students and teachers have the opportunity to reflect on gender issues, and address the real educational needs, and include in this task the senior staff, teachers and families of the students at all educational levels. At the same time, it is important to continue implementing strategies for social and cultural transformation towards more equitable environments at all educational levels and in society in general.

As part of the limitations of this study, it was identified that although a large number of teachers attended the groups and the subsequent training, motivated to extend

their gender perspective towards the reduction or elimination of violence against women; a group of teachers attended with a more or less open attitude towards the possibility of learning, and another, slightly less numerous, attended with much resistance due to their different expectations. This exercise undoubtedly invites us to cross the border of the limits of society as a regulating instance, accepting diversity implies accepting the possibility of leaving the nodes of power, rearticulating oneself in the void of self-knowledge and living outside the comfort of what society marks as acceptable. This is an exercise in which, without doubt, the pedagogical task plays a significant role in social transformation, which is not only pertinent, but also ethically and politically essential.

In order to move forward in this direction, it will be necessary to overcome multiple obstacles in the very complex relations between the State and its institutions and between the latter and the new generations in their demand for greater gender equity and the absolute elimination of gender discrimination and violence in general and, particularly, towards sexual and gender diversity (Larrain et al., 2020). So, the incorporation of the gender perspective in teaching practice is essential. This is the case of Baja California, which is the one that concerns us here, to overcome the contradictions that have been pointed out in this study. Although it is true that this cannot be achieved in one day, not even from one political administration to another, the sum of actions will contribute to a gradual change in this direction.

It is essential that feminist activism continues with social transformation from within and outside of academia, establishing specific commitments with the national state to establish and follow up on action plans for gender equity and the eradication of gender discrimination and violence in the country and especially in Baja California. Likewise, and considering such agreements, it is very important that the national and state education systems continue to reform schools and codes of conduct within the teaching profession to give rise to "the new rules of the game" of what is allowed and, therefore, what is no longer allowed in interactions between teachers and students in terms of gender (Jiménez & Galeano, 2020).

At the same time, there is a need to continue improving gender training programs for teachers, both to raise their gender awareness and to strengthen the elimination of conscious and unconscious resistance to gender equity and sexual and gender diversity. Specifically, from the training of teachers so that they can face the challenges of transmitting to their future student's gender equity and above all respect among all human beings (Miralles-Cardona *et al.*, 2020; Trejo *et al.*, 2015) through the critical analysis of realities and the awareness of being managers for social transformation (Donoso-Vázquez & Velasco-Martínez, 2013).

Finally, it is necessary to recognize that in order to achieve a change of such magnitude, it will be needed to continue with the implementation of social actions at a structural level in the sex-gender system of the country in the medium and long term. Social transformation towards gender equality and equity, as well as a dignified life for all people, requires the joining of efforts in all social sectors. Structural changes in the patriarchal system that sustains and reproduces gender inequalities demand participation from the individual, relational, family, social movements, educational, governmental and non-governmental institutions. The intergenerational nature of this type of structural change implies, however, that we cannot wait inactive for these structural changes to occur. This study is a sample of what is happening in the educational sector and following the line of the findings obtained and placing them in the socio-historical context that frames the two main positions found among the participating teachers, it is possible to think that a useful tool in this transition process is institutional legislation. The regulatory framework of educational institutions can serve as a foothold to crystallize and destabilize the discriminatory practices and violence that, as found in this study and corroborated in other investigations (Acuña-Rodríguez, 2014; Buquet, 2011; Hernández, 2011) continue to be reproduced in these spaces. It is necessary to continue working on the adaptation of such legislation to the new living conditions of Baja California children and adolescents, looking to the future.

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JULIETA YADIRA ISLAS LIMÓN

Mexican. Doctor in Health Sciences at the *Universidad Autónoma de Baja California* (UABC). Master in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy at the *Universidad Complutense de Madrid*, Spain and Bachelor in Psychology at the UABC. She is currently a research professor at the Faculty of Medicine and Psychology at the *Universidad Autónoma de Baja California*. Lines of research: addictions, personality assessment, borderline identity and gender. Recent publications: Co-author in "*Inclusión educativa desde la Universidad*" (2022) and "*Obstetric Violence in Childbirth Care in Baja California: Nursing Personnel Perceptions*" (2022).

NORMA OJEDA

Mexican-American. Doctor in Sociology with a specialization in Population Studies from the University of Texas at Austin. Master's degree in Demography from *El Colegio de México* and a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México*. Professor Emeritus in the Department of Sociology at San Diego State University in the United States. Research and teaching areas: family, social research methods, gender and reproductive health. Recent publications: "*Compartir e intercambiar roles de género: un estudio de caso en la frontera norte de México*" (2020) and co-author in "*Apertura hacia la anticoncepción adolescente entre los padres y las madres en México: un estudio de caso desde la socio-demografía*" (2019).

DEYSY MARGARITA TOVAR HERNÁNDEZ

Mexican. Doctor in Psychology. She is attached to the Faculty of Medicine and Psychology of the *Universidad Autónoma de Baja California*. Research interests: gender violence, masculinities and indigenous communities. Recent publications: Co-author in "*Violencia de género en una universidad de Coahuila, México*" (2022) and in "*Liberando la carga en lienzo: historias de arte y migración*" (2021).

BERTHA MARGARITA VIÑAS-VELÁZQUEZ

Mexican. Doctor in Health Psychology. Research interests: family violence, intimate partner violence and clinical assessment and psychological interventions. Her institutional attachment is at the Faculty of Medicine and Psychology of the *Universidad Autónoma de Baja California*. Recent publications: Co-author in "Obstetric Violence in Childbirth Care in Baja California: Nursing Personnel Perceptions" (2022) and in "Psychometric properties of the Valencia Scale of Attitudes and Beliefs toward Hypnosis Client version (VSABH-C) in a Mexican sample" (2022).