


The importance of feminist education: a report of awareness in a 2nd year class of integrated high school at IFPA

ARTICLE

Marina Denise Hollanda Souzaⁱ 

Instituto Federal do Pará, Belém, PA, Brasil

Wellingson Valente dos Reisⁱⁱ 

Instituto Federal do Pará, Belém, PA, Brasil

1

Abstract

This article analyzes the results of educational practices in the context of feminism, based on the formative experiences obtained in the research project “Women's writing in Amazonian and Latin American literature”. The study emphasizes how feminist education, based on specific methods and content that address the reality and experiences of women from a gender perspective, contributes to expanding students' sociocultural repertoire, helping to develop their writing for the Enem exams. During the teaching-learning process, two awareness-raising actions were carried out that promoted critical and reflective action by students in deconstructing patriarchal culture and defending gender equality. The theoretical references are based on Simone de Beauvoir (2009), Françoise Vergès (2020) and Pierre Bourdieu (2017), which explore structural machismo and patriarchal society, highlighting how these structures relegated women to a position of inferiority in a society marked by phallocentrism and classist gender categories and hooks (2018) with regard to the importance of feminist education in the context teaching-learning.

Keywords: Feminist Education. Patriarchal Deconstruction. Gender Equity. ENEM.

A importância da educação feminista: sensibilização para uma turma do 2º ano do ensino médio integrado do IFPA

Resumo

Este artigo analisa os resultados das práticas educativas no contexto do feminismo, a partir das experiências formativas obtidas no projeto de pesquisa “A escrita feminina na literatura amazônica e latino-americana”. O estudo enfatiza como a educação feminista, fundamentada em métodos e conteúdos específicos que abordam a realidade e as vivências das mulheres sob uma perspectiva de gênero, contribui para ampliar o repertório sociocultural dos alunos para as provas do Enem. Contudo, foram realizadas quatro ações de sensibilização: a leitura de textos canônicos, a leitura de obras literárias com enfoque feminista, uma sessão de cinema seguida de debate e a produção de textos dissertativos pelos alunos. Os referenciais teóricos baseiam-se em Simone de Beauvoir (2009), Françoise Vergès (2020) e Pierre Bourdieu (2017), os quais exploram o machismo estrutural

e a sociedade patriarcal, e Hooks (2018) no que diz respeito à importância da educação feminista no contexto ensino-aprendizagem.

Palavras-chave: Educação Feminista. Desconstrução Patriarcal. Equidade de Gênero. ENEM.

1 Introduction

2

The present study aims to reflect on the importance of educational practices focused on the integration of feminist education in the classroom, based on the actions carried out during the research project *A escrita feminina na literatura amazônica e latino-americana* (*Female Writing in Amazonian and Latin American Literature*), developed at the Instituto Federal do Pará – IFPA (Federal Institute of Pará) under Public Notice No. 013/2023 from the Diretoria de Pós-Graduação, Pesquisa e Inovação – DPI (Postgraduate, Research, and Innovation Directorate). The project team consisted of two researchers: the supervising professor, who also coordinated the project, and the undergraduate research scholarship holder, responsible for mediating activities with the students, recording classroom observations, and collaborating in the systematization of the collected data.

The target audience was a second-year class of the Integrated High School at IFPA – Belém Campus. The class was chosen for convenience, considering the pre-existing relationship with the responsible professor, who taught Portuguese Language and Literature with a regular workload of four weekly classes, as well as the students' availability to participate in the project. The class comprised 30 students, all of whom participated in at least one stage of the research.

The pedagogical proposal aimed to expand the students' sociocultural repertoire through a feminist approach, contributing to the development of critical writing skills for exams such as the Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio – ENEM (Brazilian National High School Exam). The project sought to study different artistic manifestations of female writing in the Amazon and Latin America, with a focus on Contemporary Literature. The initiative emerged from the perception of the low visibility of women authors, whose works are often

neglected in academic and social spaces, despite their literary quality and engagement in feminist causes.

The field research corresponded to the activities carried out in the classroom, involving participant observation conducted by both researchers, which consisted of recording the students' reactions, comments, and behaviors in response to the proposed activities. The actions were divided into four stages: (1) reading canonical texts for theoretical grounding; (2) reading short stories by authors such as Isabel Allende (*Eva Luna's Tales*) and Maria Lúcia Medeiros (*Zeus or the Girl and the Glasses*); (3) screening films in the session *Elas no Cinema* (Women in Cinema) (*Barbie* and *Like Water for Chocolate*), followed by debates; and (4) producing essays on the themes "The Persistence of Violence against Women" and "Black Women in Society and Culture." These activities promoted critical reflections on gender inequality, stereotypes, and the historical erasure of women, especially Black women. In at least one instance, it was possible to sensitize students to the importance of feminist struggles and demonstrate how sexism persists and develops in our society.

As a follow-up to the activities, interviews were conducted with some students to understand how they interpreted and attributed meaning to the studied content. Out of the 30 students, 10 volunteered to participate in the interviews. From these, 8 were selected based on diversity in gender, race, and participation in the activities, in order to ensure a representative sample of the group's voices. The collected data provided support for analyzing the effects of feminist educational practice in the school environment.

2 Methodology

The methodology was divided into four stages for the implementation of the pedagogical actions. The first stage was based on the theoretical foundation provided by canonical authors and works derived from feminist studies, such as *The Second Sex* by

Simone de Beauvoir, *Ain't I a Woman* by Bell Hooks¹ and *Masculine Domination* by Pierre Bourdieu.

The works were selected by the supervising professor according to the research plan, which aimed to deepen knowledge on the subject. Weekly meetings were held to discuss the texts among the researchers. During the readings and analyses, various debates took place, contributing to the idea of putting theory into practice with the purpose of supporting and enriching the students' education. Following the theoretical grounding on the theme of "feminism," a second-year class of the Integrated High School of the Systems Development course at IFPA – Belém Campus was selected for the practical application of the pedagogical actions.

In the classroom, the second stage involved reading selected literary texts in which women were either protagonists or the authors. The texts included *Iracema* by José de Alencar, in which a woman is one of the protagonists; short stories by Isabel Allende from *Eva Luna's Tales*; and short stories by Maria Lúcia Medeiros from *Zeus or the Girl and the Glasses*, though the latter will not be the focus of reflection in this article. Nonetheless, these readings significantly contributed to fostering a feminist education among the participating students.

The third stage consisted of organizing a film session entitled *Elas no Cinema* (*Women in Cinema*), in which films portraying women's roles in society at different times were screened, allowing students to identify feminist struggles across societies. Two films were selected — *Barbie* (directed by Greta Gerwig and starring Margot Robbie, 2023) and *Like Water for Chocolate* (directed by Alfonso Arau, 1992) — with the goal of promoting critical reflection on gender issues and the social roles of women in contemporary society. The activity also aimed to critically analyze *Barbie* in light of theoretical concepts on feminism and patriarchy, while encouraging the production of argumentative texts on feminist themes and connecting the discussions to the students' daily lives. The debate

¹ Bell Hooks (2017), in *Teaching to Transgress*, allows her name to be written in lowercase letters as a way of emphasizing her thought. However, in this text, we use her name with uppercase initials to highlight the significance of an important Black intellectual.

addressed both women's struggles and rights in their individual dimensions and a comparative analysis between the works.

In the novel *Like Water for Chocolate* by Laura Esquivel, the female protagonist, Tita, faces daily struggles within her family and relationships due to a family tradition that required her to care for her mother. In this context, women were limited in their autonomy and lacked the freedom to fully exercise their roles as individuals. In marriage, they were treated as the "other," and in society, their condition was reduced to decisions imposed by others, constantly being seen as the second sex.

According to Beauvoir (2009), by denying women the right to exist fully as individuals, the patriarchy was able to maintain control over their autonomy and freedom. This system demonstrated its effectiveness when women themselves internalized and reproduced the roles assigned to them, mostly passively accepting the ideology that oppressed them. Furthermore, as Beauvoir describes in *The Second Sex* (2009, p. 185): "The destiny traditionally proposed by society to women is marriage. For the most part, even today, women are married, or have been, or are preparing to be, or suffer for not being." The author draws attention to the possibilities women could explore beyond marriage and motherhood, positioning herself against the sexist view that confined them exclusively to service and total devotion to men.

Thus, the film adaptation addresses fundamental issues of the feminist movement, focusing on female freedom, autonomy, and the challenge to traditional roles assigned to women, in order to reflect on the importance of recognizing gender inequalities perpetuated over time.

The film *Barbie* (2023), directed by Greta Gerwig, offers an innovative and reflective approach to feminist issues, using the iconic doll as a reinterpretation of feminism to explore the complexities of gender, identity, and the oppressions imposed on women. This inquiry reflects the dilemma faced by many women in contemporary society, where the need to meet unrealistic standards generates frustration and insecurity.

The narrative critically addresses the social expectations placed on women while celebrating diversity and the pursuit of authenticity, promoting a rich dialogue on power

dynamics and the struggle for equity. Moreover, the film highlights the importance of female empowerment and autonomy. In *Barbieland*, women occupy all positions of power, creating a utopian reality that contrasts with the gender inequality of the real world. This representation serves as a satirical critique of existing disparities while simultaneously pointing to the transformative potential of an environment in which women have full freedom to lead and innovate.

Patriarchy and gender dynamics are also addressed in a humorous yet reflective manner. The arrival of the Kens in the real world and their discovery of patriarchy generate comical situations but also raise serious questions about how power structures affect both men and women. This role reversal encourages reflection on the need for more equitable and supportive relationships between genders.

Another notable aspect is the search for identity and individuality, represented by Barbie's journey into the real world. The character realizes that she does not need to fit into predefined molds, but rather discover her own essence. This quest resonates with the challenge many women face as they attempt to find authenticity and purpose in their lives amid external pressures.

Furthermore, the film addresses themes such as aging, acceptance, and female solidarity. Characters like Ruth Handler, the creator of Barbie, reinforce the idea that life is not limited to youth or perfection but is composed of a series of stages that should be embraced and valued. Additionally, the solidarity among the Barbies demonstrates the importance of mutual support among women, fostering the overcoming of rivalries imposed by society.

In sum, the film goes beyond entertainment by offering a critical and in-depth analysis of what it means to be a woman in a world full of expectations and contradictions. Greta Gerwig uses the doll as a tool to explore the complexities of contemporary feminism, inviting the audience to reflect on the importance of authenticity, equity, and solidarity in building a more inclusive and equal future.

After the film screenings, a classroom observation period was conducted, during which the scholarship holder accompanied the students in Portuguese Language classes,

which at IFPA – Belém Campus are taught in two sessions. This allowed her to actively participate in discussions on the subject, as well as in the activities for producing the argumentative-essay texts that constituted the fourth stage of the project.

Thus, after expanding the debates on a more inclusive feminist education, the students were invited to write argumentative essays on the social role of women and the role and struggles of Black women within feminist movements. These activities encouraged research, reading of motivating texts, and the development of critical thinking. The students applied their theoretical knowledge in their essays, connecting it to the practical realities of daily prejudice and sexism. The classes resulted in intense debates, expanding the students' sociocultural repertoire and proposing practical solutions to the issues discussed, in accordance with the ENEM reference framework.

3 Results and Discussion

Feminist issues discussed over the years by theorists such as Simone de Beauvoir (2009) and Françoise Vergès (2020), among others, reflect academic trajectories dedicated to the study and analysis of gender-related matters. Their contributions are essential for understanding the social mechanisms that shape gender identities and structure power relations in society.

Feminism is a political action led by women, aimed at confronting discrimination and female oppression. Its central objective is to deconstruct patriarchal culture, promote women's rights, and achieve gender equity. This movement seeks to strengthen women's empowerment and autonomy, recognizing them as protagonists of their own lives, and proposes the transformation of power relations between men and women.

In the 1960s, the second wave of the feminist movement emerged, focusing more on women's freedom. During this period, women began to challenge the determinism that confined their social roles exclusively to household care and started claiming their sexual freedom, asserting that their bodies should not belong to men nor be controlled by external moral standards. This stage of feminism, which followed the fight for voting rights (the first

wave), broadened the debate to include issues such as sexual freedom, reproductive rights, workplace equality, the division of domestic labor, and the confrontation of various forms of structural violence.

In *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir analyzes how patriarchal ideology constructed woman as the “other,” confining her to passive roles subordinate to male interests. Her critique challenges the social conventions of her time by demonstrating that patriarchy relies on cultural and moral norms to lead women to internalize and accept their own submission. The author’s famous statement — “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman” (Beauvoir, 2009, p. 9) — encapsulates this reflection, emphasizing that social and cultural constructions are decisive in defining what it means to be a woman, influencing power dynamics and gender relations.

Understanding the conception of gender as a category elaborated by Beauvoir’s (2009) feminist theory is essential for comprehending the inequalities and power relations between men and women. The roles assigned to the female gender result from a historical construction shaped by a patriarchal society, whose objective is to perpetuate power structures and patterns of subordination.

This social structure was reinforced by colonialism, as colonizers indoctrinated the colonized, naturalizing this way of life and the subordination of women. As a result of these socially constructed and assigned roles, the “sexual division of labor” emerged. This division reinforces inequalities, hierarchies, exploitation, and the oppression of one sex over the other in social relations. Furthermore, the strength of this indoctrination contributed to the perpetuation of violence, subordination, and the marginalization experienced by women. This consolidated the patriarchal society and naturalized prejudiced patterns, which reserved public space and power for men while confining women to the domestic environment, characterized by fragility and vulnerability.

According to Bourdieu (2017), gendered symbolic violence and domination persist because they are inscribed in masculine and feminine habits—bodily, emotional, and mental dispositions produced by structures of domination and reproduced unconsciously. For him, male domination constitutes a particular form of symbolic violence.

As a space where symbolic violence is exercised, the school plays a crucial role in the covert transmission of dominant cultural values. In this context, it legitimizes arbitrary representations of masculinity and femininity, as well as behavioral standards deemed appropriate for each gender, assigning rigidly differentiated roles to girls and boys. The absence of educational policies that promote non-sexist education, combined with everyday pedagogical practices, transforms the school into an instrument for reproducing male domination and gender inequalities.

Elements such as curricular content (both official and hidden), teaching methods, speech, attitudes, and behaviors of education professionals often reflect traditional conceptions of gender, in which women continue to occupy subordinate positions. Games, toys, activities, books, and teaching materials reinforce a binary logic that perpetuates stereotyped gender roles. Thus, the school contributes to legitimizing discrimination and inequalities between men and women, directly impacting the construction of gender relations in society.

Based on the concept of gender and its intersections with class, race, and generation, the theoretical framework highlights the importance of a gender perspective in educational strategies directed at students, guiding them toward empowerment and autonomy. According to Paulo Freire (1996), the school, as a space of coexistence, functions as a microcosm where issues of gender, power, and identity intertwine deeply, directly influencing students' daily experiences and interactions.

In the classroom context, this dynamic is reflected in interactions between male and female students, frequently marked by the perpetuation of stereotypes and oppressive practices. The recurrence of discriminatory and disrespectful behaviors toward adolescents and women demonstrates the internalization of these social norms, which reinforce gender inequalities. In this way, the school environment becomes a stage where gender identities are constantly reproduced and, in some cases, challenged (Hooks, 2018).

Furthermore, Beauvoir's (2009) reflection leads us to consider the transformative role of education in deconstructing these imposed identities. By recognizing that female identity is a product of socialization, educators have both the responsibility and the

opportunity to create environments that question and reformulate these norms. In this sense, it is possible to foster an educational space where girls and women can develop their identities authentically and free from oppression, contributing to the construction of a more equitable society.

3.1 Interview Analysis

In order to identify the students' reception of the proposals presented by the project *A escrita feminina na literatura amazônica e latino-americana (Female Writing in Amazonian and Latin American Literature)*, interviews were conducted with some students from the class who volunteered to participate. The objective was to observe their perceptions regarding the development of the project activities, seeking to understand how these activities contributed to their critical formation on feminist issues discussed throughout the second year of Integrated High School.

The analysis of the interviews was based on reception aesthetics (Reis et al., 2018), which investigates how different receivers, in this case the interviewees, interpret and assign meaning to the studied information. This method emphasizes the importance of the interviewees' individual and contextual experiences in constructing an understanding of the texts or filmic discourses presented. Reception aesthetics allows the identification of a plurality of interpretations, reflecting the participants' sociocultural and historical diversity.

Regarding the profile of the interviewed students, 8 students were selected, of whom 2 were female and 6 were male, as the class is predominantly composed of male students. Out of a total of 30 students, only 5 are female. The final dialogue on gender and equity issues was of utmost importance for the analysis in this research.

For the description and analysis of the reports, students were numbered from 1 to 8, according to the chronological order of the interviews.

Box 1 - Distribution of Participants by Gender

Participants	
Student 1	Female
Student 2	Female
Student 3	Male
Student 4	Male
Student 5	Male
Student 6	Male
Student 7	Male
Student 8	Male

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Throughout the development of the project *A escrita feminina na literatura amazônica e latino-americana (Female Writing in Amazonian and Latin American Literature)*, the aim was to understand how second-year students of Integrated High School would perceive and assimilate the feminist themes discussed with them in the classroom. The proposal sought not only to expand the students' sociocultural repertoire but also to stimulate critical reflection on gender inequalities and the impacts of feminism in contemporary society.

To assess this reception, interviews were conducted with students from the class who participated in the project. The objective was to identify how the proposed activities contributed to the students' critical formation and to understand how they related the debates to their daily lives and to the development of writing skills for the ENEM.

Before presenting the obtained results, it is essential to contextualize the profile of the analyzed class. The predominantly male composition of the group provides an

interesting scenario for analyzing how a mostly male environment reacts to topics related to gender equity and female empowerment.

The interviewees highlighted the importance of this type of feminist-oriented education for their empowerment and critical autonomy, emphasizing that the project provided tools for them to act more confidently in defending women's rights. Moreover, the students stressed their role as knowledge multipliers within their communities. They consider that initiatives like this are essential and strategic for encouraging female protagonism, as they provide updates and new knowledge on laws, rights, and other issues that impact women's lives, strengthening them in confronting sexism and gender-based violence in society.

Reflecting her interest in participating in the interview, one student stated:

"I found the project very important for my development... because it was through the activities worked on in class that I managed to score 940 on the ENEM essay in 2023, thanks to the memories I had from the essays we wrote. Having this relaxed way of learning helped me a lot, so much so that the ENEM result reflects it" (Student 1).

When asked about how feminist issues can influence her development and sociocultural formation, she added:

"In the movie... in the first movie, I even talked to the boys that sometimes the things we say... everything we say shows a lot about what we think. So regarding feminism itself, I learned that actions say a lot, so... the way of thinking (about women) has to be different, the way we treat gender. You know? For example, meeting a woman for the first time is different from the way you would talk to a man. It became an important topic. I don't think there's a difference among my classmates, but there is at least a minimum respect regarding this issue. I even find it interesting because we are studying Systems Development, which is considered a male course. There is a big discrepancy in the number of men compared to women... there are only five girls in a class of 30 students. So, I think the respect is minimal. The movie we watched, Barbie, shows a lot of that: women have their value, and feminism is very present. Sometimes we place men as if they were inferior to women, but it's not really that; the issue is that often men disrespect the female gender. So, I think it was important because it made me realize that respect is always welcome and extremely necessary. I think it even helped to change my view of... the respect they have for us women is minimal. I think it was important in that sense" (Student 1).

Student 1's statement highlights the importance of critical reflection on gender relations and the impact of feminism in educational and professional environments. By reporting her experience in the Systems Development course—a traditionally male space—she points out the numerical disparity between men and women and how this influences social interactions within the classroom.

Her comment on the film *Barbie* demonstrates how cultural representations can awaken new perceptions about women's roles in society and the necessity of respect and equity between genders. By stating that “*actions say a lot*,” the student recognizes that the way we communicate reflects deeply ingrained beliefs and directly influences social dynamics. Furthermore, she problematizes the distorted view some hold of feminism, reinforcing that its struggle is not about female superiority over men but about equality and the recognition of rights.

Finally, her reflection on the minimal respect among classmates underscores the urgency of initiatives that promote a more inclusive and empathetic educational environment, where women not only occupy traditionally male spaces but are also treated with the dignity and recognition they deserve.

Regarding this aspect, the question posed to the second student interviewed was: Did the project contribute in any way to the development of your writing skills?

“Certainly, it helped me so much that when I was writing the second paragraph... well, I basically remembered everything and put it down—it's not exactly the same, but very similar to what I wrote in the essay. I used the same structure, the same references, everything” (Aluna 2).

Student 2 highlights the relevance of discussions on feminism and gender equity not only in the social sphere but also in students' academic development. Her account shows how the contents covered in the project “*Female Writing in Amazonian and Latin American Literature*” directly contributed to her writing performance, especially in the context of the ENEM.

By stating that she used the same structure and references in her essay, the student underscores the importance of incorporating relevant social debates into the school

environment, as this broadens students' argumentative repertoire and facilitates the practical application of knowledge. Her testimony reinforces how feminist education can go beyond awareness, becoming a concrete tool for fostering critical thinking and improving academic performance.

Her experience demonstrates that innovative pedagogical strategies—such as the use of films and debates—can be effective in helping students assimilate concepts and apply this knowledge in different contexts. This reinforces the need for educational practices that encourage critical reflection and enable students to take ownership of themes relevant to their personal and academic growth.

In the second question, concerning feminist issues in the classroom, the student added: “I think feminist topics should be addressed starting from elementary school, to create an environment of equality.” (Student 2)

And regarding feminist education itself? *“Definitely, it helped me so much that when I was writing the second paragraph... basically I remembered everything and used it, not exactly the same, but very similar in the essay. I used the same model, same repertoire, everything”* (Student 2).

Student 2 highlights the relevance of discussions on feminism and gender equity not only in the social sphere but also in the academic development of students. Her account demonstrates how the content addressed in the project *A escrita feminina na literatura amazônica e latino-americana* (*Female Writing in Amazonian and Latin American Literature*) directly contributed to her writing, especially in the context of the ENEM.

By stating that she used the same model and repertoire in her essay, the student emphasizes the importance of incorporating relevant social debates into the school environment, as this broadens students' argumentative repertoire and facilitates the practical application of knowledge. This testimony reinforces how feminist education can go beyond awareness-raising, becoming a concrete tool for critical formation and improving academic performance.

Her experience demonstrates that innovative pedagogical strategies, such as the use of films and debates, can be effective in assimilating concepts and applying this

knowledge in different contexts. This underlines the need for educational practices that encourage critical reflection and allow students to engage with topics relevant to their personal and academic growth.

Regarding the second question about feminist education topics in the classroom, the student added: *“I think feminist issues should be addressed from elementary school, to create an environment of equality”* (Student 2).

And regarding feminist education specifically:

“I think it would be an education presented from a more female perspective because, throughout history... it has been largely told from a male point of view. So feminist education would be told through the eyes of a woman... so you can see the other side. It's important, as I said, if it were addressed from the beginning, I think it would have a greater impact than it did” (Student 2).

Student 2's statement reflects a critical perception of how history and education, in general, have been structured from a male perspective, leaving out women's experiences and contributions. By suggesting that feminist education should be told “through the eyes of a woman,” she highlights the need to expand female representation in teaching, allowing students to access diverse perspectives and understand reality from multiple viewpoints.

Furthermore, the student emphasizes the importance of introducing these discussions from the early years of basic education, since the earlier this awareness occurs, the greater the impact on building a more equitable society. Her statement reinforces the role of the school as a space for social transformation, where it is possible to deconstruct exclusionary patterns and promote a more plural and inclusive education, enabling both girls and boys to access training that values gender equity and recognizes the female voice in history and society.

The perception of values gained during the project was also reflected in the statements of Students 3, 4, and 5:

“Yes, the project contributed to my thinking about feminist issues; these discussions are very important because they show us a different perspective. Regarding feminism itself, we don't see much of it outside school... So bringing it into school

(feminist education) is important. It also provides a lot of repertoire for the ENEM exam; in this regard, it helped me a lot for that year's test. Especially the movie Like Water for Chocolate, which shows us different realities for women. And it's possible to see that they still suffer from various types of violence" (Student 3).

Student 3 illustrates in his words how the project contributed to broadening his understanding of feminist issues, allowing him to view gender and feminism from a new perspective. He acknowledges that this topic is not widely discussed outside the school environment, which reinforces the importance of educational initiatives that bring these debates into the classroom.

Furthermore, the student highlights a key aspect: the relationship between feminist education and the development of academic repertoire. By mentioning that the project helped him prepare for the ENEM, he demonstrates how addressing relevant social topics can directly impact students' argumentative and critical skills, making them better prepared to tackle essay questions and debates in academic settings.

The film *Like Water for Chocolate* is cited as a significant example in his understanding of the diverse realities experienced by women, particularly regarding the structural violences that persist. This comment emphasizes the power of cinema and literature as pedagogical tools capable of provoking deep reflections on gender inequality and women's rights.

"Yes, I found it important because there are still some issues today that... whether we like it or not, are still problems. So movies are usually for us to reflect on that. Nowadays, even with laws, women still suffer some form of violence; you can see it in the news every day, whether it's femicide or harassment, and there are many reports about this. Actually, there isn't a specific moment to learn about these things (feminist issues), so I think it's always important to reinforce... to reinforce these rights and to have these activities in schools, because there are still many people who are very... you know? Sexist in schools and think they can do whatever they want just because they are in school" (Student 4).

Student 4's statement reveals a realistic perception of the persistence of violence against women in society, even with laws designed to curb such practices. He recognizes that issues such as femicide, harassment, and gender inequality remain daily problems, widely reported in the media, which underscores the need for continuous discussions on these topics.

Additionally, the student points out a crucial aspect: the absence of a specific moment in formal education to learn about these issues. This comment highlights a gap in the school curriculum and justifies the importance of educational projects that bring these themes into classroom debate. He also notes that the school environment is not exempt from sexism, acknowledging that some students still reproduce oppressive behaviors because they believe they can act without consequences.

His testimony reinforces the importance of the school as a space for social transformation, where the debate on gender equity must be constant, contributing to the formation of more conscious citizens who are prepared to combat structural inequalities and violence.

"Yes, I really liked the project; it was a good complement for us. Regarding the repertoire, it helped develop topics, as it really helped us understand how to produce the text... I think it was indeed important to address women's issues, because the Systems Development (DS) course is no longer so male-dominated. Looking at the 2nd year now and the 1st year, you can see that the 2nd year has an almost equal number of male and female students, and the 1st year even has more women than men... So it is important to include these topics now in the new incoming classes" (Student 5).

Student 5's statement highlights two essential aspects: the project's impact on academic formation and the changing presence of women in traditionally male-dominated areas. He emphasizes that discussions on feminist issues helped develop the students' textual repertoire, which reinforces the importance of addressing social topics in education to expand students' argumentative skills.

Moreover, the student draws attention to a transformation in the profile of the Systems Development (DS) courses, traditionally male-dominated, which in recent years have welcomed a greater number of women. This fact shows that female participation in previously male-majority spaces is increasing, making discussions about gender equity even more relevant in this context.

By stating that it is important to bring these topics to new classes, the student recognizes the role of education in raising awareness and fostering a more equitable environment, ensuring that future generations are more conscious about diversity and respect both within and beyond academic and professional settings.

Student 6 emphasized the importance of empowering girls in the school environment to foster gender-equal behaviors:

“In my view, yes... presenting different points, with literary texts and films, is something that captures your attention. When the films were shown, I was able to... really associate real-life situations and discuss certain points in class with the teacher. All of this helped me understand feminist issues and feminism, so much that it helped me in the ENEM; I used some points from these films. I think this topic is very important to be represented in these various situations. Definitely, even to raise awareness of situations that occur at IFPA, in their lives, to show that they can decide everything that happens to them, that they are not trapped by what anyone says. Just as everyone must have their own perspective, it is important to pass this on, especially to women. But, just like women, everyone should learn all the points that make up a society — the fact that we live together. So we have to respect everyone, understand everyone, and understanding these things both at home and at school changes a person; whether you want it or not, you will learn or get worse depending on what you are learning in your environment. For example, the film shows all those points about women being forced by someone or not wanting to marry someone else, and all these points make you understand that fortunately today this is not so common, except in some countries” (Student 6).

Thus, the student highlights the importance of engaging teaching methods, such as the use of films to address social issues and stimulate critical reflection. He emphasizes that connecting audiovisual content to everyday life facilitated his understanding of feminist issues and feminism, demonstrating how this dynamic format can make learning more effective and meaningful.

Additionally, the student notes that classroom debates and discussions were fundamental to consolidating the knowledge acquired, to the point that he applied it in his ENEM essay. This underscores the idea that feminist education and gender equity topics not only raise awareness but also expand students' sociocultural and academic repertoire.

Another relevant aspect of his statement is the emphasis on women's autonomy and the importance of teaching these concepts to all students, regardless of gender. He recognizes that the school and family environments are crucial for shaping people's perceptions of social issues and that the knowledge gained can directly influence individual behavior and attitudes.

Finally, by noting that, although society has evolved, there are still places where women face severe limitations, the student demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of feminism and the need to continue promoting critical awareness and respect for women in all contexts.

"I believe it helped a lot because it promoted knowledge in a more interactive way. That is, we didn't just have the usual student-teacher dialogue; we had more interactive approaches, for example, audiovisual materials and text production activities. This interactivity strengthened learning significantly. Before, my understanding of these issues was shallow, but with the classes and the materials provided, I was able to understand the cause more deeply and dive further into the subject. Yes, I found it very important, especially because it has even been a topic in the ENEM essay. It is something very contemporary, something that happens every day—the issue of machismo and the entire social structure. I'm sure that everything that broadens our perspective on subjects like feminist issues contributes to our development, both for the ENEM and for pedagogical growth in general. Especially because some topics discussed at school help break taboos; sometimes we don't have these conversations at home with our parents, so it's important for schools and educational institutions to address them" (Student 7).

Student 7 emphasizes the importance of an interactive and diversified approach to teaching social issues, particularly feminist topics. He acknowledges that the use of audiovisual materials, debates, and text production significantly contributed to his learning, making the process more dynamic and facilitating a deeper understanding of a subject he previously knew only superficially.

Moreover, he highlights that feminism and machismo are contemporary issues, frequently addressed in the ENEM, reinforcing the relevance of discussing them in the school environment not only for social awareness but also for academic formation and critical thinking development.

Another interesting point is his perception that schools play a crucial role in breaking taboos, as such debates often do not occur at home. This demonstrates how education can be an agent of transformation, providing a space where students can reflect and develop a broader view of gender inequalities and other structural social issues.

"It's always good to remember that women have a space in society and that they also have rights. Therefore, addressing themes like this is extremely important. It was important indeed, and it also encourages men not to be so sexist or rude toward them. I think it always impacts their lives in some way; for example, some female students are interested in these topics, while

others are not, but it always generates reflection. This perspective encourages critical analysis, examining the roots of these issues and understanding that women have rights. Moreover, it's possible to extend this analysis to other issues, like understanding why people are racist or examining other cases of inequality. I believe these subjects should be debated in school so we can gain perspective, understand others, and likely influence the male students" (Student 8).

20

Student 8's statement highlights the importance of constantly reinforcing that women have rights and space in society, emphasizing that discussing feminism in schools is essential for promoting equity. He acknowledges that these discussions not only validate women's struggle for equality but also encourage men to reconsider sexist behaviors and adopt more respectful social attitudes.

Additionally, he points out that the impact of these discussions varies among female students, with some showing greater interest than others; however, the reflection generated is always valuable. This reinforces that feminist education is not just about individual awareness but a collective process that influences the social dynamics as a whole.

Another relevant point is his mention of the need to expand critical analysis to other forms of inequality, such as racism. He understands that education should stimulate reflection on different types of oppression and their historical roots, enabling students to develop a broader and more empathetic view of social inequalities.

Finally, by suggesting that these topics be debated in schools so that everyone can understand different perspectives, the student reinforces the role of education in building a more conscious, respectful, and inclusive society.

4 Final Considerations

The implementation of educational practices grounded in feminism proved to be a transformative approach within the school context, promoting critical, reflective, and socio-culturally enriched learning among students. Activities such as film screenings, debates, written productions, and literary readings contributed not only to the development of skills required in assessments like the ENEM, but also to a deeper understanding of gender dynamics and structural inequalities present in society.

The integration of theory and practice proved essential for engaging students, demonstrating that addressing feminist themes in the educational environment constitutes a powerful tool for deconstructing prejudices and strengthening empathy and solidarity among women. Furthermore, the experience reinforces the importance of inclusive curricula that are attentive to gender issues, empowering young people to act as agents of change in pursuit of a more just and equitable society.

The positive impact of these actions highlights the need to expand such practices to other educational contexts, consolidating a pedagogy that values equity and the plurality of voices. In this regard, the project contributes to the formation of critical and conscious citizens, capable of recognizing and confronting inequalities, thus fostering more inclusive and egalitarian perspectives for the future.

References

BEAUVOIR, Simone de. **O segundo sexo**. Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2009.

BORDIEU, Pierre, **A dominação masculina**. Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil, 2017.

HOOKS, Bell. **A educação como prática da liberdade**. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2000.

HOOKS, Bell. **Eu não sou uma mulher?** mulheres negras e feminismo. Rio de Janeiro: Rosa dos Tempos, 2019.

HOOKS, Bell. **O feminismo é para todo mundo**: políticas arrebatadoras. Rio de Janeiro: Rosa dos Tempos, 2018.

FREIRE, Paulo. **Pedagogia da Esperança**: um reencontro com a pedagogia do oprimido. 37. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1996.

REIS, Wellingson Valente dos; CASTRO, José Guilherme de Oliveira; TEIXEIRA, Lucilinda Ribeiro. Rito de passagem da vida: a recepção de Maria Lúcia Medeiros por alunos do Instituto Federal do Pará. **Cadernos de Pesquisa**, v. 25, n. 2, p. 225–242, 8 Jul 2018. Disponível em: <https://periodicoseletronicos.ufma.br/index.php/cadernosdepesquisa/article/view/9330>. Acesso em: 07 fev. 2025.

VERGÈS, Françoise. **Um feminismo decolonial**. Trad. de Jamille Pinheiro Dias e Raquel Camargo. São Paulo: Editora Ubu, 2020.

22

ⁱ **Marina Denise Hollanda Souza**, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-4481-9920>

Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Pará

Graduanda no curso de licenciatura em Letras – Língua Portuguesa no Instituto Federal do Pará, IFPA - Campus Belém. Pesquisadora do projeto de pesquisa: “A escrita feminina na literatura amazônica e latino-americana” e bolsista no programa Residência Pedagógica desde 2023.

Author contribution: Autora

Lattes: <https://lattes.cnpq.br/1824478922508703>

E-mail: marinadenisehollanda@gmail.com

ⁱⁱ **Wellingson Valente dos Reis**, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0119-3356>

Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Pará

Doutor em Comunicação, Linguagens e Cultura pela UNAMA (Universidade da Amazônia). Docente do Instituto Federal do Pará (IFPA) – Campus Belém; Líder do Grupo Interdisciplinar de Pesquisa em Arte, Cultura e Educação - GIPACE (IFPA/CNPq) e membro do Grupo de Pesquisa Mulheres Amazônidas e Latino-americanas na Literatura e nas Artes - MALALAS (UFPA/CNPq).

Author contribution: Autor

Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/9565321075411405>

E-mail: wellingson.valente@ifpa.edu.br

Responsible publisher: Genifer Andrade

Ad hoc specialist: Maria Lília Imbiriba Sousa Colares and Regina Cândida Ellero Gualtieri.

How to cite this article (ABNT):

SOUZA, Marina Denise Hollanda; REIS, Wellingson Valente dos. A importância da educação feminista: um relato de sensibilização para uma turma do 2º ano do ensino médio integrado do IFPA. **Rev. Pemo**, Fortaleza, v. 7, e15124, 2025. Available in: <https://revistas.uece.br/index.php/revpemo/article/view/15124>

Received on March 8, 2025.

Accepted on July 11, 2025.

Published on November 10, 2025.