



UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO PAMPA – UNIPAMPA
LETRAS LÍNGUA PORTUGUESA E INGLESA E RESPECTIVAS LITERATURAS

ANGÉLICA FLORES VENTURINI

WOMEN FACING VERBAL SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN BAGÉ'S STREETS

BAGÉ – RS
2015
ANGÉLICA FLORES VENTURINI

WOMEN FACING VERBAL SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN BAGÉ'S STREETS

Trabalho de conclusão de curso apresentado na Universidade Federal do Pampa, como requisito parcial para obtenção do Título de Licenciado em Letras Português-Inglês e suas respectivas literaturas.

Orientadora: Profa. Dra. Kátia Vieira Morais

Bagé

2015

ABSTRACT

This work is a discussion and a reflection on the verbal sexual harassment suffered by women on the streets of Bagé city. I aim to analyze how verbal sexual harassment affects the daily lives of women in contemporary society, and how this issue can interfere in the construction of these women's identities. The theme also proposes to put the issue of harassment to the fore as a strategy to draw attention to an everyday social problem that often goes unnoticed. The work is being carried out through a bibliographic research on feminism (BUTLER, 1990; HOOKS, 2004; SPIVAK, 1994), identity (HALL, 1996), verbal sexual harassment (KOSKELA, 1999; ERLICH & KING 1996; THOMPSON, 1994) and the streets as a public space (KOSKELA, 1999; WATSON, 2005; RUSH, 2012). The research presented is qualitative, it aims to explore and understand the data collected from studying the points of view from the participants' situations and, based on that, the interpretation made by the interviewer. The interviews are guided through a questionnaire with ten (10) questions. I interviewed ten (10) women from 18 to 29 years old who work and/or study. The criteria for choosing the age range is due to these women being often exposed to ordinary activities of everyday life, thus more exposed to verbal harassment on the streets. The testimonies were collected through audio recordings and written notes. I noticed that the verbal sexual harassment affects the lives and the identities of these women, as reported on how they react to daily harassment and how they have to alter their routines in order to not face it. It is expected that the identities of these women may also be influenced according to the constant verbal sexual harassment. As a result, I obtained—through the analyses of their testimonials—the perception of those women on verbal sexual harassment and on the feminist movement. Additionally, besides the stories of these women as subjects of male verbal abuse, I present some ideas in order to deal better with the deconstruction of sexist culture in bajeense society. Thus, it is considered that verbal sexual harassment can be evidenced regarded as a cultural character problem in the city of Bagé through dialogue with women about their experiences. I suggest developing feminist projects at schools, also more studies in this area, in order to deconstruct the sexist cultural and social patterns of Bagé city. Additionally, I encourage the empowerment of young women to struggle for their rights in the feminist movement.

Keywords: sexual harassment, feminism, women, culture, Bagé.

RESUMO

Este trabalho é uma discussão e uma reflexão sobre o assédio sexual verbal sofrida pelas mulheres nas ruas da cidade Bagé. Eu pretendo analisar como o assédio sexual verbal afeta a vida cotidiana das mulheres na sociedade contemporânea, e como esta questão pode interferir na construção das identidades dessas mulheres. O tema também propõe colocar a questão do assédio à tona como uma estratégia para chamar a atenção para um problema social cotidiano que muitas vezes passa despercebido. O trabalho é realizado por meio de uma pesquisa bibliográfica sobre feminismo (BUTLER, 1990; HOOKS, 2004; SPIVAK, 1994), identidade (HALL, 1996), assédio sexual verbal (KOSKELA, 1999; ERLICH & KING 1996; THOMPSON, 1994) e as ruas como um espaço público (KOSKELA, 1999; WATSON, 2005; RUSH, 2012). A pesquisa apresentada é qualitativa, que visa explorar e compreender os dados coletados a partir do estudo dos pontos de vista das situações dos participantes e, com base nisso, a interpretação feita pelo entrevistador. As entrevistas são guiadas através de um questionário com 10 (dez) perguntas. Entrevistei 10 (dez) mulheres de 18 a 29 anos que trabalham e/ou estudam. Os critérios para a escolha da faixa etária foram devido a essas mulheres, sendo muitas vezes expostas a atividades comuns da vida cotidiana, portanto, mais expostas ao assédio verbal nas ruas. Os depoimentos foram coletados por meio de gravações de áudio e notas escritas. Notei que o assédio sexual verbal afeta as vidas e as identidades dessas mulheres, sendo relatado como elas reagem ao assédio diário e como elas têm de alterar suas rotinas a fim de não enfrentá-lo. Espera-se que as identidades destes mulheres também podem ser influenciadas de acordo com o assédio sexual verbal constante. Como resultado, obtive, através da análise dos depoimentos das participantes, a percepção dessas mulheres sobre o assédio sexual verbal e também sobre o movimento feminista. Aliás, além das histórias dessas mulheres como sujeitos do abuso verbal masculino, apresento algumas ideias para lidar melhor com a desconstrução da cultura machista na sociedade bajeense. Assim, considera-se que o assédio sexual verbal pode ser evidenciado e considerado um problema de caráter cultural na cidade de Bagé, através do diálogo com as mulheres sobre suas experiências. Sugiro desenvolver projetos feministas nas escolas, também mais estudos nesta área, a fim de desconstruir os padrões culturais e sociais de caráter sexista na cidade de Bagé. Além disso, encorajo o empoderamento das mulheres jovens a lutar por seus direitos no movimento feminista.

Palavras-chave: assédio sexual, feminismo, mulheres, cultura, Bagé.

TABLE OF CONTENT

1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. RESEARCH DESCRIPTION	2
2.1 THEME.....	2
2.2. OBJECTIVES	2
2.3 RESEARCH QUESTION	2
2.4 PROBLEM	2
2.5 HYPOTHESIS	3
2.6 JUSTIFICATION	3
3. LITERATURE REVIEW	4
3.1 What is feminism?	5
3.2 Identity construction: What is to be a woman?	7
3.3 Defining Sexual Harassment	12
3.4 The Street as a Public Space	14
4. METHODOLOGY	17
5. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS.....	19
6. CONCLUSION	26
REFERENCES	28
ATTACHMENT A	30
ATTACHMENT B	31
ATTACHMENT C	32
ATTACHMENT D	33
ATTACHMENT E	34
ATTACHMENT F.....	35
ATTACHMENT G	36
ATTACHMENT H.....	38

ATTACHMENT I	39
ATTACHMENT J	41
ATTACHMENT K	42
ATTACHMENT L	43
ATTCHMENT M	44

1. INTRODUCTION

The present study is an opportunity that I have to expose my frustration about an issue, which can be trivial to some people, but very controversial and disturbing to others: sexual harassment on the streets¹. I believe there are many women who feel embarrassed and violated with men addressing them verbally on the streets using words, gestures, and offensive looks at them. On the other hand, many people do not understand how offensive those gestures can be. What shocks me is the fact that many women think it is an opportunity to feel desired by men even if the words they hear are not kind at all.

I bring this issue in order to empower women's voices as subject verbally attacked on city streets by a sexist and prejudiced society, having as their abuser men. I also intent to explain why sexual harassment does not have to be seen as something we should tolerate or pretend we do not care about men's comments. In order to do that, I interview young women. I report common situations in women's everyday lives, even though I am restricting the research to the age group 18-29 years old. That is, I propose a survey of young adult women, in order to analyze how the subject woman is affected by sexual harassment in her daily construction of identity in the beginning of her adulthood. I also intend to rethink the subject women to deconstruct normative patterns from our society.

In this project, after I briefly describe the research, I begin the problematization of sexual harassment on the streets of Bagé (RS – Brazil) with feminist principles—I believe and defend—that are written by authors established in their areas of research (BUTLER, 1990; HOOKS, 2004; SPIVAK, 1994; HALL, 1996; KOSKELA, 1999; ERLICH & KING 1996; THOMPSON, 1994; WATSON, 2005; RUSH, 2012). I define feminism and its principles, as well as the purpose of feminism in women's lives. Besides, I reflect on the question of being a woman as I discourse about gender and identity in my text. Next, I directly discuss the subject of sexual harassment, reflecting on the public space of the street where verbal harassment happens. I parallel these ideas to thoughts I had when younger, and then with feminist studies I developed to date.

¹ In this work, I refer to sexual harassment interchangeably as verbal sexual harassment, street harassment and verbal approach. In all of them, I am referring to the verbal approach suffered by women on the streets. (THOMPSON, 1994; KOSKELA, 1999).

2. RESEARCH DESCRIPTION

2.1 THEME

Verbal sexual harassment in Bagé's streets.

2.2. OBJECTIVES

To analyze how sexual harassment affects the identity of urban women.

To analyze cases of verbal street harassment and the consequences their impact on women's identity construction.

To bring up the issue of verbal sexual harassment as a strategy to draw attention to an everyday social problem that often goes unnoticed.

2.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

In which ways does verbal sexual harassment affect women's live? How feminism movement can be an ally to deconstruct verbal sexual harassment?

2.4 PROBLEM

Verbal sexual harassment is still seems to be a subject seen as something normal and acceptable.

2.5 HYPOTHESIS

When we are able to recognize sexual harassment as something serious that must be disassociated from trivial matters of women's everyday lives, we are able to confront the normalcy of verbal sexual harassment and fight for actions—within the feminist movement—that will help women to rethink it. The purpose is helping women to understand how sexual harassment can interfere with the formation of women's identity, as a sexist society does not consider verbal harassment offensive, nor relevant to discuss. To bring this issue into discussion is a way to call the attention, specially the feminism attention, to something that frequently happens and makes many women feel they might not be the owners of their bodies.

We may not have the male concern about sexual harassment, but I believe that we will be more encouraged to fight for respect if we bring this issue as something offensive and disgusting as it is. Putting ourselves in each other's shoes and embracing the idea of sisterhood to be stronger is one of the reasons to be a feminist.

2.6 JUSTIFICATION

I want to write about verbal sexual harassment because many women, also myself, have already experienced it. As a woman and a feminist citizen, I want to alert people—who sees sexual harassment on the streets as something usual—about the damage it might bring to women's identity formation. I also intent to discuss about a possible manner to deal with this situation that is imposed to young women in the most part of their lives. I support women and I defend the right of equality, if my only weapons are my words, I will have to write and use the Academy to show my indignation, so other women can realize that sexual harassment is not

something either tolerable or acceptable. In the section that follows, I make an argument for the unacceptability and repulse of verbal sexual harassment as I present the views of scholars on feminism, identity, sexual harassment, and public space. After that, I present the research methodology.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, I explore concepts such as feminism, identity construction, verbal sexual harassment, and public space in that order to better understand how and why sexual street harassment can be detrimental to a woman's identity.

Since I was a child, the common knowledge was that women are not equal to men. I am sure my parents did not want to make me feel less than anybody else does, but the treatment that I received was a little different from my brother's. I always heard sentences such as "women need to show some respect to themselves" or "You should not do this, you are a girl". These sayings are much common for me and for all women. To explain it better, what society means by that is to adjust women's behavior in its perfect model of femininity, having us submissive and vulnerable. I spend my whole adolescence thinking about how life would be if I could have the same treatment as my brother had. Why was I judged when I did the same things my brother did? He was not judged for his behavior: why should I be?

Feminism came into my life before I even knew the term "feminism". When I started college, I could have access to authors, professors, and people in general that have the same idea of human rights as me. I could learn terms that I have listened to, but I could not understand the meaning very well. For instance, the term "feminism" firstly came to me with the idea of it being the opposite of "sexism". I started using this term in a wrong way, I could not express my opinion about equal rights because of it. Therefore, as an academic, I started to read more about this concept and I have learned day by day how it was constructed in society. Fortunately, I had this autonomy to look into a concept that I did not know before I refuse it. However, it is not what I am used to see around. People judge feminism and reject it because they do not even know the meaning of this word, and they might not have any idea what it represents to women in general—without discrimination of class, gender, race, sexuality, and so on. Most women

are also afraid of feminism because this word was transformed into something that means “no femininity” while feminism, considering my beliefs in this ideology, defends, for instance, on the acceptability to be whatever we want to, I mean, freedom to be feminine or not.

Bell hooks (2004) as an important American author, claims that feminism is a concept that needs to be taught at school and be in evidence in all media. She believes that the role of feminism is to educate people in order to show gender equality, she also claims for a simple and understandable language to explain feminism for the purpose that all people should have conditions to comprehend it.

3.1 What is feminism?

In my conception, feminism means the struggle for equal rights for women, the end of race, ethnicity, and gender discrimination and also any other kind of prejudice pre-established by the sexist society. Feminism comes to argue against the order already established by men. It may seem easy to understand when I put in those words, but the fact is that most people cannot see it as clear as I do. I am not telling that I am free from prejudice in my thoughts or in my words; however, to assume it and to try making things different around myself is much more valid than to pretend that I do not see all of the injustice caused by sexism. Feminism is not a monster; it is an ideology (a conjunct of ideas or thoughts of a person or a group of individuals), which I am still constructing inside of me, because this idea of equal rights and no discrimination needs to be polished every single day in life. I know that it is hard to rethink all the speeches we have already heard about what feminism is, though it is essential to understand what we, women, suffer everyday just because the world is lazy enough to change a concept that even History is tired of remembering: sexism.

In the feminism field of study, it is possible to find many authors with different lines of thinking. I bring Bell Hooks (2004) as a great feminist author because she presents feminist theory in a simple language in order to people understand her arguments and bring feminist theory to everyday life. She claims for a sisterhood which women are able to embrace and support each other.

I tend to hear all about the evil of feminism and the bad feminists: how "they" hate men; how "they" want to go against nature and god; how "they" are all lesbians; how "they" are taking all the jobs and making the world hard for white men, who do not stand a chance. (...)They think feminism is a bunch of angry women who want to be like men. They do not even think about feminism as being about rights - about women gaining equal rights. (HOOKS, 2004, p. 2.)

Bell Hooks exemplifies how people who do not have a clear definition of feminism see it as a selfish and unnecessary manner to make things better for women. It seems that women want to lead men and take their positions, specially, in the business environment. As the author gives importance to everyday women's issues, she defends the idea that society needs to be taught about what feminism is for sure. I believe that, if we reconsider to discuss about our prejudiced thoughts, our common knowledge attitudes and unthinkable actions, we will be able to understand ourselves better, to rethink values and humanity, also to understand a little what women claim for: equal rights and respect. Society will be much easier to live, much fairer for both women and men if people recognize their own prejudices.

Judith Butler (1990) discusses about who is the subject behind the feminist theory, claiming that gender identity must occupy an important role in this discussion. For her, feminism is not about women's right once we define what is "being a women" based on society's concepts, she brings a feminism where people must respect all kinds of human beings specially people who do not define themselves in any gender category. If being a woman means female physical characteristics and female genitals, we will certainly be defining just one kind of woman among many; therefore, we will be discriminating and excluding people around us. Feminism, like any other field of study that has many concepts and definitions, helps us set the parameter of a field of study. There are theorists who advocate many concepts as they think of feminism and Judith Butler is one of the authors that fights for understanding of gender, for instance. She believes that "the identity of the feminist subject ought not to be the foundation of feminist politics" (BUTLER, J. 1990. p.6). Once if we define "women" by genitals, as the subject of feminist theory, we will be discriminating and excluding people who consider themselves women. We have to understand that we cannot restrict people while we already are a mass of restricted people in our society. Butler (1990) suggests that to think feminism, we

also need to think identity formation since she does not define gender by a person's genital; it does not construct the whole identity of a woman.

3.2 Identity construction: What is to be a woman?

Nowadays, the identity construction of a woman in Bagé is something very peculiar since we still live in a male-dominated society. I was born in the 1990s in a patriarchal family in which my father was the pedestal and I was raised to be a lady. I have noticed there is not much difference in the way people raise girls in 2010s. Society separates kids in “girls’ things, girls’ colors and boy’s things, boy’s colors” since the gestation period in order to build a pattern of gender. Worell (2001) discusses that “Girl’s play tends to center on themes related to family and domestic life. In many communities, girls can often be observed playing with dolls, households objects (...)” (p.811). Having household toys for girls (not boys) is very similar to what I observe happening today. On the other hand, boys are commonly associated to sports, gun fighting, and outdoors games. Worell (2001) also states:

Children’s toy preferences and activities are also influenced in many ways by parents. Parents provide gender-typed environments that may be subtle ways of channeling children’s preferences and their behavioral tendencies. Parents tend to present girls and boys with distinct social contexts. (WORELL, 2001, p.811)

As we can see by Worell’s statement, parents do not seem to encourage women’s autonomy since they still divide children’s activities in binary representations. They are creating a site of prejudice for their children; they are also restricting children’s likes. The fact is that we are not in the 1990s anymore, but people still carry the same thoughts, and they take them as rules for life.

In view of those pre-established women patterns, I consider discriminatory to define the subject woman in just one way since the category 'woman' should not define who people are entirely. Butler states,

The very subject of women is no longer understood in stable or abiding terms. There is a great deal of material that not only questions the viability of "the subject" as the ultimate candidate for representation or, indeed, liberation, but there is very little agreement after all on what it is that constitutes, or ought to constitute, the category women. (BUTLER, 1990, p. 1)

In the quote above, Butler (1990) explains that the amount of representations of the subject women is not stable anymore; it means that the representations, which constitute the subject women, are many. However, Butler also indicates that it is difficult to find an agreement about what those representations are—reminding that society seems to accept only normative representations to constitute its category of women. Still in Butler's feminism (1990), the issue of gender deconstruction is extremely important once the political, social, and linguistic representation will only extend to what may be recognized as a subject. However, what if I am not the kind of woman I should be (based on my genitals, style or sexual orientation), for instance? Gonçalves introduces us to Stuart Hall's concept of identity formation in a very simple way. She writes,

The feminist social movement is recognized for questioning the distinction between "femininity" and "masculinity" expanding, thereby, the space of political contestation into areas of social life that were not focused on the patriarchal look so far such as sexuality, family, domestic division of labor, etc. Feminism has also contributed to the questioning of the biological stance on gender identity - or social roles - bringing into

light subjectivity and identification as a social construction process. (HALL, 2011 apud GONÇALVES. R. C., p.35. 2014)²

Since the feminist movement defends the right of women as subject of feminism and the women whether they represented normative patterns, I believe that feminism, besides contributing to the formation of personal and social identity, helps in deconstructing and dialogicity of gender issues, which the patriarchal context does not respect at all. In other words, feminism dialogues about gender in social contexts and it is what sexism tries to avoid.

According to Hall, identity can be an expected social representation of ourselves. It means that we can also have more than one identity depending on the role we represent. Therefore, identity only exists because of the Other and it is constructed through discourse; it is not stable, but it is in constant transformation. We need to exclude what we are afraid of being in order to construct an identity (or identities). Hall (1996) interprets from Butler that “All identities operate through exclusion” (p. 15), because people often exclude what they do not want to be part of or what they do not want to be identified to. In other words, society seems to deny the existence of what is different according to its sexist patterns. We are constantly creating identity (identities) without a conscious knowledge of it. Hall explains how we come to an identity (or identities) and what identity means. He writes,

A theory of what the mechanisms are by which individuals as subjects identify (or do not identify) with the ‘positions’ to which they are summoned, as well as how they fashion, stylize, produce and ‘perform’ these positions, and why they never do so completely, for once and all time, and some never do, or are in constant, agonistic process of struggling with, resisting, negotiating and accommodating the normative or regulative rules with which they confront and regulate themselves. (HALL, 1996, p. 14)

² O movimento social feminista é reconhecido por questionar a respeito da distinção entre a “feminilidade” e a “masculinidade” ampliando, com isso, espaço de contestação política em esferas da vida social que não eram até então enfocadas através do olhar patriarcal: a sexualidade, a família, a divisão doméstica do trabalho etc. O feminismo contribuiu também para o questionamento sobre a “biologicidade” das identidades de gênero (gender) - ou papéis sociais - trazendo à tona a subjetividade e a identificação como processos de construção social (HALL, 2011 apud GONÇALVES. R. C., p.35. 2014, translation mine).

The ‘positions’ here are the roles that individuals have to perform in society. Hall discusses about the expectation of being, of behaving as the pattern of identity that we are attributed in society. All individuals suffer the pressure of maintaining a posture that is appropriate because of the identity that the subject (in this work, women subject) carries. However, it does not mean that all people fit in or agree with such normative patterns pre-established for them— for instance, those are some sentences of common sense that can exemplify it in a simple way: Behave as a lady if you are a woman; be a ‘real man’ if you are a man. As a link to this work, we can comprehend that the expectation for women is to be sexualized and to be seen as objects on the streets since “the identity of the subject woman” supposed to be someone feminine, heterosexual, white, good-looking, attractive, fertile, and, the most important, silent. Thus, one of the struggles of feminist movement is to fight against a limitation process of those identities in which the subject women are reduced to an object of a male public domain.

In contribution to the topic of women’s marginalization, in the article “Can the subaltern speak?” Spivak (1994) focuses on the idea of giving voice to the silenced people, specifically the subaltern ones. She makes a study about colonial and postcolonial theory in order to deconstruct ideas and discourses established within this context. Considering my discussion in this work, I will just focus on female subaltern subjects. First, we need to think who the subalterns are. For her, the subalterns are the worker’s class, referring to colonized subjects in India, those who did not want to include the colonial elite values in their lives or be included in this colonial elite value system even if still dominated by such colonial groups. Spivak explains, “If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even deeply in shadow” (Spivak, 1994, 83p.). What she means by that is that subalterns are not mentioned or recognized for what they have done, they cannot have a voice in this colonial context so if it is hard for subaltern men, women subaltern are totally vanished. Thus, thinking about the purpose of this work, I understand that women from Bagé do not have a written history – it means that we hardly discuss about sexual harassment in the newspaper, there might be very few teachers at school (if any) instigating students to reflect about feminism or women’s identity. In addition, even if we are not in shadows as those

subaltern women in India, we still do not have an important look from society for our social problems, although we are moving toward it.

Following the same line of argument, Spivak's discussion also points to the British outlawing of Sati, a Hindu law, which refers to the suicide of widows in Indian culture after their husband's death. She discusses about the repression suffered by women who did not have a choice for living after their husband's death. However, even if given a voice those women might or might not decide as well for death. They might oppose the idea of freedom, because they might prefer to die out of their devotion and love for their husbands. Spivak discusses if it is a matter of cultural identity or crime, as British colonizer would call it. She seems to be leading us to a paradox in which we might not have a way out.

I understand that those women need to change their discourse in order to be accepted in western culture. It is indispensable to have changes in both discourses in order to create a dialogue, and then both sides might be in an agreement. However, should "white men" interfere in "brown women's salvation from brown men"? Spivak rises this question in her text. The questioning is if brown women need to be saved by white men, since it is all about control again. Women still are oppressed by male domination; they are still in the shadows. Their future salvation would still be domination.

Butler (1900), Hall (1996), and Spivak (1994) dialogue about the subject women themselves and how their identities can be constructed in a repressed space, which I am going to refer to our public space here in Bagé. Although not in the same context as Spivak reported in her article above, we can argue about the repressed view of bajeense women's representation, and since we do not have only one identity (HALL 1996), we can see how women's space is important to construct our bajeense society. Those women have their identities restricted or (and) interrupted by the repression suffered by the bajeense male population, which are crudely immersed in our local culture. And, Bagé's culture is a present factor in men's discourse here.

In this discourse universe, which I am referring to Bagé's streets, women are affronted because of the clothes they wear. For example, if a woman wears a fitness clothing or a shorter outfit, this woman is automatically harassed based on her clothing. Men do not respect women and they assume an ownership power before the woman's body if it is a little sample or in clothes that mark their curves. Moreover, the clothing of the woman is always associated with

a search for attention or self-assertion, for approval of men, as if no woman could wear something that pleases her for the simple fact of pleasing herself, and nobody else. We must end the idea that women dress around and for the male subject, for the acceptance of their own bodies by this male representation?. Women are not models for seduction; at least they are not supposed to be seen as such, except if they want to be.

3.3 Defining Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined for each bullying or enforcement of a sexual nature, or the inappropriate verbal or physical approach. Even if this issue can be understood in physical and verbal harassment, in this paper, I will focus only on verbal harassment suffered by women on the streets. I consider this topic very important once it bothers me a lot in my personal life. Being a student is even hard, because most of us need to study and work at the same time, so we need to get around a lot and, based on the Brazilian condition of life, we need to use public transportation all the time. Those circumstances makes us vulnerable every time we need to walk alone on the streets especially at night. This issue is not only about security, but also about public space domain. In other words, men run the streets and women cannot be safe there, once women “have no rights” on public spaces. Being afraid to walk alone down the street knowing that at any moment someone can address you disrespectfully is a social nature problem; it means that, feminism is not only about women struggle for equal rights, but also about respect and safety in exercising our freedom to walk down the streets of the cities with no fear to be alone. Erlich e King point out how Crenshaw explains that men still have prerogatives:

Whether or not androcentric definitions of sexual harassment or rape are actually encoded in law, the interpretation and characterization of events in such cases are ‘overwhelmingly directed toward interrogating and discrediting the woman’s character on behalf of maintaining a considerable range of sexual prerogatives for men’. (CRENSHAW 1992. p. 409 apud ERLICH. & KING, 1996, p. 154.)

According to Crenshaw (1992 apud ERLICH & KING 1996, p. 409), women, besides being abused verbally or physically, are virtually forced to assume a fault that does not exist, since harassment and physical abuse are human rights violations and any citizen deserves due respect no matter which sexual orientation, race, or creed they have. I comment on the lack of decent treatment towards women in certain governments, for instance in the case of India (SPIVAK 1994). Living in a patriarchal and male-dominated society, women are, in most of the cases, forced to accept that the harassment practiced by men is a minor offense that should be disregarded and that it is some part of male behavior. “In such inquiries, attention tends to be focused much more on the woman’s behavior” (ERLICH & KING, 1996, p. 154). The woman's body tends to take the blame for such harassment because of its display in public spaces or due to “bolder” clothes to the context of the sexist society. To blame a woman for her fashion or for some attitude considered "masculine” covers the issue of women's inferiority to man, while men leaving parts of their bodies on display or having “promiscuous” attitudes, they might be considered socially successful men.

As Koskela writes in her article, “Flashing can be considered to be a serious form of sexual harassment. Flashing, as well as other forms of harassment, reminds women of the threat of sexual violence” (KOSKELA, 1999, p.7). The situation of verbal sexual harassment that women face every day makes them feel just about being physically attacked. I might have to say that verbal sexual harassment often becomes the beginning of an act of physical violence against women. Therefore, living in a society where the fear of walking in public spaces is constant, it only shows us how much we need to talk about this extremely serious issue that accompanies women’s lives in all its stages. However, we have to consider that not all the women have enough strength to deal with it by themselves; that is why we have to keep the discussion in favor of feminist empowerment in which women can be aware that together we can handle it better.

3.4 The Street as a Public Space

I always liked to be on the streets, feeling the freedom that was to be a child. No compromises neither worries because my parents took care of me. I did not care about staying on the streets playing with my friends until late, but when I grew up these things started to change and I did not know why I could not stay outside alone anymore. My parents told me that as being a girl, I needed to take care of myself because boys were very insolent. This may seem familiar to all girls that I know once they realize that being alone, especially at night, is not okay to them as well. I ask myself, what if I were told that boys could be disrespectful to me just because I was a girl? I would have asked my parents that maybe they should tell my brother that he could not be disrespectful to girls so when I grew up, boys would not mess with me. I had advice from my parents, we held conversations about taking care of myself and about walking alone, and I could never accept being inside of my house just because some man could mess with me.

Based on that, I reflect about the streets being public spaces, which means that the streets were mine too, so I did not have to ask for permission to walk on them. It sounds childish when I speak in this way, but I am right: women have the right as every other person has to be on the streets. It seems so simple to understand that scares me the way women have to face their days on the streets. I can compare a woman on the streets as I thought it was when I was a child. We do not have permission to stay on the streets; at least we are prepared to tolerate, what Thompson (1994) will call, “street harassment”.

As Rush (2012) in her article about ‘Women in a masculine public space’ explains, “The simple practice of using a space does not render it free of gender nor does it mean that the use of these spaces is free from inequalities” (p. 4). Actually, it is clear the differences between men and women while using a public space, in this work, we refer to the the public space of the streets. I reflect around the idea of identity construction and sexual harassment in the previous sub-sections and now I argue that the streets are such a stage for those social phenomena. Watson (2005) confirms saying that “Space is not merely a surface where social practice takes place. Rather, space is produced in social practices; it is a social category in itself. Space is simultaneously the medium and the outcome of social practices” (WATSON, 2005, p. 101). The streets are responsible for the construction of our social practices; it is a space that produces

meaning in our routines. A public space is part of our discourse since it is the context in which actions are performed, perceptions are created and dialogues are produced and encouraged.

Koskela (1999) discusses the subject women facing the fear of being in public spaces. She observes that “The notion of women being sometimes able to resist fear does not deny that in many women’s lives fear plays an important role. For some, it means fleeting moments of uneasiness, for others, constant and serious restrictions that profoundly shape their everyday lives” (KOSKELA, 1999, p.2). Unfortunately, the fear of being harassed and affronted on the streets is a relevant factor, which women are forced to face in order to keep their routine journeys where they use the public space of the street. Fear amounts to special exclusion as Koskela points out:

In order to understand the problem of women’s spatial exclusion, the concept of space as a social construct is essential. This involves an interpretation of spatiality that differs from the biased interpretations of traditional geographical approaches. First, it acknowledges that spatial problems are not solely questions of mobility or distribution in physical space. Second, it makes it possible to understand that individual use of space is not based on independent free choices but is instead a product of social power relations. (KOSKELA, 1999, p. 2.)

The streets as public spaces constructed discursively by the social power relations reinforce the argument where women are unwanted on the streets if the purpose of them being there is not facing the male attraction. Besides, the decision of women about the ways they will use to move from one place to another—especially at night— are directly linked to the fear they have when it comes to streets whose space is ruled predominantly by men (KOSKELA, 1999).

I find myself in the role of alerting the Bagé city's population with regard to verbal sexual harassment and feminism. I do the feminist movement my tool to get closer to other women, who might not see verbal sexual harassment as an aggressive attitude. I also discuss the subject woman in order to dismember this category, in all its instances. For this reason, I try to understand how society constitutes the subject woman and why it is so limited. I argue in what makes a woman being a woman in a free viewing of prejudices— I believe prejudice exists because of the lack of sensitivity, love and empathy, lack of respect towards the Other. I

do the women's movement a didactic space in order to open the eyes of bajeense society for psychological disorder (which can be a start for a physical aggression) that young women suffer in Bagé when they have to face verbal sexual harassment daily. I comment how the women's identities can be affected by verbal sexual harassment and its consequences. Women, when using street public space, are threatened, violated and diminished by men—I point out to comment on this in a general way with the proposal of people rethink their pre-judgments about verbal sexual harassment and feminism movement. I Want women, firstly, and men understand feminism as a movement of struggle and resistance of women that, in the case of verbal sexual harassment, will assist in the deconstruction of the bajeense culture in which the subject woman can be considered a male object, also a public domain in the case of the streets.

4. METHODOLOGY

This work aims to highlighting the daily verbal harassment young women suffer, which it is often taken as a common happening on the streets of Bagé. I propose the theme for believing that, once putting the issue to the fore, this strategy might draw attention to an everyday social problem that cannot go unnoticed anymore. The work takes place through theoretical research and semi-structured interviews. The theoretical research focuses on finding out how the concepts of feminism, identity, sexual harassment, and public space contribute for our understanding of the problem at sight—verbal sexual harassment on the streets of Bagé. In order to expose how verbal sexual harassment happens and how it affects the lives of young women in Bagé, I choose to interview ten (10) volunteer women ages from 18 to 29 years old. I believe it is the age group that suffers most sexual harassment on the streets because they work and study making them more exposed to the public environment. In addition, I choose this age group in order to highlight the opinions, reflections, and perspectives that people from among my age group suffer on the streets—I am 23 years old.

To select the volunteer women, I asked young women from my social context—women I know from work, university and neighborhood—to participate in the interview, I talked to them in order to explain my research and they agreed in participate and I asked them to sign a consent form (ATTACHMENT A). They are aware of the content of the research that they can withdraw from it at any time and that their identity will be kept anonymous at all times.

The semi-structured interview in which I elaborate a questionnaire with ten (10) questions consists of proposing basic questions related to the topic of the research (ATTACHMENT C). In this questionnaire or inquiry, I propose basic questions about feminism and sexual harassment. The purpose of these questions is precisely to instigate the interviewees to share their experiences and to come up with more hypotheses and reflections on the main theme. This style of interview presents a more promising resourcefulness for the interviewees to naturally share their opinions and struggles since the respondents may find it easier to talk with the interviewer due to reporting a social phenomenon in a more comfortable and understandable manner (MANZINI, 2004).

I propose my questionnaire written in Portuguese (ATTACHMENT C) because the testimonials and examples that those women gave to me could not be translated in a properly

natural way even though some of them also speak English. I believe that they could feel more comfortable speaking in their mother tongue because it is easier to demonstrate and explain the harassments suffered since they would not have to venture in search for specific vocabulary to describe situations or elaborate on their working ideas on feminism or verbal sexual harassment. Besides, the context we are immersed is here in Brazil, more specifically, the city of Bagé.

The interviews took about 30 minutes each. They were recorded in order to maintain the information obtained; however, all of the volunteer women were interviewed anonymously. I analyze and study the testimonies collected so that I can discuss those reports in light of the theoretical research, which includes feminist studies, verbal sexual harassment, identity formation, and streets as public spaces. As my work is written in English, it is important to highlight that I summarized in English all the interviews that were done in Portuguese that I heard from those ten (10) volunteer women. So, I summarized the most important topics they answered for each question. (ATTACHMENT D-M). My intention is not to unveil how the discourse on verbal sexual harassment is being formed, but how their discourse as a whole constructs women's identity in general.

5. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

In this section, I analyze the most important answers I receive from the interviews of the ten (10) volunteer women from Bagé. In the interviews, I discuss about the understanding of feminist movement (HOOKS, 2004) (BUTLER, 1990), sexual harassment (THOMPSON, 1994), how they perceive and how they deal with sexual harassment in their routines (KOSKELA, 1999; RUSH, 2012), how it can affect their identities which are in constant (re)construction (HALL, 1996), and also how feminism can influence the deconstruction of male cultural behavior.

I obtain many definitions about feminism movement in these interviews. Most of the women, eight (7) of them, respond that feminism is a movement in favor of women's rights and struggle to equality of genders. It makes me realize that we are not so in the shadows when thinking about feminism movement, I mean, we are reaching women's consciousness in order to fight for equality. In addition, the contexts of those women who understand what feminism can be lead us to the university context, which appears to have an important influence in the learning process of feminism. Also the family circle that has activist feminist women inspire more family members to reflect and understand the feminist movement. Here I mention Bell Hooks (2004) that related her notable experience with feminism movement through the university place. She reports her favorite female professors who instigated her to study and write about feminism itself in spite of dismantle sexism patterns in the academic space and in her social life.

However, some of the women I interview, three (3) of them, are not sure about what feminism means; I also notice that they are afraid of the "feminism" term as many people are. One of them, the youngest, has never been exposed to feminism and does not know what possible meanings it may have. The other one is the oldest woman; she could explain what feminism is, but she observes that she needs more time to think about this movement in order to form a more coherent opinion. And the last one knows one of the meanings of feminism, but she is immersed in the stereotypes culture constructs that appear in media texts or in the general opinion such as an "idea that activist women in feminist movement are not married to men, do not want to have kids, do not care about appearance, or are lesbians" (ATTACHMENT G). This

last example clearly shows us what this woman is afraid of—she is married, she wants to have children, and she cares about her feminine appearance. I understand the concern of those women who do not want to associate themselves to the feminist movement since they do not have any kind of education about it at school. It is a social problem we still face here in Bagé mostly because of the male culture established in our context of education. What I presume women know about feminism is mainly through the internet or through little actions that feminist activists try to accomplish in the city.

About sexual harassment, I obtained some definitions and interesting reports. All of the women I have interviewed could realize that sexual harassment can also happen when someone approaches you verbally; this approach, based on their answers, is defined by receiving disgusting comments from an unknown person, whistles, flashing—the act of blinking to someone (KOSKELA, 1999). One of the interviewees realizes it when I instigate her to speak about unpleasant words she is used to listen to on the streets. It is important to reflect about the women's lack of consciousness when referring to male approach, but fortunately, the women I have interviewed were quite aware of the existence of verbal sexual harassment, even if they were not aware that it actually has a name—people have been talking and writing about it. On the other hand, it was not a pleasure (but, at the same time, it was very important) to me listening to their experiences of sexual harassment (including all kinds of harassment, not only verbal), because this is a very important topic we have to discuss about. I have heard heavy testimonials—not only about verbal sexual harassment, but also about others kinds of harassment. Those testimonials made me realize the relevance of my work here.

Sexual harassment interferes a lot in women's life, principally in adolescence age, because adolescence is the part of life in which girls are discovering themselves, and constructing their own identities. It is the moment which girls start suffering this harassment, because of the body growth. She reports that she felt like “an animal in the jungle being hunted by lions”, as her body was public and as she did not have the right to discover her body by herself. She reports that all of the violation that she suffered brought her many psychological problems. (ATTACHMENT E)

This testimonial shows us how verbal sexual harassment interferes in girls' adolescence, how it can bring such psychological problems in an extremely important phase of girls' lives in which happens the body's modification, the first love, also the discovery of sexuality.

I listened to women's stories. They were glad to have a space to talk about what they have suffered on the streets, they recognized the interviews as a space to unburden themselves, they felt a relief in talking about something that causes them, most of the time, feelings such as anxiety, sadness, anger, or stress. On the other hand, I was surprised to notice that one of my interviewees (ATTACHMENT L) reported that verbal sexual harassment was not an issue that she could take as a problem to herself. She told me that she has never reflected about it, maybe she would never do if it were not because of my questionnaire.

To complement the topic of sexual harassment, I also discuss about how those women deal with street harassment (THOMPSON, 1994) in their routines. I had three (3) women who reported the problem of not being able to go to work or home without feeling uncomfortable with their bodies, with their clothes. They commented that not even with the presence of their boyfriends they feel comfortable in walking in front of a construction site, for instance.

She said that she suffers verbal harassment every day going to work, but she does not say a word because she is afraid of suffering a physical attack. She told me that she feels terrible walking on the streets to go to work because she has to change the sidewalk in order to not listen to things she does not want, or not being analyzed visually by men. (...) she reported that men who work on the streets are the worst kind. She feels disgusted when it happens, so when she gets home she reflects about it and feels sick again. (ATTACHMENT K)

The routines of these young women are completely affected because of the discomfort generated from the necessity of displacements they have to do daily. The men looking at them, analyzing their bodies cause a repulsion in these young women that are forced to face a totally male dominated space which we seem to wrongly name "public space".

The word public³ does not fit here whereas women have not right to be there based on the sexist culture that we still have to accept. I already discussed about the importance of a public space since its discourse is constantly influencing women's identity formation (WATSON, 2005; HALL, 1996). Thus, I perceive women stop going out alone (or only with female friends), they have to think in strategies to find the best way to go home every day, they need to worry about their outfits before living home because they will for sure influence in the manner that men will look at them on the streets. All of these arguments cited above are such a waste of energy in a person's life that makes women stop doing things in order to not being stressed every day.

Another example of sexual harassment influencing women's identity formation is also presented in the speech of one of my interviewees. She reports that:

(...) she suffered verbal harassment already, but she expected it, since she was used to see her sister suffering it when she was younger. Thus, it interfered a lot in her life because she changed her style; she started to dress in a more masculine way, so she would not suffer what she used to see her sister suffering before. (ATTACHMENT M).

Thus, as an outfit being such an important mark of expression, of identity's representation, the testimonial of the women above shows how verbal sexual harassment might have influenced in the way she presents herself to society.

In my last questions, the purpose was to bring about some solutions for verbal sexual harassment based on feminist movement in order to deconstruct sexist male behavior. Most of the women responded using two keywords: education and punishment.

Education embraced solutions such as investing in feminist projects at school, lectures, campaigns, and support feminist actions. It is a way to strengthen the feminist current and teach young women empowerment. Furthermore, it is important that schools provide this learning space in order to teach respect among people, especially between men and women (including feminist ramifications, which involves homosexuals, transgender, black movement, and

³ Relating to or involving people in general, rather than being limited to a particular group of people. Cambridge dictionary online. Available at: <<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>>. Access on October 23rd, 2015.

others). Below we can see how two of the interviewees justify their opinions about the feminist movement as a solution to deconstruct sexism.

Children still have a salvation and it is through education; she says that feminist groups should interfere at school, giving lectures, making social projects in order to educate boys and girls and specially to make girls realize they are equal to men and they deserve respect. In addition, those school's projects would be interesting to break the prejudice that feminist movement suffers. (ATTACHMENT G)

The interviewed comments that men should be educated to respect women since childhood, and it is parents' responsibility once boys take examples of behavior from their parents. She did not think feminism is able to deconstruct sexual harassment nowadays. Therefore, a possible solution to this men cultural behavior is to educate future generations. (ATTACHMENT D)

Bell Hooks (2004) shows us that “feminism is for everybody”, it is not in vain that her book is called this way. Taking Hooks for our discussion, those women in their testimonials above also believe in education as Bell Hooks does. She justifies her learning process about feminism through education at college. I might have to say that we do not need to wait for kids to enter college to learn that—regarding that not all people who are in college learn about feminism.

Punishment involving money was the most cited kind of solution for verbal sexual harassment. The justification for it was that people only take something seriously when it involves money. Unfortunately, that might be our society, which takes financial capital more seriously than anything else. I must say that I agree with that since old men's behaviors will be such a difficult task for feminist actions to address. It is difficult to make old men realize how verbal sexual harassment is such an offensive attitude for women. The interviewee H reports that “As a possible solution, she talks about men learning how to respect women since childhood because gender is just a difference not an inferiority position. Although, she does not believe in a behavioral change from old men, maybe a punishment involving money would be a solution to them” (ATTACHMENT K). Another interviewee reports that

[...] feminism could try to make men realize that sexual harassment (all kind of sexual harassment not only verbal) is disrespectful, evasive, and it is violence against women. On the other hand, she says that it is difficult to imagine a solution to this problem because men have to change their demeanor about it. It is going to be a long time struggling against it and trying to show people (men specially) that sexual harassment should not be acceptable. (ATTACHMENT J)

These examples show us how women from this research justify their solutions in order to deconstruct such a sexist behavior from old men. In addition, they report their feelings about sexual harassment.

As a solution, she brought two important words: education and information. She says that people need to be aware of sexual harassment so that is why people need information. Moreover, having a law and a punishment involving money, it will make people rethink their actions, because money is on the chart. (ATTACHMENT F)

As we can notice, old men are immersed in their cultural identities, which brings such terrible behavior in relation to women (HALL, 1996). For this reason, law and punishment in order to stop those actions will be an important way to deal with this problem.

As I can point, in this section above I discussed the testimonials from the women I interviewed, which were based on the ten questions I proposed in my methodology (ATTACHMENT C). With their points of view, I have the opportunity to rethink concepts of feminism, verbal sexual harassment and street as public places. To summarize, they point feminism as an important strategy to deal with verbal sexual harassment on the streets if women are able to discuss feminism first. Then, women and men should have the opportunity to understand feminist movement since elementary school. However, I may have to say that talking feminism is difficult since this word scares people sometimes. On the other hand, I will not stop trying to discuss and to show feminism for women, because I believe we need it and we might always do. In this section above, I could perceive that talking feminism with those women were much important for them, and for me as well, because we could realize we are not alone and we are not weak. I notice my research and its analyses of verbal sexual harassment on the streets as a manner to deal with women's oppression and I believe that they felt the same

way. I might give them the opportunity of rethinking their concepts and their attitudes before men and also a chance of understand their own prejudices.

6. CONCLUSION

In my work, I bring important topics such as feminism, verbal sexual harassment, identity construction, women at public spaces, also how to deal with them in order to provide respect and equality to women in this patriarchal society. I build a research collection of answers about those topics above that ten women volunteer; they were young adult women from eighteen (18) to twenty-nine (29) years old. They provide me with such an interesting experience in which I am able to understand and perceive different points of view. They actually help me reflect even more about women's concerns at public spaces—streets. How so?

In addition, I have my struggle for feminist movement recognized because they share my anger and revolt about verbal sexual harassment. Together we can perceive how women are oppressed and attacked every single day of their lives. It is not acceptable that we have to face sexism in every single men's attitude. Besides, I also have the opportunity to encourage those women in favor of our constant struggle for women's rights, I could make them realize that feminism should not have been feared. I do not partake on the belief that research that involves interviews and sharing of stories can be detached from our personal ideologies. So, I declare myself feminist before the participants decide to join the research. This way, I understand that all research that involves interviews can be a modifying part of our lives as we share questions, answers, stories of our daily lives.

“Feminist” a word so full of definitions, stereotypes, and fears. Feminism do not kill people, feminism will not decrease any achievements we got on behalf of women's right so far, and it will not make you a men-hater or a lesbian if you support it or at least recognize it as something benevolent. Why do people still insist in degrading feminist movement instead of supporting it? I still raise this question to women, specially, because sometimes I cannot believe that there are women who are against feminist movement since it fights to keep those women's rights equal to men's. All the discussion in this work was provided in order to analyze how sexual harassment affects the identity of urban women, also the cases of verbal street harassment and the consequences of their impact on women's identity formation. I intend to bring up the issue of verbal sexual harassment as a strategy to draw attention to an everyday social problem that often goes unnoticed. Besides, in my analysis, I obtain the comprehension of the facts involving verbal sexual harassment, and ideas in which the participants of this

research show me how feminism can be an ally to deconstruct the sexist culture of Bagé. With that, I have the opportunity to expand my own thoughts and then extend this knowledge to other women in order to create a space to share and help diminish the damage of sexism in their lives. We have to focus in education since it is through education that we have the power of change, since children are the future of our struggle, they have the power to continue fighting for a better place to live.

Children are humans with little judgment concerns; they are the future of our society and maybe only these future generations will have the power of changing our prehistorical cultural behavior. Furthermore, many kids will suffer prejudice at school if we do not treat what feminist movement covers from the start of our education process. We can provide this space for our children; we can change it if we fight against those attitudes. Furthermore, we still have tools in order to keep showing people that we should not be stagnant in time.

The internet has a strong power of making people realize about verbal sexual harassment and feminism. People who work with public and mainly teachers, they have the power to teach, alert, and speak about it without making it useless. Think about how many children a teacher has contact at school; now think about how many internet users a youtuber (people who makes videos on YouTube web site) makes to watch the videos online.

My work has the importance of dealing with verbal sexual harassment and feminism movement. In my research I did not come accross many studies about verbal sexual harassment in Brazil, but I believe we do not have enough study upon verbal sexual harassment here, and it is an issue that has to be discussed according what I have proved so far. Nevertheless, it seems that we still have to go further with it for having more people aware of verbal sexual harassment as a cultural problem that influences women's lives negatively. I suggest that women (and men) go far for it, that they fight for equality and education because that is the only thing that is in our hands. Education and information will be the most important direction we can go towards. We must not silence, we must not back off from our achievements, but more importantly, we must not settle down while society still are such an oppressive place we have to face.

REFERENCES

BUTLER, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, London: Routledge, 1990.

Cambridge dictionary online. Available at:<<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>>. Access on October 23rd, 2015.

ERLICH. S. & KING. R., 1996. Consensual sex or sexual harassment: negotiating meaning. In: BERGVALL, Victoria., BING, Janet., FREED, Alice. *Rethinking language and gender research: theory and practice*. Addison Wesley Longman, New York, 1996.

GONÇALVES, Cássia Rodrigues. *Transexualidade, cinema e linguagem: dialogando com Kátia*. 2014. 86 f. Dissertação (Programa de Pós-Graduação em Letras) – Universidade católica de pelotas - UCPEL, Pelotas, 2014.

HALL, Stuart. Who Needs 'Identity'? Questions of Cultural Identity. Ed.: Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay London: Sage publication, 1996. p. 1-17.

HOOKS, Bell. *Feminism is for everybody: passionate politics*. Cambridge: South End Press, 2004.

KOSKELA, Hille. Gendered Exclusions: women's fear of violence and changing relations to space. *Geogr. Ann.*, 81 B (2): 111–124. 1999.

MANZINI, E. J. Entrevista semi-estruturada: análise de objetivos e roteiros. In: *Seminário Internacional Sobre Pesquisa e estudos qualitativos*, Bauru, v 2, p. 10. 2004.

RUSH, Liz M. An Autoethnography of Fuencarral 43: Women in Masculine Public Space. *The JUE: The Journal for Undergraduate Ethnography*. v.2, n.1, p. iv, 2012.

SPIVAK, Gayatri. *Can the subaltern speak? Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory: A Reader*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1994.

THOMPSON, M. Deborah. "The woman in the street": Reclaiming the Public Space from Sexual Harassment. *Yale Journal of Law and Feminism*, 1994.

WATSON, Sophie. "Bodies, gender, cities". *City: Analysis of Urban Trends, Culture, Theory, Policy, Action*, 4, n° 1, 2005.

WORELL, Judith. *Encyclopedia of Women and Gender: Sex Similarities and Differences and the Impact of Society on Gender*. Academic Press, 2001.

ATTACHMENT A**Declaração de participação em pesquisa acadêmica**

Eu _____, portador do RG _____ e CPF _____ residindo na cidade de Bagé, concordo em participar do trabalho de conclusão de curso da acadêmica ANGÉLICA FLORES VENTURINI com o intuito de responder dez (10) questões sobre Assédio Sexual Verbal nas Ruas da Cidade de Bagé. Aceito ter minhas respostas gravadas e apontadas por escrito para a elaboração do trabalho. Reconheço que minha identidade será preservada e que ainda terei direito de ler o trabalho e as minhas respostas sempre que for necessário.

Assinatura do participante

Assinatura do responsável pela pesquisa

Bagé, __ de _____ de 2015.

ATTACHMENT B

Interview

1. What do you understand about feminism? Exemplify a situation if you do not know how to define it in a concept.
- 2- What do you understand about sexual harassment? Exemplify a situation if you do not know how to define it in a concept.
- 3- Have you ever suffered any kind of harassment? Exemplify.
- 4- How do you feel when walking in the city's streets to go to work / school / college during the day? What about at night?
- 5- Does the male verbal approach bother you? Why?
- 6- What do you think about this kind of masculine attitude directed at women?
- 7- How do you think feminism could influence in the deconstruction of this male behavior?
8. How does this kind of situation interfere in women's lives?
- 9- How do you deal with this issue around men from your acquaintanceship?
- 10- What would be a possible solution to this problem?

ATTACHMENT C

Entrevista

- 1- O que você entende sobre feminismo? Exemplifique uma situação caso não saiba definir em um conceito.
- 2- O que você entende por assédio sexual? Exemplifique uma situação caso não saiba definir em um conceito.
- 3- Você já sofreu algum tipo de assédio? Exemplifique.
- 4- Como você se sente ao caminhar nas ruas da cidade para se deslocar ao trabalho/escola/universidade durante o dia? E durante a noite?
- 5- A abordagem verbal masculina incomoda você? Por quê?
- 6- O que você pensa sobre esse tipo de atitude masculina direcionada ao público feminino?
- 7- Como você acha que o feminismo poderia influenciar na desconstrução desse hábito masculino?
- 8- Como esse tipo de situação interfere na vida das mulheres?
- 9- Como você lida com esse assunto perante homens de sua convivência?
- 10- Qual seria uma possível solução para esse problema?

ATTACHMENT D – Interviewed 1: A., 25 years old. Works. Lives in Bagé for 8 years.

A. considers herself feminist; she could point the main ideas which feminist movement claims to: Pro-women, Equal rights, freedom of choice. However she did not recognize feminist movement as a social, political movement, and she understands feminism as a way of being, acting and behaving.

Sexual harassment is the situation which people approach someone else without any consent. It could be verbal or physical, whether being a man or a woman. In addition, the fact that she has to walk alone on the streets (when she is on foot) makes her feeling insecure because of the criminality. When I pushed her, she complemented the idea confirming that men used to make disgusted comments about women on the streets and she thinks it is a matter of education. At night, she does not walk alone on the streets for the same reason.

She bothers with disgusted comments made by men on the streets, she feels embarrassed and she thinks it is wrong. However, she says that there is acceptable approach such as calling someone beautiful or gorgeous. Moreover, she points that it is acceptable this kind of discourse in suitable places such as parties or dancing clubs, because women and men are aware of its happening in those places.

Once she points that disgusting approaches (which includes, calling women hot or delicious) are disrespectful and offensive, she says that those discourses interfere in women's life causing low self-esteem.

The interviewed comments that men should be educated to respect women since childhood, and it is parents' responsibility once boys take examples of behavior from their parents. She did not think feminism is able to deconstruct sexual harassment nowadays. Therefore, a possible solution to this men cultural behavior is to educate future generations.

ATTACHMENT E – Interviewed 2: P., 23 years old, works, was born in Bagé.

The second interviewed is a feminist woman which believes that feminism theory is mainly engaged in gender equality in all spheres.

She discuss that sexual harassment is a very large concept to describe in just one point of view, since this term encompasses physical, verbal and virtual harassment. She adds that sexual harassment is cultural and men sometimes do this unconsciously, because their fathers used to do that and they were educated in the same way. Fathers induced sons to repeat such behavior.

Sexual harassment interferes a lot in women's life, principally in adolescence age, because adolescence is the part of life where girls are discovering themselves, and constructing their own identities. It is the moment which girls start suffering this harassment, because of the body growth. She reports that she felt like "an animal in the jungle being hunted by lions", as her body were public and as she did not have the right to discover her body by herself. She reports that all of the violation that she suffered brought her many psychological problems.

She reports that she just feels safe on the streets when she is in her car, but when she walks alone she feels insecure, she said that she feels like "trash", violated. At night, it is the same thing, and for her, sexual harassment happens in the same frequency. The male approach makes her feeling violated even if it was an accomplishment. However, she believes that feminism has the power to deconstruct this sexism culture since it exposes what is wrong to society, and how wrong it is. She always talks to men about sexist attitudes and she tries to bring this issue in order to make men deconstruct their own patterns.

As a solution, she comments about the union of feminist groups, since feminist groups are too subdivided. She says that being in a big group we can fight harder against sexual harassment, even if we cannot see the end of this sexism cultural behavior too soon.

ATTACHMENT F – Interviewed 3: M., 22 years old, Studies, lives in Bagé for a few years.

M. says that feminism is a search for women's rights, is a search for respect. In addition, it is not the opposite of sexism as many people think.

For her, sexual harassment is everything that comes to you in a disrespectful way. For example, if you are walking down the street and some man calls you "hot". She thinks it has to have a punishment. Even though many people did not see verbal street harassment as a sexual harassment. She stops doing some things because of it, she feels insecure and she gets angry when someone approaches her on the street. On the other hand, she did not silent when some similar situation happens around her; she takes side and confronts whoever is having a sexist attitude. She approaches men when it happens and does not matter if they are from family or not. However, she discusses that it is easier to talk to young men than to old men, because some older men are not able to deconstruct their old patterns and it becomes an endless discussion.

She suffers harassment all the time on the streets. It makes her uncomfortable because it is disrespectful and disgusting. She believes that it happens because it is cultural. She reports that it is terrible to walk alone without any man by her side. She feels intimidated by other men, she did not like to walk alone, but she says that it is preferable to walk during the day than at night. She did not go out alone at night by herself.

M. believes that feminism movement can show society what happens to us women, and how sexual harassment happens. She also says that something is changing and maybe women are raising her conscious because of feminism. Some women still do not see how sexism decreases their lives. Feminism movement is helping women to deconstruct their own "sexism patterns". As a circle, empowered women will be empowered mothers and wives who will be the model to their children.

As a solution, she brought two important words: education and information. She says that people need to be aware of sexual harassment so that is why people need information. Moreover, having a law and a punishment involving money, it will make people rethink their actions, because money is on chart.

ATTACHMENT G – Interviewed 4: V., 27 years old, works, was born in Bagé

In V. words, feminism is about fighting for women's rights; it breaks the society's sexism taboos. However, she still has doubts about feminist movement, and I can noticed that she is immersed in the idea that activist women in feminist movement are not married with men, or do not want to have kids, or do not care about appearance, are lesbians. The feminist woman stereotypes are clear in her speech.

About sexual harassment, she believes it comes from men and women; she says it is an aggression without the person's consent. Nevertheless, this aggression could be physical and verbal. In the case of verbal approach, she says that men have no right to judge women's body, as she reported situations that have happened to her on the streets: Men calling her to say malicious things or making her uncomfortable with looking her body in a dirty way. She reported that men do not know the meaning of "no". Men think they have rights about women's body, they act like they can point what women are supposed to do or what women are supposed to be, based on women's clothes, attitudes and so on. Because of that, she does not like to walk alone on the streets, and even Bagé being a small city the security is terrible. She used to walk with her friends on the street at night when she was younger, but nowadays it is not possible for neither men nor women. However, for women is worse once we are easier targets.

She also talks about women's sexuality and the taboos around this issue. For her, all men and women have the right to be free in their sexuality, being responsible and taking care of their healthy. There is nothing wrong on being comfortable and liberal with our sexual life. No one has the right to accuse you of doing something wrong since the word "wrong" do not fit in your concepts.

She reports that society is moving toward insecurity, and women are being oppressed because of it. In addition, this sexist attitude is cultural, since men were not taught to valorize women in their childhood. She gets angry about it; she exposes her opinion, but without being cruel and respecting different opinions. However, she do not think she can interferences in men's thoughts once they were raised in a sexist way. She thinks everyone need to be taught how to respect each other despite of race, gender or class.

As a possible solution, she believes in punishment to men once it is difficult to achieve the mind of men who already have those thoughts about women. However, children still have a salvation and it is through education; she says that feminist groups should interfere at school, giving lectures, making social projects in order to educate boys and girls and specially to make girls realize they are equal to men and they deserve respect. In addition, those school's projects would be interesting to break the prejudice that feminist movement suffers.

ATTACHMENT H – Interviewed 5: K., 19 years old, works, was born in Bagé

This young woman I interviewed confesses she did not know anything about feminist movement so she could not answer me the questions related to that. However, she reported her opinion about sexual harassment, which she conceptualizes through examples: She suffered sexual harassment on the streets; she says men used to say disgusted things to her. In addition, it is even worse when she goes to parties and clubs, because men seem to consider themselves owners of the place, it means, they own the women in those places, they feel the right to say whatever they want to women, they did not care about saying unwelcomed things.

She feels okay about walking on the streets in the middle of the day even that she had already suffered some approaches by men. She explains that in the daylight, it is common to have more people on the streets, and then it makes her to feel safe. When I asked if she felt secure walking on the streets at night she reported that she does, but if there is a men walking behind her she gets afraid. She discusses that it might be “something from women”, because we are used to be afraid all the time.

She comments that verbal approach is invasive and terrible to women. She says that men think they can say whatever they want to women and it is disrespectful. She also said that it interferes in a psychological way in her life and women’s life. She felt decreased.

When I asked her if she treats this issue with men at the same way she does with women she agreed and replayed that it is because she do not get around people who disagree in this point with her. Although, it is difficult to think in a solution, maybe through conversation and exposing the issue to people.

ATTACHMENT I – Interviewed 6: Ad., 24 years old, works, was born in Bagé

For Ad., feminism is a movement to fight in order to women to have the same rights as men. However, women are too radical sometimes and she did not agree with that. Although, she thinks it was an important movement that brought us many achievements.

About sexual harassment, she comments that there are many kinds of sexual harassment and they are moral, oral and physical, also it happens and it is comes from all kinds of people, does not matter if they are men, women, old people and so on. However, it is more common to see men approaching women. She said that she already suffered it in a local work; she has never mentioned it because no one had asked until now. She reported that she reported that her ex-boss used to give rewards or better offers positions in exchange for sexual favors. He used to call her and other coworker to fake meetings and propose disgusted this to them. He also called to her section at work to ask if she had decided. She felt terrible, because he was her boss and she had to handle with that every day, she had no way out.

When I asked her about walking alone on the streets she reported that sexual harassment happens all the time, but especially when there are men working in some construction. She is used to put on her headphones and pretend that they are not talking to her; she puts her head down and go home because there is not one men who does not say a thing to her. They say: “Hi, do you want to come for a walk? Do you want to get to know the work?”. And, at night she reported that it is easier to walk down the streets, because she is always with her friends and that makes her safer than in the middle of the day when she have to walk and sometimes has not a planned route.

She reported about her feelings when men approached her, she did not like it and she calls it invasive since she does not give anyone to approach her in this way. She reported that the voice tone is also something that makes her be careful when unknown men talk to her.

She says that sexual harassment is a sexist attitude that makes women feeling uncomfortable and objectified. Men do not have the right to interferes in women’s life and the feminist movement is being an important tool for women’s struggle. She believes that women are not shutting their mouths anymore and that is making men to notice that we are fighting against sexists’ attitudes. Even though not all women have voice to complain, many of them are moving towards it. She says that she does not be quite in situations like those she mentioned,

but she still has fear that something happens to her, something physically and she could not defend herself. It interferes in her life in a way that she cannot trust easily in any one, she got afraid of working with men for example.

Talking about her male friends, she reported that she treats the issue of sexual harassment in the same way she would talk to a female friend. She also complains when her male friends say something disrespectful to another women or when they have sexist attitudes. She do not change her mind and she retaliates by sexist opinions wherever it is possible. On the other hand, Ad. reports that she makes her friends reflect about their actions when she replies them and it is a gain to us, feminists.

In her opinion, a possible solution to sexual harassment would be the women's struggle, it means that every time a woman replies and stands up for her rights, it is an achievement to feminist movement. Therefore, those women who do not be silent will encourage more women to do the same and put sexual harassment up until everyone realizes it is a serious problem in our society.

ATTACHMENT J – Interviewed 7: C., 24 years old, works, was born in Bagé.

This young woman reported that feminism is constantly struggle that women try to fight every day in order to have the same rights as men do.

Sexual harassment is any kind of behavior that is not permitted, not allowed by a person who suffers it. She reported that she suffers verbal sexual harassment especially when she goes to work. She also reported a sexual harassment from when she was a child: A man approached her and pressed her against a wall and touched her. She got traumatized because of it, so she had never gone to school alone again. She still do not walk alone on the streets, if she need to go out at night she takes a cab and she still be afraid of the taxi driver. She complains that sexual harassment is an absurd and the fact that she has to listen to dirty jokes (even using a uniform) while going to work. She pointed that does not matter the social class or age of those men, they all do the same disrespectful things. When she tries to argue with men about verbal harassment, she noticed that men always try to justify their actions and to blame women for it. Although, she never changes her opinion about it and never silent herself. I asked her if sexual harassment interferes in her life or women's life, she said that it interferes because she stopped doing things she used to do such as walking alone; she have to think about her outfit, she does not go in certain places because she is afraid that something can happens to her or some man approached her.

She said that feminism could try to make men realize that sexual harassment (all kind of sexual harassment not only verbal) is disrespectful, evasive and it is violence against women. On the other hand, she says that it is difficult to imagine a solution to this problem because men have to change their posture about it. It is going to be a long time struggling against it and trying to show people (men specially) that sexual harassment should not be acceptable.

ATTACHMENT K – Interviewed 8: I., 25 years old, works, was born in Bagé.

According to her, feminism is a struggle against sexism, against sexist attitudes from men and sexual harassment is any kind of approach without consent. She points that there are many forms of sexual harassment and it does not need to be physical. In case of verbal harassment, it can be a malicious look, a dirty joke, a whistle. She said that she suffers verbal harassment every day going to work, but she does not say a word because she is afraid of suffering a physical attack. She told me that she feels terrible walking on the streets to go to work because she has to change the sidewalk in order to not listen to things she does not want, or not being analyzed visually by men. At night, she says that is easier to walk on the streets because there is not a lot of men working, she reported that men who works on the streets are the worst kind. She feels disgusted when it happens, so when she gets home she reflects about it and feels sick again.

Nevertheless, she reported that feminism could help stopping sexual harassment, because men are realizing that women are not in an inertial state anymore, they are having voice. However, she said that controverting is dangerous once men can attack you physically – if they think they have the right to analyze you, they will also think they can hit you.

She always talks about sexual harassment with men of her social context and she keeps the same opinion, also they agree with her about sexual harassment being wrong and disrespectful. She believes that sexual harassment is a cultural problem and she thinks that it does not happen in other places of the world as it happens here.

As a possible solution, she talks about men learning how to respect women since childhood because gender is just a difference not an inferiority position. Although, she does not believe in a behavioral change from old men, maybe a punishment involving money would be a solution to them.

ATTACHMENT L – Interviewed 9: G., 29 years old, works, was born in Bagé.

She thinks that feminism is a movement that defends the subject women. However, she could not explain to me more than that. She said that she never stop to think about it. About sexual harassment, she comments that it is when someone is forced to do something that does not want; it could be also an aggression by words and not necessarily a physical aggression. In a first moment, she told me that she had never suffered sexual harassment, but I pushed her and she realized that men already have made malicious jokes on the street to her. She reported that when she worked with many men and she was the only women, she used to listen to things that she did not like, but she never felt offended because she did not care about it. She have been always pretending that she did not listen to them; she ignores those attitudes although she thinks it is disrespectful and stupid. She feels safe walking down the streets, but at night, she feels insecure to walk so she moves by car.

I asked her about how it affects women's life, she said that women get reclusive, get closed in relation to other people, they stop doing things, and they get afraid of trusting to someone. She said that there are many men that she knows who practice verbal harassment, but she never be quite about it, she always complains and says that it is disrespectful to women, so they stop doing it, at least in front of her. She believes that those attitudes makes women to lose a space that is ours too, and because of that oppression, women stop being visible in determined contexts.

To finish, she reported me that she is not involved in feminist movement, but she sees that has a lot of campaigns in favor of feminist movement. However, she has never reflected about sexual harassment so she cannot think in a solution to this problem, but she said that this interview made her reflecting about the feminist movement and men's attitudes.

ATTCHMENT M – Interviewed 10: S., 25 years old, studies, lives in Bagé for a few years.

In S. words, feminism is a search for equality of sex, since that there is not justice in the human evolution so male subjects still think they are superior to women.

She defines sexual harassment as all kind of approach that is not permitted, she also points that it is easier to identify physical sexual harassment because it is more visible, but a malicious-looking or a whistle can be sexual harassment too. She reported that she suffered verbal harassment already, but she expected it, since she was used to see her sister suffering it when she was younger. Thus, it interfered a lot in her life because she changed her style; she started to dress in a more masculine way, so she would not suffer what she used to see her sister suffering before. Although, she does not bother in walking on the streets alone, she also prefers to do it at night when there is no one around; it is safer than when there are people on the streets.

In her opinion, sexual harassment is unpleasant since “your trying to live your day and there is someone sexualizing you” and she does not want that, she thinks sexualization has to be reserved to moments when it has reciprocity. She also thinks it is degrading for both sides because it is just ugly to who does and it is bad for those who receive it. She reported that she keeps the same opinion about sexual harassment in front of men she knows. However, she does not see them acting like that, and if they do it in front of her, she might argue or just ignore it.

About feminism achievement in this issue, she says that feminist movement are helping to stop it because women, especially, are getting more aware of sexist attitudes, also people are realizing that sexual harassment is such a “prehistorical behavior”. To complement her speech, she thinks that to stop accepting sexual harassment, and to point it up are manners to make people be aware of it as a problem. A constantly work of consciousness by women to women and to men at school could be another way of putting sexual harassment as a degrading attitude that must end

