PSICOLOGIA

"In My Time…": A Generational Difference in the Relation between Gender Roles and Well-Being

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Abstract: This article analyzes the beliefs and behaviors regarding gender roles of eight Portuguese youngsters and seven seniors. Our aim is to understand how individuals from different generations and sexes perceive gender roles and well-being, and how they manifest themselves. After semi-structured individual interviews, we used thematic analysis method, applying N-Vivo 12 software. Findings emphasize that, despite an expressed *gender equality ideal*, women tend to feel *overloaded at home in trying to balance work and family* tasks. Men seem to have *greater domestic and labor power* than women. Women express greater well-being when *domestic duties are shared* and when they perceive they are *receiving support*. Men simultaneously associate the experiences of *sharing domestic duties* and *contributing less* with well-being. *Hardships of work-family balance* were identified by diverse participants, from different sexes and ages, as a sign of lack of well-being.

Keywords: Gender roles; Well-being; Intergenerational; Generation transmission.

All languages have expressions such as "do not trust a crying man or a laughing woman" or "women in state affairs are like monkeys in glass-shops" that refer to the social dimension of roles associated with individuals according to what is expected of their gender.

The present article focuses on gender roles and their relation with well-being in individuals from different generations. More specifically, it intends to answer the following questions: (1) what is the relation between gender roles and well-being? and (2) what is the generational difference in the relation between gender roles and well-being?

Our aim is to describe the relation between gender roles and well-being in individuals from different generations. The specific purposes are to: (a) analyze beliefs and behaviors regarding gender roles in two different generations; (b) study how gender roles are expressed in the systems where the individuals are inserted according to Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model (see Bronfenbrenner, 1977); (c) understand how individuals from different generations perceive gender roles and well-being; and (d) understand how individuals from different sexes perceive gender roles and well-being.

The literature in this area, based mostly on quantitative methodologies, has revealed the existence of a relation between gender roles and well-being. In this study, we use qualitative methodology, in order to explore more deeply the participants' meanings, expressions and perceptions of these concepts. At the same time, we adopted Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model as a theoretical basis, particularly when it concerned ideologies, beliefs and values that belong to macrosystems, which we used to aid the construction of the interview guide, looking to bring differentiated and original contributions to the theory, as suggested by Kulik (2004). This model focuses on the impact of the various systems in which the individual is inserted, such as a microsystem (interpersonal relationships and direct interactions), a mesosystem (interactions between various microsystems), an exosystem (systems that do not directly affect the individual), a macrosystem (social and cultural values) and a chronosystem (changes that occur in the environment over time) (see Bronfenbrenner, 1977).

The structure of this article includes a theoretical framework focused on gender roles, followed by a description of the methodology used to achieve the proposed goals. Furthermore, it includes the presentation of the results obtained and discussion of the main ones in conjunction with the existing literature. Our conclusion presents a critical assessment of the present study, suggestions for future research and a reflection about the potential implications of this study.

Theoretical framework

Chrisler (2004) presents the difference between sex and gender. Sex refers to the classification according to biological characteristics related to reproductive capacity. Gender refers to the classification according

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to psychological and behavioral characteristics, social activities and cultural expectations which may or may not reflect biological sex (Chrisler, 2004). As shown by Luhaorg and Zivian (1995), both men and women can identify predominantly with male or female traits and roles, or identify simultaneously with both or neither.

When presented with a more traditional ideology distinguishing male and female gender roles, women are expected to be primarily responsible for the home and child care and for maintaining relationships (van de Vijver, 2007). Women are seen as more sensitive and fragile beings, who must work within the family, in the private sphere, and assume the emotional support of the family system (Pimenta, 2011). On the other hand, men are expected to be primarily responsible for tasks such as gardening and maintenance and improvement at home, as well as the financial support of the family, assumxxxxing a public role in the community (Pimenta, 2011; van de Vijver, 2007).

When we have a more egalitarian ideology, women are not only associated with the family, but also unbalanced power relations are contested and it is considered that domestic work must be divided between men and women (Piña & Bengtson, 1993). Several studies associate more egalitarian beliefs with younger individuals (Kulik, 2004; Poeschl, 2000; Sweeting et al., 2014; van de Vijver, 2007), with a higher educational level (Kulik, 2004; Sweeting et al., 2014; van de Vijver, 2007) and with lower levels of religiosity (Kulik, 2004). Equal beliefs are also associated with females, in particular single women (Poeschl, 2000), with higher incomes, full-time jobs and economic independence (Kulik, 2004). This is also the case with males, more specifically, men with careers traditionally less associated with male roles, for example basic education teachers (Dodson & Borders, 2006). In the egalitarian ideology, differences may arise in terms of the desired equality or equity. In equality, fairness exists when everyone receives the same treatment or rewards; while in equity, justice is found when each person receives rewards equal to or comparable to their contributions (Abdullah et al., 2016; Braun et al., 2008).

However, an individual's beliefs (cognitions – the way individuals think and their ideals regarding gender roles) and behaviors (actions – practices and habits of individuals related to gender roles) towards gender roles do not always coincide. For example, Poeschl and Silva (2014) found that some individuals who belong to a population recognized as progressive, despite their more egalitarian beliefs, showed traditional family practices.

Gender and gender roles, having a relational character, are systemically present in interactions between individuals, while also being culturally and socially constructed, reflecting the system in which they express themselves, as shown by the various systems of Bronfenbrenner's theory (Woodhill & Samuels, 2003). The family system transmits and maintains the differentiation between men and women and the beliefs associated with gender roles. Even though individuals consider themselves different from the previous generation, these differences are not as considerable as they may think (Bem, 1981; Pimenta, 2011; Poeschl, 2000). Therefore, exposure to these cultural schemes and gender stereotypes contributes to their internalization and to self-fulfilling prophecies through which gender roles are maintained (Bem, 1981; White & Gardner, 2009). In addition to family transmission, beliefs about gender roles can be transmitted throughout life, through the adaptation of an individual to the culture of a particular group, a process known as acculturation. Acculturation promotes, for example, that small cultural groups with more traditional beliefs about gender roles adapt their opinions in order to adjust to a larger group with less traditional beliefs (van de Vijver, 2007).

The literature presents incongruences regarding the relation between gender roles and well-being. On one hand, studies report that not ascribing oneself a gender role contributes to a reduction in one's biopsychosocial well-being in both women and men (van de Vijver, 2007). On the other hand, several studies report contradictory but statistically relevant relations. For example, the manifestation of male gender roles is shown to promote well-being in men, (Wolfram et al., 2008; Woodhill & Samuels, 2003). Androgyny also promotes greater well-being and psychological health in both women and men (Wolfram et al., 2008; Woodhill & Samuels, 2003) and, lastly, inconsistency between society's expectations and attitudes regarding gender roles; in other words, being in conflict with the gender roles ascribed to oneself, can reduce well-being in women (Piña & Bengtson, 1993).

Biopsychosocial well-being involves several dimensions. In the study developed by O'Heron and Orlofsky (1990), it was observed that the manifestation of the male gender role functioned as a protective factor for a better personal and social psychological adjustment in the male and female groups. Despite this, as Bem (1981) stated, androgynous men could be more effective in adapting socially, due to their more flexible and varied characteristics and capacities. In fact, androgyny has been revealed to be related to less depression and anxiety (O'Heron & Orlofsky, 1990).

In this study, considering the literature, well-being is understood as quality of life and health at the physical, psychological and social levels: biopsychosocial well-being.

METHOD
The study that led to the development of this article adopted a qualitative methodology. The Ethics and Deontology Committee of the Faculty of Psychology of the University of Lisbon approved its realization.

Participants
A sample was selected from young individuals, between 18 and 25 years of age, and seniors, between 65 and 90 years of age.

Recruitment of participants was done on a voluntary basis, on a convenience sample, through educational institutions. The sample of youngsters was recruited through the Faculty of Psychology of the University of Lisbon and the sample of seniors was recruited through several universities and senior academies in the Lisbon municipality.

The sample consists of 15 participants: 8 youngsters (3 males and 5 females), age ranging between 18-23 years and an average of 19.5 years, and 7 seniors (1 male and 6 females), age ranging between 74-89 years and an average of 81.9 years. The sample includes only one senior man due to resistance from participants with these characteristics to participate in the present study.

All the younger participants were taking a psychology degree, one of them being in the 3rd year and the others in the 1st year of the same course. In terms of marital status, only one was in a dating relationship, the rest being single. Regarding the household, one lived with his father, another two lived with their uncles, one lived with housemates, another one with his siblings and the remaining three lived with their parents and siblings. In the case of senior participants, two had university courses, three had completed the 3rd cycle, one had completed the 1st cycle and one hadn't attended school. In terms of marital status, four were widowed, two were married and one was single. One lived in a nursing home, two with their spouses and four lived alone.

Instruments
We used individual semi-structured interviews to collect data. This instrument was chosen because it makes it possible to relate values, attitudes and opinions, with a degree of depth and flexibility, enabling the acquisition of rich and complex testimonies (Boni & Quaresma, 2005; Duarte, 2004; Quivy & Van Campenhoudt, 2005).

The literature presented and Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model (see Bronfenbrenner, 1977) were used to build the interview guide. More specifically, the guide was intended to focus not only on one's reality and identity, but also on the surrounding systems, such as family, work, family-work balance, the surrounding community and society's belief and practice systems. The topics covered in the interview guide were perceptions of gender roles; division of domestic tasks and how participants perceived them to be divided; divisions of power; perceptions of work-family articulation; the perception of equality and justice, and the characterization of well-being and dimensions related to it.

Through our questions, we sought to understand what the participants' own behaviors were, what they believed they should do and what other people do and should do (e.g., "What roles are/were more typically assumed by women and men in your house?"). In order to capture the different systems of fenbrenner's bioecological model, avoiding the tendency to stay only with the couple relationship, questions such as "Think of a community that you are a part of and that is meaningful to you. How is the division of power, between men and women, in this community?" or "In your work experience (or at your university/institution), are there differences in the way men and women are involved?" In issues related to well-being, we sought not only to know the perception of well-being, but also to make the relation with gender roles (e.g., "Given the roles assigned to men and women, how do you feel that it affects your well-being?").

Procedures
Before each interview, the purposes of the study were introduced, and participants gave their informed consent. Authorization for audio recording of the interviews was also requested, guaranteeing anonymity and confidentiality of the participants' data as well as the destruction of the recordings of the interviews after the end of the present study.

All interviews were recorded on audio and then transcribed, in order to facilitate data analysis. The chosen method of analysis was thematic analysis, developed using the N-Vivo 12 software. This method consists of identifying, analyzing and describing patterns or themes in the data, allowing an organization and subsequent interpretation of the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis process followed the steps proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006): (1) transcription and familiarization with the data; (2) systematic production of initial codes; (3) grouping the codes into themes; (4) review of the themes; (5) definition and description of the themes; and (6) highlight of illustrative excerpts of each theme, in order

to relate them to the existing literature and to extract interpretations. Thus, the final analysis of the interviews consisted of giving meaning to the set of standards or themes, having as reference the purposes of the study, the theoretical assumptions presented in the literature and the context in which the data were collected (Duarte, 2004).

In the analysis, the data were coded considering five major categories created from the initial purposes of the study: (1) *well-being dimensions* (this category was, subsequently, divided into sub-categories: *contributors* [conditions that provide well-being/lack of well-being] and *indicators* [signs that show well-being/lack of well-being]); (2) *gender role dimensions*, alluding to the various gender roles that an individual can assume, that they see others assume and how they perceive them (e.g., fair/unfair); (3) *gender role manifestation*, referring to beliefs or behaviors related to gender roles (following the definitions presented in the theoretical framework: way of thinking and ideals were codified as beliefs, and practices and habits were codified as behaviors); (4) *gender*, when the participants referred to the roles associated with men and/or the roles associated with women; and (5) *systems*, indicating the system in which gender roles or well-being were manifested and the system that influenced the adoption or expression of certain gender roles, specifically, microsystems like community, conjugality, family, parental relationship, relationship with others, and themselves. In the *well-being dimensions*, *gender role dimensions* and *systems* categories themes were identified, built from what emerged in the interviews and the number of references were taken into account. In some themes, it was necessary later to identify subthemes, following the same construction criteria. It was previously decided that two categories would be binary: *gender role manifestation* (beliefs/ideals and behaviors) and *gender* (male and female roles).

To respond to the purposes of knowing beliefs and behaviors regarding gender roles, the expression of gender roles in different systems [2] and the well-being perception, the themes and subthemes are presented. Therefore, to understand sex and generational differences in gender role perception and the relation between gender roles and well-being, crossings between themes and subthemes are presented. It was possible to obtain the crossings because there were excerpts from the interviews coded into different themes and categories, namely, the *gender role dimensions* and *gender* (male and female roles), and *gender role manifestation* (beliefs/ideals and behaviors), and *gender role dimensions* and the *well-being and lack of well-being dimensions*, in each group of participants. Afterwards, the qualitative cross-table analysis tool of the NVivo-12 was used to access these crossings.

As the sample of senior men consisted of only one participant, the data collected in this interview was included and presented in the group of seniors and in the group of men. The sample of senior men alone was not taken into account.

RESULTS

The results presented below include the most expressive themes and subthemes identified in the analysis, relating to the major categories described, in alphabetical order, which can be consulted in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

To indicate the number of participants of a certain theme or subtheme, "N" will be used (e.g., N = 13). To indicate the number of references found in the analysis, "Nref." (e.g., Nref. = 10) will be used. The citations of the participants will be identified through the code: (1) a number referring to the order of the interviews conducted; (2) sex (Man – M – or Woman – W); (3) generation (Senior – s – or Young – y); and (4) a number referring to the age of the participant. For example, the code "5My22" indicates a quote from the fifth participant interviewed, who is male, young and 22 years old.

For the purposes of analysis in this study, "work" will be considered as work activity at an active age (in the senior generation) or student activity at university (in the young generation).

Identified themes and subthemes

Tables 1, 2 and 3 identify the most expressive themes and subthemes that appeared in the data of this study, in order to facilitate the reading that follows. Data are presented in alphabetical order. These tables focus on the gender role dimensions category and well-being dimensions subcategories (with contributors and indicators included).

Table 1 presents the most expressive themes and subthemes associated with the gender role dimensions category.

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[2] The *systems* category is not presented because it is transversal to the other categories and a reflection of them.

Table 1. Gender role dimensions.

Themes and subthemes			Number of references				
Gender role dimensions			**N**	**Ref.M**	**Ref.W**	**Ref.Y**	**Ref.S**
Equality/Inequality perception	Equality		15	41	73	82	32
	Inequality		13	16	43	40	19
Freedom of choice/expression			5	0	36	36	0
Generational transmission			10	18	36	51	3
Housekeeping	Division of domestic tasks	Dialogue to divide tasks	10	7	18	14	11
		External person doing the tasks	4	0	4	1	5
		Not taking on domestic tasks	9	2	36	21	2
		Not having the skills to do the tasks	3	0	3	1	3
		Taking on domestic tasks	15	55	170	138	87
	Division of power	Be submissive/ inferior	5	1	13	14	0
		Be superior	6	1	15	16	0
		Dialogue for consensus in decisions	10	3	15	13	5
		Who has the power	14	17	39	33	23
		Who makes the decisions	10	7	19	14	12
	Financial contribution and management		14	17	17	9	25
Identity	Be a worker		7	1	9	3	7
	Be correct		5	2	10	8	4
	Be respectful		13	10	20	18	12
	Caring for the image		6	4	10	12	2
	Following the laws		7	6	5	8	3
	Have greater sensitivity		6	0	10	6	4
Justice/Injustice perception	Injustice		6	2	9	8	3
	Justice		14	6	18	14	10
Relationship with the community	Importance of the social network		11	15	29	27	17
	Prejudices		8	17	11	20	8
	Work	Labor relations	10		13	13	6
		Opportunities	3	1	7	2	6
		Taking leadership positions	5	1	9	6	4
		Vocational orientation	5	2	12	11	3
		Work-family articulation	14	26	60	50	36
Relationship with the other	Cares/support provision	Taking care for someone sick	6	0	15	0	15
		Taking care of the children	15	26	56	47	35
	Educate/ discipline the children		12	14	27	20	21
	Perception of received support		10	5	57	24	38

Note: The *gender role dimensions* are ordered alphabetically. "*N*" represents the total number of participants who mentioned this theme; "Ref.M" represents the number of references to this theme by men; "Ref.W" represents the number of references to this theme by women; "Ref.Y" represents the number of references to this theme by young people; "Ref.S" represents the number of references to this theme by seniors.

As shown in Table 1, regarding *gender role dimensions*, eight themes were identified: (1) *equality/inequality perception* (*N* = 15), (2) *freedom of choice/expression* (*N* = 5), (3) *generational transmission* (*N* = 10), (4) *housekeeping* (*N* = 15), (5) *identity* (*N* = 15), (6) *justice/injustice perception* (*N* = 15), (7) *relationship with the community* (*N* = 15) and (8) *relationship with the other* (*N* = 15).

The *equality/inequality perception* theme, related to the division of domestic tasks, division of power, child care and employment status, is divided into: *equality perception* (*N* = 15) – "But, for example, in the treatment of children, I am already seeing more equality between men and women..." [1Ws74] and *inequality perception* (*N* = 13) – "(...) access to high positions, we see many more men than women, there

are always these inequalities (…)" [13Wy19].

In relation to the *freedom of choice/expression* (*N* = 5), this reflects the possibility of choosing and expressing in the most comfortable way for oneself and without being limited by society's standards – "(…) from the moment that only one person has an opinion, it will be a lot… there is no freedom." [9Wy18].

The *generational transmission* (*N* = 10) concerns the beliefs, values and attitudes transmitted through education by the family and the surrounding community – "(…) the immediate family is much more likely to try to maintain these standards and, in general, people in the street also (…)" [11Wy20].

The theme *housekeeping* contains subthemes such as (a) *division of domestic tasks* (*N* = 15), related with the responsibility of assuming or not the tasks, dialogue in the division of tasks, tasks execution by someone outside the couple/family and lack of ability to do the tasks – "The man must assume the tasks with the woman. They must share, because the woman also works (…)" [2Ws86]; (b) *division of power* (*N* = 15), referring to who in the couple, family or society has greater or lesser power and decision-making dialogue – "(…) there is still that idea that the woman is inferior and has to be submissive to man and can't do what she wants (…)" [3Wy19]; (c) *and financial contribution and management* (*N* = 14), which refers to the way financial issues are managed in the family and, particularly, by each spouse – "(…) if the woman does not work, money is common. So, practically, everything the husband earns is for the household." [7Ms78].

Regarding the *identity*, subthemes emerged such as *being a worker, being correct*, *being respectful*, *caring for the image*, *following the law, having greater sensitivity*, among others, expressing characteristics of the individual's own identity – "I must know how to respect both the husband and the children (…)" [3Ws84].

The *justice/injustice perception*, relative to the division of domestic tasks and wages differences, are divided into *justice perception* (*N* = 14) – "A fair division is no one being overloaded." [6Ws83] – and *injustice perception* (*N* = 6) – "I don't consider it fair because I could help a lot more, for example." [15My23].

As for the *relationship with the community* theme, subthemes emerged such as (a) the *importance of the social network* (*N* = 11), which involves getting along with others and feeling integrated in the group – "It is so because we have known each other for a long time (…) and so we talk, today where are we getting coffee…" [1Ws74]; (b) the *prejudices* (*N* = 8), that is, the judgments of society within the gender roles expected for the individual, such as the responsibility for driving, being a good housewife, being good at sports, being a consumerist and having a good image – "(…) in Portugal, almost all men like football, so there is that idea that they can be good at it, they must be good at school, good at sports (…)" [14My18]; (c) and the *work* (*N* = 15), including areas such as the joint capacity of the assumed roles at work and in the family, relationships between co-workers, vocational guidance and the opportunities and conditions at work – "(…) there is discrimination on the level of wages, but everyone knows that, that a man earns much more that a woman." [8Wy20].

Regarding the *relationship with the other*, the most referred subthemes were (a) *care/support provision* (*N* = 15), which involves taking care of children and the sick – "If the husband is more available, the woman will not miss work to take care of the elderly." [3Ws84]; b) *educate/discipline the children* (*N* = 12), which reflects the task of imposing rules and limits – "The man at home has more of an authoritarian part, I think." [8Wy20]; (c) and *perception of received support* (*N* = 10), which indicates how the participants perceived support, either from the spouse or the children – "(…) my son likes to help in the kitchen and everything, and helps his wife in all and I think it is good!" [4Ws89].

Table 2 presents the most expressive themes and subthemes associated with the *well-being dimensions* category.

Table 2. Well-being dimensions.

Themes and subthemes		Number of references				
Well-being dimensions – Well-being		N	Ref.M	Ref.W	Ref.Y	Ref.S
Healthy relationships	Doing good	6	0	18	3	15
	Maintaining the social network	8	3	11	11	3
	Respect	10	7	9	8	8
	Support perception	8	1	24	7	18
Not having health problems		9	8	7	8	7
Positive perception of self	Be serene and resilient	4	0	7	2	5
	Positive relationship with oneself	5	2	9	9	2
Work-family balance		8	2	17	6	13
Comfortable surrounding environment	Satisfaction at home	7	4	8	4	8
	Satisfaction at/with work	11	8	21	18	11
Healthy relationships	Family unity	8	4	9	11	2
	Good relationship with children	5	2	6	1	7
	Marital satisfaction	8	5	30	5	30
Housework satisfaction		13	8	33	27	14
Positive feelings		13	3	10	5	8

Note: The *well-being dimensions* are ordered alphabetically. "*N*" represents the total number of participants who mentioned this theme; "Ref.M" represents the number of references to this theme by men; "Ref.W" represents the number of references to this theme by women; "Ref.Y" represents the number of references to this theme by young people; "Ref.S" represents the number of references to this theme by seniors.

Focusing on the *well-being dimensions*, as shown in Table 2, contributing factors emerged as main themes: (a) the *healthy relationships* (N = 15), including subthemes such as the perception of support given by the family, colleagues and friends, do good, respect and the ability to make and maintain friendships – "I have two children, a daughter and a son […] they are very good friends of mine, they call me every day to ask if I'm fine." [3Ws84]; (b) the *positive perception of self* (N = 8), includes feeling at ease and comfortable with oneself – "I think the one in which I feel better […] is like the relationship with myself and especially the culture, knowledge, my well-being, self-esteem, respect and etc." [9Wy18]; (c) and the *work-family balance* (N = 8), which indicates the absence of a conflict between the roles assumed at work and in the family within oneself – "But I also think this is all about the couple's organization, what little time there is afterwards must be shared." [6Ws83].

In terms of well-being indicators, among other themes, emerged: (a) the *comfortable with the surrounding environment* (N = 14), containing subthemes related to feeling satisfaction at work and at home – "With my parents and siblings I feel good because I feel that I am protected, I am with my family, we are usually at home, we are protected there." [14My18]; (b) the *healthy family relationships* (N = 13), comprising subthemes related to the intra-family relationships perception – "I have a relatively good relationship with my children and my grandchildren." [7Ms78]; (c) and the *positive feelings* (N = 13), which includes feeling comfortable, happy and at peace – "For me I was happy, I was very happy!" [6Ws83].

Table 3 presents the most expressive themes and subthemes associated with the *lack of well-being dimensions* category.

Table 3. Lack of well-being dimensions.

Themes and subthemes			Number of references				
Well-being dimensions – Lack of well-being			*N*	Ref.M	Ref.W	Ref.Y	Ref.S
Contributors	Disturbing surrounding environment	Society judgment	6	6	20	22	4
		Work-family conflict	5	4	8	8	4
	Lack of time		10	9	18	20	7
	Relational difficulties	Disrespect	8	4	7	7	4
		Lack of support perception	8	1	9	6	4
		Lack of understanding/dialogue	6	1	10	2	9
Indicators	Dissatisfaction at/with work		4	7	4	10	1
	Housework dissatisfaction		13	8	33	22	19
	Injustice due to inequalities		3	2	4	5	1
	Marital dissatisfaction		6	3	11	3	11
	Negative feelings		10	5	20	10	15

Note: The *lack of well-being dimensions* are ordered alphabetically. "*N*" represents the total number of participants who mentioned this theme; "Ref.M" represents the number of references to this theme by men; "Ref.W" represents the number of references to this theme by women; "Ref.Y" represents the number of references to this theme by young people; "Ref.S" represents the number of references to this theme by seniors.

As shown in Table 3, regarding *lack of well-being dimensions* in terms of contributors, the following came up, among others: (a) the *disturbing surrounding environment* (*N* = 12), comprising subthemes related to socially widespread beliefs that influence the individual action, the work demands in family life and felt insecurity – "When a woman is on the street, she is afraid of having to hear comments and experience scenes at night" [11Wy20]; (b) the *lack of time* (*N* = 10), which refers to the time taken up by work and domestic routines that could be dedicated to oneself, to the children or to the couple – "(…) when working, there is always that risk, that consequence of not spending so much time with the children (…)" [12My20]; (c) and the *relational difficulties* (*N* = 14), containing subthemes related to the maltreatment between people, the lack of dialogue in the relationship and the lack of support perception – "(…) treating others poorly is, I think, one of the things that surprises me most, treating someone badly and harming someone in anything…" [6Ws83].

In terms of lack of well-being indicators, the following themes emerged: (a) the *housework dissatisfaction* (*N* = 13), reflecting dissatisfaction with the household chores division and the need to do them – "So on the level of housekeeping, if there is no balance between the two, the woman will start to be upset and that's it, it sucks." [8Wy20]; (b) the *marital dissatisfaction* (*N* = 6), related to the household chores division, financial management, perceived support, the personal characteristics of each spouse and spouse criticism – "(…) then begins discomfort in the relationship, even if they don't feel it right away, at some point they will feel it, someone will be a little more resentful (…)" [11Wy20]; (c) and the *negative feelings* (*N* = 10), such as frustration, anxiety, sadness and concern – "Of course, we have days when we feel more down." [3Ws84].

In terms of systems and relationships in which gender roles were expressed, included in *systems* category, *gender role dimensions* were identified in *conjugality* (*N* = 15), *individuality and identity* (*N* = 15), the *surrounding environment* (*N* = 15), *parenting* (*N* = 15), *relation to others* (*N* = 13) and *intra-family relationships* (*N* = 9), with transversal *gender role dimensions* to these themes.

Crossings between themes and subthemes

This section presents crossings between *gender role dimensions* and *gender* (male and female roles) and *gender role manifestation* (beliefs/ideals and behaviors), in each group of participants. Regarding *gender role manifestation*, if a participant said, for example, "we both clean the house", it was considered a behavior. If, however, a participant said, "I would like us both to clean the house", it was considered a belief (an ideal). There is also data crossing between *gender role dimensions* and *well-being* and *lack of well-being dimensions* for the different groups of participants.

The themes and subthemes mentioned were those with the greatest expression and which, when crossed, responded to the purposes of this study.

Moreover, in this section, the number of references of a certain theme or subtheme (obtained through *NVivo-12* coding analysis) are presented, instead of the number of participants. This is done in order to clarify the importance and connection of these themes or subthemes.

Gender role dimensions, gender and gender role manifestation. Focusing on the *gender role dimensions*, it appears that senior women see the following themes associated with the male role as beliefs/ideals: *taking on domestic tasks* [*N*ref. = 7], *perception* of *received support* by men [*N*ref. = 5] and *being respectful* [*N*ref. = 5]. On the other hand, when referring to behaviors, these women point out as themes associated with men: *taking on domestic tasks* [*N*ref. = 17], *perception* of *received support* by men [*N*ref. = 12] and *not taking on domestic tasks* [*N*ref. = 9]. Regarding the main themes associated with women, senior women point out, as a belief/ideal, *taking on domestic tasks* [*N*ref. = 12], *work-family articulation* ability [*N*ref. = 8], *to be a good housewife* [*N*ref. = 6], and *taking care of the children* [*N*ref. = 6]. When referring to behaviors and practices, they emphasize *taking on domestic tasks* [*N*ref. = 32], *work-family articulation* [*N*ref. = 15], *perception* of *received support* by women [*N*ref. = 13] and *taking care of the children* [*N*ref. = 12].

In young women, the *gender role dimensions* identified as those most associated with men, as beliefs/ideals, are *taking on domestic tasks* [*N*ref. = 14] and *work-family articulation* [*N*ref. = 13]. In terms of behaviors, these women point out the themes of *taking on domestic tasks* [*N*ref. = 21], *not taking on domestic tasks* [*N*ref. = 17], *taking care of the children* [*N*ref. = 14] and *who has the power* [*N*ref. = 11] as those most associated with men. Regarding the themes most associated with women, young women point out, as beliefs/ideals, *taking on domestic tasks* [*N*ref. = 29], *freedom of choice/expression* [*N*ref. = 18] and *work-family articulation* [*N*ref. = 17], and, in terms of behaviors, *taking on domestic tasks* [*N*ref. = 35], *generational transmission* [*N*ref. = 21], *who has the power* [*N*ref. = 12] and *taking care of the children* [*N*ref. = 9].

In young men, the *gender role dimensions* most associated with men, as beliefs/ideals, pass through *generational transmission* [*N*ref. = 12], *taking on domestic tasks* [*N*ref. = 11], *work-family articulation* [*N*ref. = 8], *taking care of the children* [*N*ref. = 7] and *educate/discipline the children* [*N*ref. = 7]. In terms of behaviors, the themes are *taking on domestic tasks* [*N*ref. = 11], *importance of the social network* [*N*ref. = 8] and *work-family articulation* [*N*ref. = 6]. The themes most associated with women, as beliefs/ideals, are *taking on domestic tasks* [*N*ref. = 9], *taking care of the children* [*N*ref. = 8] and *work-family articulation* [*N*ref. = 6], and, as behaviors, *taking on domestic tasks* [*N*ref. = 8], *taking care of the children* [*N*ref. = 7] and *work-family articulation* [*N*ref. = 6].

Gender role dimensions and well-being dimensions. Focusing on the connection between *gender role dimensions* and *well-being dimensions*, it was found that, in senior women, the *gender role dimensions*: *perception* of *received support* [*N*ref. = 21], *doing good* [*N*ref. = 14] and *taking on domestic tasks* [*N*ref. = 13] showed a higher connection with well-being.

In young women, the *gender role dimensions* most closely linked to well-being were *equality perception* [*N*ref. = 23], *taking on domestic tasks* [*N*ref. = 21] and *perception* of *received support* [*N*ref. = 8].

In young men, the *gender role dimensions*: *taking on domestic tasks* [*N*ref. = 7], *equality perception* [*N*ref. = 7], *importance of the social network* [*N*ref. = 5] and *generational transmission* [*N*ref. = 5] showed a greater link to well-being.

Gender role dimensions and lack of well-being dimensions. Focusing now on the connection between *gender role dimensions* and *lack of well-being dimensions*, it was found that, in senior women, *gender role dimensions*: *taking on domestic tasks* [*N*ref. = 17], *work-family articulation* [*N*ref. = 12], *perception of received support* [*N*ref. = 7] and *taking care of the children* [*N*ref. = 7] showed a greater connection with lack of well-being.

In young women, the *gender role dimensions* most associated with lack of well-being were *taking on domestic tasks* [*N*ref. = 23], in*equality perception* [*N*ref. = 15] and *work-family articulation* [*N*ref. = 13].

In young men, the *gender role dimensions* of *work-family articulation* [*N*ref. = 8], *taking on domestic tasks [N*ref*. = 6] and taking care of the children [N*ref*. = 5] showed a greater link with lack of well-being.*

DISCUSSION

With regards to the *gender role dimensions* associated with women, the results of this study point to the fact that most of the *domestic tasks* are taken by the women, and the women's work is not recognized by young men. In contrast to the latter, senior women reinforce the greater contribution of women in domestic tasks, sometimes placing women as the first option and, in case of unavailability, men as responsible for the tasks. These results converge with other studies that also present women as the main contributor to *domestic tasks*, although men also participate to a lesser degree (Sagnier & Morell, 2019).

In addition to *domestic tasks*, both seniors and young people attributed to women the *work-family articulation* ability. These results support the existing literature, as they show a double workload to fall on women, including the professional work and domestic work obligations (CITE, 2012; Queiroga et al., 2018).

In relation to male *gender role dimensions*, young people (men and women) attributed *taking on domestic tasks* to men, followed by the *work-family articulation* ability. This result can be an indicator of a desire and/or a transformation towards gender equality, with men also taking on a double workday. However, young women also spoke about men *not taking on domestic tasks*, remembering that the contribution of men at the domestic level is still limited within both realities. This paradox of men's contribution to *domestic tasks* was not verified in the studies found.

The seniors, on the other hand, pointed out as *gender role dimensions* associated with men the fact that they *take on domestic tasks* and *support the women and/or the family*. Like young women, senior women attributed to men *not taking on domestic tasks*, bringing to light a paradox in male *gender role dimensions*. As for the *perception of support* provided by men, the reference to these *gender role dimensions* in men is very much in line with the study by Stevens et al., (2001), where they found that, in a couple relationship, emotional support was offered equally between men and women.

Continuing with the *gender role dimensions*, it was also found that women participants believe that the *daily care of the children* must become the responsibility of women and young men believe that the *education and discipline* should be more for men. Both results were reported in beliefs and practice. These results replicate findings of other studies showing that women assume the majority of childcare work (Perista et al., 2016; Poeschl, 2000; Poeschl et al., 2018; Sagnier & Morell, 2019). By contrast, other studies have shown that caring for children was a "catalyst" for men's participation in domestic life, where there was greater equality compared to other levels, such as domestic tasks (França & Schimanski, 2009; Rodrigues et al., 2015), which was verified only in young men results. As for the *education and discipline of children* being associated mainly with men, it can result in men having a greater power role than women, since these are the ones associated with the decision making and "having the last word" related to the children's education.

When the focus was on the *superiority* and *inferiority/submission dimensions*, it was found that, in the environment, *superiority* was predominantly associated with men and *inferiority/submission* with women, which was reported mainly by young women. Other studies highlight women's disadvantaged position in society and within the couple, where a submission and yielding posture towards men is described: the man being considered a figure of authority and power (Fávero & Maracci, 2016; Fernandes, 2009; Queiroga et al., 2018). Fernandes (2009) argues that these postures are learned in the socialization process, which leads us to reflect on the generational transmission of gender ideologies, co-constructed in society.

Transversal to all *gender role dimensions*, the *justice and injustice perception* and the *equality and inequality perception* emerged. Regarding *justice and injustice perception*, such topics were mentioned mainly by female participants, and when referring to *domestic tasks* distribution. Thus, a *justice perception* was found in relation to the belief that domestic tasks should be undertaken by both men and women, and an *injustice perception* when domestic tasks were assumed only by women. These results are consistent with Perista and colleagues (2016), who show that women express greater injustice when the domestic tasks division is not balanced. Like those found by Poeschl (2010), our results show that some female participants found it would be fairer if the man made a small contribution to domestic tasks rather than not contributing at all; and the higher this participation, the greater the *justice perception*. The results of this study are also in line with Braun and colleagues (2008) availability time theory, which suggests that a fair division would be where the spouse who spent less time in their work activity would be the one to spend more time on domestic tasks.

With regards to the *equality and inequality perception*, the results suggest that, regardless of generation or sex, participants consider gender equality the ideal to achieve, which confirms previous studies (Rodrigues et al., 2015; Sagnier & Morell, 2019). However, all participants reported at least one situation in which they experienced or had knowledge of gender inequality. It was reflected at the *domestic tasks division* (greater burden for women), the *work-family articulation* (greater burden for women and the perception that women should stop working when they have children), the *daily care of the children* (greater burden for women) and the willingness to *be heard* in the workplace (greater availability for men). Common to all these perceived inequalities is the fact that women have more responsibilities and fewer opportunities than men (CITE, 2012).

Given these *justice and injustice perceptions* and *equality and inequality perceptions*, the dialogue was highlighted by the participants, young and senior, as a potential means of harmonization and balance in the couple and family. Even though the participants were shown to have different beliefs, they considered that, through dialogue, it would be possible to achieve a common reality for the couple or family where all its members felt comfortable. The awareness of a need for dialogue emerges as a relevant aspect in this research. However, the results did not reveal if this dialogue was experienced and if it had positive implications in practice. Contrary to these results, Sagnier and Morell (2019) noted that a large majority of

young women do not value the question of dialogue and negotiation with the partner for the division of domestic tasks.

It is also important to mention, responding to the purpose of studying how gender roles are expressed in systems according to Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model, that, through the results for the *systems* category, participants identify the expression of gender roles in different contexts. The themes presented in Results are interconnected with the various levels of the bioecological model (see Bronfenbrenner, 1977), since they concern systems in which the individual is inserted, the interaction between these systems that indirectly affect him and the values that are transmitted. These results emphasize the transversally of gender roles in individuals' lives and reinforce the importance and relevance of the bioecological model.

Focusing on the primary purposes of this study, that is, the relation between gender roles and well-being in individuals of different generations and sexes, it was found that in all groups of participants the theme of *taking on the domestic tasks* was related to well-being as much as lack of well-being.

When analyzing by groups, it was found that women, young and senior, tend to associate the *contribution in domestic tasks* with well-being when there is a *sharing of tasks* and when they *perceive support* of men in them, reinforcing an ideal of equality in gender roles. On the other hand, men, in addition to valuing the *sharing of domestic tasks*, also associated the *contribution in domestic tasks* with well-being when men contribute less, particularly young people. These results are in line with Forste and Fox (2012), who noted that men had higher levels of happiness in part because they contributed less to domestic tasks than women.

Regarding lack of well-being, all participants mentioned the weight associated with *domestic tasks* when there isn't a balanced division of tasks, leaving certain individuals, whether men or women, overloaded. Women reinforced that this overload was usually more common in women than in men. These results are consistent with other studies that show a relation between traditionalism associated with gender roles and distress in men and women (Stevens et al., 2001; Sweeting et al., 2014).

The *support received perception* theme was associated with both well-being and lack of well-being, but only in women. Specifically, we found an association between the *support received perception* from the family and social network, whether instrumental or psychological, and well-being in women (Forste & Fox, 2012; Sagnier & Morell, 2019). On the other hand, the *insufficient support received perception* was found to be associated with lack of well-being amongst women, particularly in domestic tasks. This result appears in line with the previous studies that noted that the fact that women do more domestic tasks and are not supported at this level is associated with lack of well-being (Stevens et al., 2001).

Finally, a theme only associated with lack of well-being, regardless of generation and sex, that emerged was *work-family articulation*. This result confirms previous studies, which express the difficulty in reconciling several roles by the same individual (Kinnunen et al., 2004). These results also expand the literature because this association had previously been found only in women (Sagnier & Morell, 2019).

Conclusion

This study highlights the expression of an ideal of equality between gender roles, which is common between generations and sexes. However, the participants also reported that this ideal does not always exist in practice. Namely, equality tends not to occur on a domestic level and in work-family articulation, in which the woman is overloaded and, at the labor level, where the man has access to more opportunities.

There were also observed clear differences in the investment type with the children, with women being cited as mainly responsible for the daily care of the children and men for educating and disciplining them. Differences were also observed in the power level, it being mentioned by all the groups of participants that the man occupies a place of superiority in relation to the woman. In turn, women tend to adopt a submissive role, even though it is contrasting with the expectations of equality mentioned by this group.

The results regarding the themes aimed at the male and female gender do not highlight differences between generations and sexes. However, in relation to well-being, the results reflect greater distinctions, in particular between the sexes.

Regarding the distribution of domestic tasks, women reported greater well-being when sharing these tasks, while men noted that both sharing, and the lesser contribution of men would be associated with greater well-being. When this shared distribution does not exist, all participants associated this circumstance with lack of well-being. In the case of women, the perception of overload as a contribution to the experience of lack of well-being is also highlighted.

This study also emphasizes the association of the difficulty of work-family articulation with lack of well-being, highlighted by all groups of participants. This suggests the difficulty of individuals, both men and women, in responding to the requirements of various socially assumed roles.

Finally, our research also highlights the relationship between greater well-being in women and the perception of support received, whether instrumental or psychological, and an association between lack of well-being in women and lack of support received, particularly in domestic tasks.

Limitations

One of the limitations of this study is related to the data collection instrument. The semi-structured interview, as it is a self-report instrument, can condition the responses of the participants. In addition, this methodology does not allow the circumvention of social desirability in the participants' responses.

The interview guide, which led the data collection, may have lacked more specific issues that would probably have allowed the emergence of a wider range of topics.

Finally, another limitation concerns the sample, which mainly consisted of women and only one senior man, which led to a poorer comparison between groups of the sample.

Future directions

In future studies, samples with greater diversity could be explored, for example, with more men, with other generations, from contrasting contexts (such as rural versus urban), with individuals in non-heterosexual relationships, in transsexuality, in relation to religiosity, among others. Gender roles with children could also be explored, in order to understand their perception and how it impacts their choices, since the generational transmission and education for gender occurs since childhood.

It would be interesting to add a longitudinal character to the study, in order to deepen possible changes in the beliefs and behaviors related to gender roles, carrying out several moments of data collection.

Since the recruitment of the sample went through academic institutions, it would be useful to use those same academic institutions as a space to debate these findings, addressing gender roles and their notable impact on well-being and lack thereof. This space should allow reflection on gender roles, as well as how these can affect personal, relational and social well-being.

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