THE ROLE OF COMPANIES IN THE PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUITY: AN ANALYSIS OF THE PETROBRAS DISTRIBUIDOR'S CAMPAIGN

1. Introduction

Since the consolidation of the concept of social responsibility[[1]](#footnote-1) in the 1980s, with the preparation of the first social report, to the present day, companies have progressively understood their role in social transformation. If, initially, the only action was the disclosure of the social balance, over time, awards, indicators and programs were implemented, which has strengthened relationships with the various stakeholders.

Since 2011 I have worked in the area responsible for the Social Responsibility actions of a large company in the retail area in the oil and gas sector. This company has a great impact on the Brazilian society, due to the fact that there are supply service stations located throughout the country, as well as on account of the various operational units also dispersed geographically.

Last year, we publicly assumed our adherence to the Women's Empowerment Principles, led by UN Women, in partnership with the Global Compact. There are seven principles designed to encourage the insertion, retention and promotion of women in the labor market, not only with the labor force, but also with their value chain (resellers, customers, consumers, suppliers, communities, shareholders, etc.). ). And to monitor the progress or regress of the actions in each of the principles are used indicators, in addition to monitoring specialists in UN Women. These are the seven principles: to establish corporate leadership sensitive to gender equality at the highest level; treat all women and men fairly in the workplace, respecting and supporting human rights and non-discrimination; ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men working in the company; promote education, training and professional development for women; support women entrepreneurship and promote women's empowerment policies through supply and marketing chains; promote gender equality through community-driven initiatives and social activism; measure, document and publish the company's progress in promoting gender equality.

Petrobras Distribuidora has joined a group of 150 signatory companies. Only 18 are led by women. There was a black woman, Raquel Maia, leading the Pandora, but she left the post to become president of Lacoste. She remains the only black woman to hold this position. In this way, the company continued to strengthen its commitment to the promotion of gender equity.

And the initiatives that we will present in this article is the gender campaign, released in 2019, in order to stimulate reflections on women in the labor market. The campaign was a co-creation of an advertising agency with the Social Sustainability area of ​​Petrobras Distribuidora.

We adopt the concept of equity rather than the concept of equality in this article. The first deals with the guarantee of rights from the diversity existing in social groups, while in the second concept, differentiated needs are not considered. We can conclude that equity guarantees social justice.

And we consider Joan Scott's concept of gender, in which there are behaviors expected by men and women, socially constructed and reproduced by institutions. The image we have is that men and women are framed in "boxes" of behavior, disregarding the diversity existing in humans. However, this world-binarist construction encourages oppression of women and harm to men.

2. Data on gender inequality in the labor market

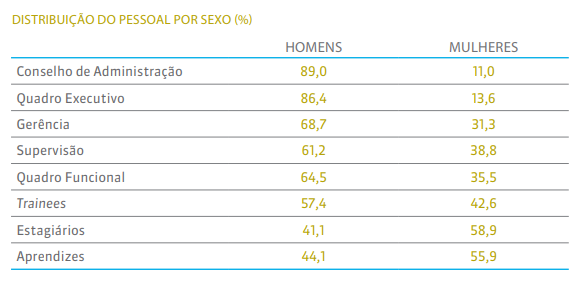
Analyzing data on the labor market, the average monthly income, in a population above 16 years, is influenced by gender and race. On average, the black woman earns R $ 1,027.50, the black man, R $ 1,500.00, the white woman, R $ 1,800.00 and the white man, the highest value: R $ 2,509.70 (IBGE 2016). We remember the voice of Elza Soares chanting "the cheapest meat on the market is black meat".

And when we evaluated the National Survey for Household Sample Continuous 2016, regarding the net attendance rate (high school), the rate of black women is 69.3%, that of black men, 57.3% of white men, 71.9% and white women, 80.1%. From these data, we perceive the inequalities of gender and race. Regarding higher education data, the same research shows that women (16.9%) have higher education levels than men (13.5%). 22% of white people have a complete upper level for 8.8% of black people.

We noticed that school dropout is higher among the black population, but black women are the hardest hit because, although they have a higher rate of study, they are the ones with the lowest income. And they are also the ones that occupy, for the most part, unemployment rates. According to Survey PNAD 2014, the unemployment rate of black women was 10%. White women were 10%, followed by black men (6%) and white men (4%).

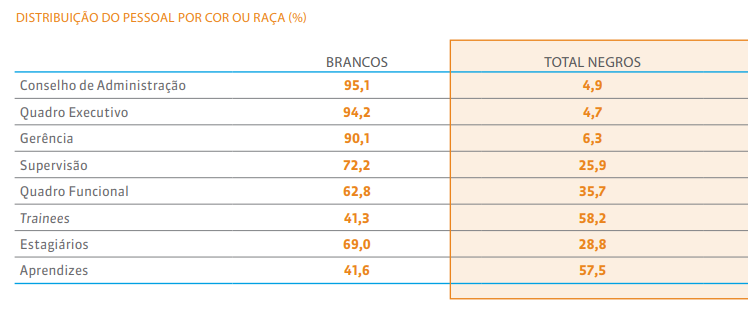
These numbers are worrying, as there has been an increase in female participation from 23% to 40% in the role of family provider. Although they are responsible for their families' livelihoods, they earn less than men and occupy less jobs and jobs.

Other relevant information is the fact that women who are able to enter the labor market end up bumping into an "invisible ceiling", difficult to overcome, called "glass ceiling". In the sixth edition of the Social and Racial Report of the 500 Biggest Companies in Brazil and its Affirmative Actions ", prepared by the Ethos Institute, we noted that, in the distribution of positions, there is a" hierarchical bottleneck ", insofar as the number of women is reduced as the complexity of the job increases. The data reinforce that they occupy less the positions of leadership and, consequently, of decision in the companies.



Social and Racial Report of the 500 Biggest Companies in Brazil

When data are presented with the racial aspect of the workforce, the bottleneck is even greater:



Black people are hired more, even in trainee positions, but the number reduces by about half when they occupy functional positions. And according to management positions, they are 6.3% only, and in the positions of high leadership are rare 4.9%. Black people also bump into a "glass ceiling", not occupying the positions of decision and management in companies.

And analyzing the situation of black people[[2]](#footnote-2), we realize that the obstacles are even greater. 0.6% make up the management body and high leadership only 0.5%. There is no black person occupying the Board of Directors.

 Social and Racial Report of the 500 Biggest Companies in Brazil

We see the role of companies in making the labor market more inclusive. But one of the main barriers encountered is the perception that equity is related to social responsibility alone. The goal of programs such as UN Women, Principles of Women Empowerment, has sought to demonstrate the impact of inclusive diversity on business, generating competitive advantage. The central issue is whether - and how - companies have measured this impact and how they have made progress in terms of diversity.

Researches such as those conducted by McKinsey[[3]](#footnote-3) (2018) demonstrate that this impact of diversity on financial performance. Companies with gender diversity in executive positions have, on average, 15% higher profitability than the others.

Studies on this relationship are fairly recent, but positive results for organizations are widely reported in many countries. Gender equity is even one of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals to be implemented by 2030. The message that a sustainable world is not possible without gender equity is clear. And in the case of Brazil, due to the structuring racism of our society, we can not avoid intersectionality[[4]](#footnote-4) with race.

Statistics show the constant discrimination suffered by women in the private labor market. The question then arises whether, in public companies, gender discrimination operates in the same way. In order to deepen our role in promoting equity between men and women, after several initiatives have been implemented, we try to evaluate how the organization's perception regarding the theme and we elaborate a campaign.

3. Organizational practice as an ally of women's rights

The organizational culture is related to the people who make up the organization and the values that it has. The protection of human rights is in the chain of values and also provided for in the Social Responsibility Policy. In this way, from the organizational point of view of the institution, respect for people and, consequently, their diversity is formalized.

In order to deepen our knowledge about the perception of the workforce regarding the existence or not of situations of gender inequality in Petrobras Distribuidora, we carried out two surveys, Sustainability Coordination with the support of an advertising agency.

The first survey was conducted in 2017, with only women in the workforce. The concepts of micromachisms were presented: bropriating, gaslighting, mantenrupting and mansplanning. And then we asked if they had witnessed similar situations in the company.

The concept of micromachism was coined by the psychotherapist Luis Bonino Mendez in the 1990s: "invisible behaviors of violence and domination."

Es decir, los micromachismos son microabusos y microviolencias que procuran que el varón mantenga su propia posición de género creando una red que sutilmente atrapa a la mujer, atentando contra su autonomía personal si ella no las descubre (a veces pueden pasar años sin que lo haga), y sabe contramaniobrar eficazmente. Están la base y son el caldo de cultivo de las demás formas de la violencia de género (maltrato psicológico, emocional, físico, sexual y económico) y son las "armas" masculinas más utilizadas con las que se intenta imponer sin consensuar el propio punto de vista o razón. Comienzan a utilizarse desde el principio de la relación y van moldeando lentamente la libertad femenina posible. Su objetivo es anular a la mujer como sujeto, forzándola a una mayor disponibilidad e imponiéndole una identidad "al servicio del varón", con modos que se alejan mucho de la violencia tradicional, pero que tienen a la larga sus mismos objetivos y efectos: perpetuar la distribución injusta para las mujeres de los derechos y oportunidades. (MENDEZ, 1991).

We chose four micromachisms for dissemination. The terms are commonly known in English. The knowledge of the English language facilitates the understanding of most of the concepts, since brother and man indicate that they are behaviors practiced by men. These concepts have been ostensibly publicized, and some have been well-known in the race for the US presidency between the candidates Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump. We understand, however, how these behaviors allow us to understand other types of gender relations in the private and public world.

Bropriating refers to the intellectual appropriation of the man, which excludes the woman's name from a project or production in which they both participated or in which she was the sole author.

Manterrupting refers to the constant interruption suffered by women in moments of exposure of their ideas. Often, this behavior is followed by mansplanning, in which the man explains something the woman has just said or has explained something that is already known to the woman or to her an obvious knowledge. Example: man explain to women how menstruating is.

All previous concepts have, in the very formation of words, meanings. Gaslighting[[5]](#footnote-5) runs away from this rule because it comes from a film, Gaslight, filmed in the 1940s. In the film, Paula (Ingrid Bergman) was manipulated by her husband Gregory (Charles Boyer) through gas lights, which made her hallucinations and doubts about his sanity.

The survey continues two questions: "Have you ever had any sexist situation (s) in the corporate environment?" And "Have you ever been sexist in any situation (s) in the corporate environment? Which one (s)? ". 2090 questionnaires were sent, but we had a small participation: only 9% of women respondents. We found some factors for this low adhesion: problems in the research system and short period for answers.

However, based on the research, the Sustainability Coordination can know several existing situations, reported by the respondents. And, in a collegial decision, with the Diversity Commission, made up of representatives from different areas of the company, we decided to send a second survey, wider and for men and women. The questions were elaborated collectively and it was decided that their result would be the inspiration for an internal campaign.

The second survey was conducted in 2018 and we had a greater participation of the workforce: 1446 respondents, 62% of men and 38% of women. The objective of this second research was to know people's perceptions regarding gender bias. Questionnaires were sent to employees, service providers, trainees and apprentices, including managers and managers.

They analyzed eight situations pointed out in the first survey: whether men and women share the tasks in organizing celebrations in management; comments are made on a woman's ability or inability to lead a management; when a woman positions herself more firmly, if she hears comments such as "today she is in PMS"; whether women are constantly interrupted at meetings or events; the authorship of a woman is not recognized in a project; the woman hears biased comments when she returns from maternity leave; if the woman hears compliments when entering a meeting.

Overall, the numbers favor a perception of gender equity by the labor force. However, the higher the hierarchical level, the lower the perception of gender inequalities. We believe that the hypotheses are: the higher the hierarchical level, the lower the participation in the operational processes. In addition, micromachisms were little known (maintainrupting, mansplanning, gaslighting and bropriating). The lack of knowledge about these gender discriminations would also influence the perception of women and men in management positions.

For methodological purposes, we adopted the case study, one of the ways to produce a qualitative research (MINAYO, 2002), since the objective was to evaluate how an organization can improve gender relations, promoting women's rights through actions of awareness. Within the existing limitations of the research, there is the fact that it is employed by the organization.

We have chosen six scenarios to illustrate our campaign. Each poster contained a reflective statement about the situation. Posters were produced, broadcast on the televisions in the elevators and video walls in the operating units. And we chose one of them to insert into the lock screen of all computers.

Phrase 1 (major source): "Ah, but they are better able to organize these things"

Phrase 2: "There are no unique tasks for women when it comes to organizing celebrations and team meetings. If everyone plays a part, everyone wins in the end. "

Seal: equality between men and women. This is the best way.

With this poster, we seek to stimulate reflection on the division of labor so naturalized between men and women. We report the fact that women spend an average of 18.1 hours per week on household chores, while men spend 10.5 hours per week. Carrying the racial cut, black women spend 18.6 hours and black men, 10.6 hours (IBGE, 2016).

The beginning of the campaign was also marked by the holding of an event in celebration of International Women's Day on the 8th. We presented the documentary "Chega de Fui Fiu" and then held a debate on female mobility with the presence of Leila Barsted, director of the NGO CEPIA (Citizenship, Study, Research, Information and Action), Clarisse Linke - executive director of the Institute of Transportation and Development Policies, which works in the area of ​​mobility and gender, and Pedro de Figueiredo - founder of Memoh, who encourages men to reflect on gender equity. The event also had a fair of entrepreneurs at headquarters.

The documentary presents, as one of the solutions, the involvement of men, from reflection groups on masculinity. Our concern with launching the campaign was precisely to involve them in the process of promoting equity. We always present the wrongs for the whole society and not just for women.

The subject of harassment[[6]](#footnote-6) was analyzed in the second poster of the campaign:

Phrase 1 (major source): the room is scented when the woman enters

Phrase 2: Knowing how to praise is as important as receiving praise. A healthy corporate environment should always be respectful and free from any kind of harassment. Praising can, embarrassing not ".

Seal: equality between men and women. This is the best way.

In the disclosure, we broaden the look on the harassment, bringing data of how it occurs in the public spaces. In a survey carried out by DataFolha (2017), public transport appears first in the ranking of places where women suffer more harassment (35%), followed by streets (33%) and bars / ballads (19%). The workplace is also included in the survey (10%). 6% of situations occur at school and 2% at home.

We also present Law No. 13,718, sanctioned in 2018, which criminalizes acts of sexual harassment, among other conduct. The importunation is defined as "practice of libidinous act against someone without their consent to satisfy their own lust or third party." This new classification replaces the offense punishment of offensive indecency. The updated penalty is 1 to 5 years imprisonment.

To conclude, we demonstrate that besides harassment is a violation of women's right of movement, it can negatively impact the health of the victims. We published a study, published in JAMA Internal Medicine, that evaluated the physical and psychological condition of 304 nonsmoking women, between 40 and 60 years. 19% of them had already been sexually harassed in the workplace and 22% had been assaulted by a man. Data analysis has shown that women who are harassed are twice as likely to have high blood pressure as those who did not.

Women who have experienced physical violence are three times more likely to suffer from depression and twice as likely to experience anxiety attacks. It was also found that in both groups, women had twice as much difficulty sleeping, a situation that causes their health damage. We conclude with the dissemination of our channel of denunciations in the Ombudsman's Office, reinforcing the notion of the relevance of a work environment free of harassment, in which all people have their individuality respected.

Phrase 1 (major source): W-h-e-n a w-o-m-a-n t-a-l-k-s. When a man talks

Phrase 2: We've all had our lines interrupted. But research shows that women are stopped 2.1 times more often than men. More than a disrespectful attitude, it can be a veiled violence. Therefore, respect and listen: every speech requires active listening. "

Seal: equality between men and women. This is the best way.

The third poster presents one of the micromachisms: mantenrrupting. Studies have been published on this behavior: At a session of the Federal Supreme Court (STF), the minister Cármem Lúcia mentioned a study that detected that, in the world, the magistrates of constitutional courts are 18 times more interrupted than the men. In academic job interviews, they are more interrupted and face more questions (17 questions for them and 14 questions for them, on average). According to the study "Gender in Engineering Departments: Are There Gender Differences in Interruptions in Academic Job Interviews?" Published in the journal Social Sciences, women are more likely to be disrupted than men during an academic job interview.

In the same space, we present explanations about bropriating and mantenrupting. And we included a link that they intended to view videos about each of these behaviors.

Gaslighting[[7]](#footnote-7) was the subject of the fourth campaign poster:

Phrase 1 (major source): Watch out! She’s having PMS.

Phrase 2: To justify a woman's behavior as a PMS is prejudice. Suggest that this is the cause of certain behavior or be a form of disqualification of the woman.

Seal: equality between men and women. This is the best way.

With this piece, we seek to stimulate reflection on the differences in behavior expected by men and women. We explain the origin of the term, mentioning the film "Gaslight" and indicate the difficulty of diagnosing this psychological violence and the harm to women: lack of hope, difficult to trust and build relationships, guilt, anxiety, depression, etc.

The fifth piece brings a situation that affects, especially women:

"Working women spend an average of 18.1 hours between household chores and child care, on the other hand, men work an average of 10.3 hours. Dedication to the family is not a single responsibility of the woman, so it is also important to share this duty as important as caring. "

Phrase 1 (major source): will rest a lot during maternity leave

Phrase 2: Maternity leave is not 'serious' or another kind of withdrawal from work, since only women can become pregnant. This process concerns everyone and is related to the development of our society. License is not privilege, it's right. "

Seal: equality between men and women. This is the best way.

We seek to stimulate the debate on the valuation of motherhood, unfortunately, is not what occurs in the market generally. “Grupo Mulheres do Varejo”[[8]](#footnote-8) carried out research with reports of men and women, and one of the points cited is the treatment after pregnancy, in which, for 65% of the men interviewed and 73% of the interviewed women, it is re-enter the labor market.

The Consolidation of Labor Laws (CLT) prevents the woman from being dismissed without cause until the pregnancy is confirmed, up to five months after giving birth. However, the legislation is insufficient. A study by Fundação Getúlio Vargas (FGV) in 2017 revealed that in a universe of 247,000 women, 50% were dismissed shortly after returning from maternity leave. And this is not a reality only in Brazil. Wellesly University in the United States has shown that pregnancy increases the pay gap between Americans and Americans.

We take advantage to publicize the benefits that the company has in favor of maternity. Since 2009, Petrobras Distribuidora has joined the Company Citizen Program (Law 11,770, 09/09/2008), and guarantees its employees the possibility of extending the maternity leave for a further 60 days, totaling 180 days, that is, two months more than is guaranteed in the Constitution.

The company also allows the reduction of two hours a day in the work day for employees who need to breastfeed their children, within a period of up to 6 months after returning from maternity leave, upon presentation of a medical certificate.

At our company headquarters and in the Lubricants Factory (Duque de Caxias), we set up exclusive spaces for mothers who returned to work after maternity leave, but wish to continue to feed their children with breast milk.

We understand that the decision of the woman and the family to have children is individual, but it affects the whole society. The valuation of maternity leave means appreciation of the rights of women and children.

Finally, we released the last poster:

Phrase 1 (major source): Son sick? My wife takes the doctor.

Phrase 2: Working women spend an average of 18.1 hours between housework and childcare, while men work an average of 10.3 hours. Dedication to the family is not a single responsibility of the woman, so, as important as caring is also sharing that duty

Seal: equality between men and women. This is the best way.

We conclude the campaign by stimulating reflection on how the lack of equity also affects men. Their involvement in this discussion is fundamental, since they are also impacted by the standards defined by society. And it is from the analysis of these patterns that we perceive the care with sons and daughters attributed to women. From childhood, they are encouraged to develop activities that refer to caring for the home and children, while the children do not. In this way, there is inducement to the thought that such characteristics are natural to the woman, when, in fact, it is only a matter of stimulus.

We disclose a research that shows that men's participation in childcare and grooming produces benefits such as reduced use of anesthesia during childbirth, for example. They also identified a positive influence on breastfeeding decision, as well as help in the first breastfeeding and prolongation of breastfeeding, widely stimulated by the Ministry of Health.

The strengthening of this bond between father and baby generates better cognitive and learning development of the child. It also encourages gender equity within the family, as caregiving tasks are shared between women and men. All of these benefits were presented in the State of the World's Paternity Report 2016 (Instituto Promundo).

We emphasize that we approach only one of the types of family configuration, according to IBGE Senso, which also recognizes nuclear families, single parents, homoafetivas, shared custody, among others. Whatever it is, when there is parental involvement in a responsible way, benefits are perceived not only for him, but also for the family as a whole and, consequently, for society.

4. Conclusion

The campaign pieces sought to address some situations in which women are hit in the labor market, but are not always perceived as violations of their rights. We realize, unfortunately, that the situations pointed out in surveys and posters are not far from the reality that other women face in the labor market: harassment, devaluation of the female labor force and devaluation of maternity.

In order to foster an inclusive gender culture, it is necessary to implement changes in the company culture, organizational practices and individual behaviors. We understand that although we have already advanced implementation of organizational practices aimed at promoting gender equity, there is still a need to change the organizational culture and, above all, individual behaviors.

The campaign was created with the purpose of stimulating reflection on the behavior of each person in the company's daily life, demonstrating how harmful it can be for women and, consequently, for the whole organizational environment. Through the research and the campaign, we received reports of women who were unaware of the gender discrimination situations they experienced in the company.

From the reports of women in the research, we realize how much gender discrimination in the company could affect their health and cause illness or withdrawal. In addition, disclosing a legitimate complaint channel, such as the Ombudsman's Office, would be a way to strengthen your autonomy to report the violation.

In the current political context with potential weakening of public policies aimed at promoting women's rights, companies become areas of resistance. We, as public companies, still face the challenge of alleviating the pressures we suffer in the face of the small, public power over our processes as the desire to stimulate a more inclusive environment that has been increasingly implemented by the competition .

Companies play a fundamental role, since they can stimulate the insertion and permanence of them in the labor market, thus guaranteeing their financial autonomy and the development of their career. This autonomy, even, is relevant so that the woman often breaks with the cycle of domestic and intrafamily violence.

Another aspect is the influence that companies have in their value chain: communities, customers, consumers, civil organizations, supplier companies, etc. Insofar as gender equity - and race - becomes an organizational value, it begins to compose all the processes and this ends up showing up in the relationship with these publics. These audiences eventually perceive the relevance of environments free of gender discrimination and begin to adopt similar measures.

We understand that the debate about gender equity is not exhausted by the campaign. Weakening the existing roles in a society that insists on binarity man x woman occurs gradually. We understand, however, the social role of organizations in stimulating the debate in the corporate environment, so that it goes beyond the walls of the company and reaches other spaces: the family space, the circle of friendships, religious rituals, condominium meetings, public transportation. There is no neutral space with respect to gender - and race.

As we stimulate the debate about fairness in the organizational environment, we are not only creating a more inclusive, welcoming and respectful place. We are improving ourselves as collaborators and, consequently, as human beings.

5. Bibliografia

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1. According to ISO 26000 (guideline standard), "social responsibility is the desire of organizations to incorporate socio-environmental considerations into their decision-making processes and accountability for the impacts of their decisions and activities on society and the environment. This includes ethical and transparent behavior that contributes to sustainable development in accordance with applicable laws and international standards of behavior. The social responsibility must be the performance within the organization and also with the stakeholders. " This is the most commonly used definition. Although the consolidation of the expression occurred in the 1980s, especially with the emergence of corporate social statements, it is considered as a starting point a letter of principles of corporate Christian leaders in 1965 as a document to express corporate social responsibility .

     The Women's Empowerment Principles, a program led by UN Women, aimed at companies around the world, is well known by its acronym WEPs (Women's Empowerment Principles). The program aims to stimulate organizations that act in their processes and projects in order to increase the number of women in the labor market, stimulate women's participation in decision-making spaces and their career progression. Source: http://www.onumulheres.org.br/referencias/principios-de-empoderamento-das-mulheres/ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In Brazil, for methodological purposes, racial data is obtained through self-declaration. Therefore, black people are those who claim to be black or brown. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. McKinsey is an American consulting firm to help organizations improve their performance and pursue new strategies. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The concept of intersectionality was coined by Kimberle Crenshaw, a North American teacher, in her research on the violence suffered by black women in the United States, demonstrating that the oppressive impacts on women in patriarchal societies can not be divorced from racism. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Gaslighting has already been portrayed in such films as "Stars Beyond Time," "Big Eyes," and "The Wife." [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Harassment is a type of violence against women, since it takes an approach without consent, through gestures or words. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Film produced in the 50's, which tells the story of the manipulation made by the character Gregory against his wife Paula, through gas lights, making her doubt her sanity. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Network of women entrepreneurs, with 6,000 women in LinkedIn and 1,000 on Facebook. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)