

## Writings and intersectionality: the theoretical-methodological encounter with of singularity of crossings<sup>1</sup>

*Writings and intersectionality: the theoretical-methodological encounter with the de(s)ingularity of the cruces*

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### Summary

This article aims to present the theoretical-methodological paths developed by the final project research "Today I gave birth to myself: writing experiences as an act of discovery and resistance regarding the academic trajectory", carried out in 2023. Anchored in gender studies, with a feminist and intersectional approach, the final project and the article in question dared to bring together a diverse theoretical-methodological framework, ranging from literature to gender theory (EVARISTO, 2020; CRENSHAW, 2004:), with multiple feminist references (ANZÁLDUA, 2000; COLLINS, 2017), to break with the scientific practices of women's translation, carrying out a search for their most coherent expression. Thus, it dared methodologically, choosing collective writing as a field for data collection, bringing to light, in a complex and more complete way, the (dis)singularities and crossings - intersectionalities - experienced by university women. in the backlands of Paraíba, Brazil.

**Keywords:** Methodology. Decolonial feminism. Intersectionality. Writing experiences.

### Summary

The objective of this article is to present the theoretical and methodological paths developed by the end-of-course research project "Today I gave birth: writings as an act of discovery and resistance regarding the academic trajectory", carried out in 2023. Anclado in gender studies, with a feminist and intersectional approach, the work of the course and the article in question whether they dared to bring together a diverse theoretical-methodological framework, which ranges from literature to gender theory (EVARISTO, 2020; CRENSHAW, 2004), with multiple feminist references (ANZÁLDUA, 2000; COLLINS, 2017), to break with the scientific practices of women's translation, seeking their more coherent expressions, daring like this methodologically, choosing collective writing as a field of data collection, drawing light, in a more complex and complete way, on the (in)singularities and cruces - intersectionalities - experienced by university women in the interior of Paraíba, Brazil.

**Keywords:** Methodology. Decolonial feminism. Intersectionality. Writings.

### Introduction

The article in question is an extension of the Final Course Work (TCC) "Today I gave birth to myself: writing experiences as an act of discovery and resistance regarding the trajectory academic", carried out in 2023. Work which was born from the experiences and private, subjective and collective experiences of the author and her *sisters*<sup>2</sup> of the research with the universe

<sup>1</sup> This text was written during the postdoctoral studies of co-author Prof. Dr. Kássia Mota de Sousa, which took place at the Center for Gender Research and Studies – CIEG of the National Autonomous University of Mexico – UNAM, funded by the Foundation for the Coordination of Higher Education Personnel Improvement – CAPES, which we thank for its support and funding.

<sup>2</sup> Translated into Portuguese, it means "sisters." We decolonial feminist writers refer to each other using this expression. I believe it is through this declaration, "sisters," that we can trace the collective commitment we so strongly advocate. Sisters of experience and writing.

academic. The objective of the research was to analyze how the identities and intersections that permeate the lives of undergraduate students at the Federal University of Campina Grande (UFCG), of the Teacher Training Center (CFP), influence their academic training; such, the university students wrote letters expressing the challenges and difficulties encountered by them in their trajectories. It is worth mentioning that the *hermanas* are northeastern women who are located between the interior of Paraíba and the interior of Ceará.

It is necessary to describe this geographical space in which we are located, University where research is carried out, researchers and women, Hermanas, co-authors of research. This description is due to the fact that this is a federal university located in northeastern backlands, in a region on the border between the states of Paraíba, Rio Grande do Norte and Ceará, covering a region marked by drought not only as a natural phenomenon, but, above all as a political phenomenon, through the Cangaço movements – being a route of Lampião and Maria Bonita – through the messianic movements – through the presence of the blessed José Lourenço, Father Ibiapina, Father Cicero, among others who traveled these regions throughout the 18th and 19th centuries – a region also marked by the struggle for land, recognition and dignity carried out by indigenous people and quilombolas, in a resilient way throughout the centuries and with a large presence of women in these movements today. For these geographical, historical and political characteristics the place conforms multiple belongings revealed by research, which impose important aspects of writing and intersections.

Thinking about research that works with the writings of subalternized women, from their places of speech, considering their social crossings and belongings brought a theoretical-methodological challenge to the researchers, after all, what methodology to use to work with the intersections/crossings of the research *sisters* in an integral way and respectful? How do we present them to readers in a way that makes it obvious that they are far beyond being an “object of study”, but are actually active writers in the scientific production carried out? There were many questions and reflections.

From dialogue with decolonial feminist intellectuals, the idea of figures emerged entitled: 'de(s)ingularity of crossings', in which we sought to bring in a way dynamic the intersections found in the letters/writings of the *sisters*. With this, the purpose of this writing is to present the theoretical-methodological encounter with the figures mentioned, highlight how the construction of these figures contributed significantly for the discussion on gender and intersectionality in the academic space and to bring the findings that this exercise presented.

## Disagreements, encounters and methodological intertwinings

Taken by the reflection that Patrícia Hill Collins (2017) tells us about not getting lost in the translation, in the sense that we have ethical responsibility when working with intersectional theory<sup>3</sup>, being intimate with decolonial feminists, with the purpose of promoting policies emancipatory public policies, social justice and the public good, which we try not to “fall behind the curve” when working with the crossings/intersections of the research *sisters*. The author demonstrates a certain concern with contemporary research that neglects the essence and the ancestry of such theory and, if you are concerned, with the reductionism that they place on it, because “seem more dedicated to describing the truth than criticizing it and rewriting it deteriorates inadvertently defeating the purpose of intersectionality itself” (COLLINS, 2017, p. 14).

Therefore, in order to avoid contradiction and not get lost in translation, we begin a process of reflection, research and praxis about how to work theoretically and methodologically with the analysis of the research, above all, with regard to the unfolding carried out in the article on screen, about how we would present the research *sisters* to the readers, and reflect and discuss the intersections encountered, the repercussions they cause in private, public and academic life of university students and think about alternatives and policies public support for women in the academic space.

A priori, we begin an exercise of reading and intimate dialogue with the writings of authors feminists, in order to find an answer to the following question: which data collection instrument data we must use so as not to be disconnected from the research proposal, an instrument that would ensure that the identities of the *sisters* were preserved and that it would not be “closed”? Thus, from reading and dialoguing with several authors, two authors in specific, they spoke directly to me. Gloria Anzaldúa (2000), based on her writing “Speaking in Tongues: A Letter to Third World Women Writers” and Conceição Evaristo (2020) with his writing “Escrevivência and its subtexts”.

Gloria Anzaldúa (2000), taken by the same conflict of wanting to write a text theoretical-scientific that brings her closer to her readers, suggests writing the letter; Conceição Evaristo (2020, p. 35), in the same direction, tells us about the term created by her, the *Escrevivência*, which according to the author “is a search to insert ourselves into the world with our own

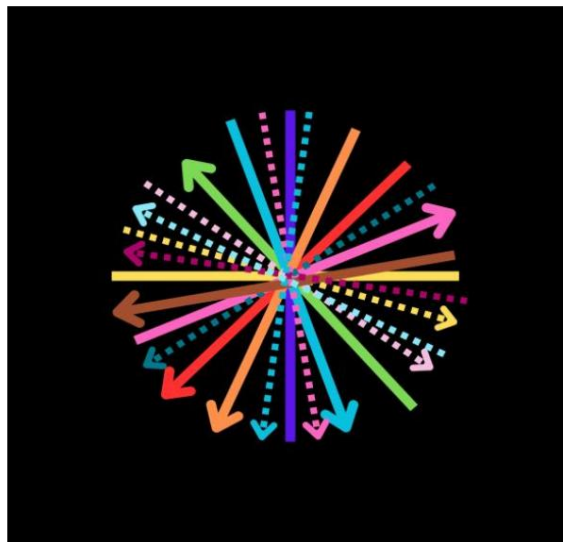
<sup>3</sup> Authors such as Crenshaw (2004), Berth (2020) and Akotirene (2020) tell us that intersectionality equips us to analyze the structures of oppression that a single body may be inserted into, showing that as these structures intersect, they enhance the discriminatory and exclusionary effects on the person's private, subjective and public life.

stories, with our lives, that the world disregards”, a writing that allows us to be spoken by ourselves and, from the moment we speak of ourselves, we are speaking of a collective. It was in this intimate conversation, with the reading of the cited writings, that we finally found the research data collection instrument: the letters, the writing of the writings.

Then another question arose: which method of analysis to use to analyze the crossings/intersections of the research *sisters* ? And again we continue with the readings of the writings of feminist intellectuals. During this dynamic we began a dialogue deep and reflective with the article “Intersectionality in race and gender discrimination” by Kimberle Crenshaw (2004). In this article, the aforementioned author provides illustrations and symbols interesting to work with intersectionalities, they portray them from the symbology of the intersections between streets and traffic, to show how intersections can collide and enhance the impact. Therefore, we appreciate this specific article along with Intersectionality theory as part of the method of analysis.

Based on dialogues, reflections and dynamics with the writings of intellectuals cited, we introduce the analysis process in the writings of the research *sisters* . In exercise of reading the cards, we were noting the intersections found and organizing them separately, when you finish reading the letters individually, we move on to the next step: observe the similarities and individualities of the crossings/intersections of each *hermana*. Then, by observing the intersections found, we find new intersections of intersections. Based on the materials found and anchored in the proposal theoretical-methodological approach of Crenshaw (2004), we began organizing the raw material from the representation of intersections, by means of figures, of the crossings of arrows and lines as is represented in the following figure:

**Figure I - De(s)ingularity of crossings**



**Source:** Research archive, Soares (2023).



As we can see in the figure above, we have lines, continuous line arrows and sectioned line arrows. The central lines, in yellow and violet, represent the intersections that are similar to all the *sisters* in the survey, the solid line arrows are the intersections and the broken line arrows are the intersections of the solid line arrows.

The name of the figure came up:

[...] from the practical construction of the *sisters' crossings*. The term "de(s)ingularity" is the combination of the prefix "des" with the word "singularity." The prefix "*des*," according to the Priberam dictionary (online), indicates negation, separation, or cessation; while the word "*singularity*," according to the Dicio dictionary (online), means something unique. This indicates that as these crossings intersect, they form the *sisters' identity*, their singularity. But, at the same time, these same crossings position them in different places, bringing to light "the many of themselves," hence the prefix "*des*." Thus, working with singularity from a collective perspective. (Soares, 2023, p. 44).








Each color represents the identities/social belongings/crossings found in the letters of the *sisters*. For this, the need arose to create tables for reading of the figures:

**Table I - Reading the solid line arrows**

Cor	Nome da cor	Identificação
	Violeta	Gênero
	Amarelo	Estudante
	Verde	Raça
	Laranja	Classe social baixa
	Vermelho	Trabalhadora remunerada
	Rosa	Parentalidade
	Azul	Trajetos
	Marrom	TDAH

Source: Soares (2023).

**Table II - Reading the sectioned line arrows**

Cores	Nome das cores	Identificação das cores
	Rosa (mesma cor de parentalidade)	Mãe de mais de um/a filho/a
	Rosa claro	Mãe solo
	Rosa escuro	Mãe solo de pessoa com deficiência
	Azul (mesma cor de trajeto)	Mora longe da universidade
	Azul claro	Mora em outra cidade
	Azul escuro	Mora em outro Estado
	Amarelo	Estuda a noite

Source: Soares (2023).

The construction of the figures provided a better visualization, both for the readers and for readers to have a dimensional sense of how - taking into account the intersections found - the structures of oppression work together to enhance the difficulties and exclusion of these women in the academic space, using inequality to such (AKOTIRENE, 2020); as for us researchers to visualize the context and reality in which each *sister* is inserted, giving us more in-depth and coherent results with the research proposal. It is worth highlighting that the production of figures of 'de(s)ingularity of crossings' assured us the preservation of the subjectivity of each participant, because by making a figure presenting each *sister* in an individual way did not open up any margins for generalizations, in addition to externalizing that the greater the number of crossings, the greater the impacts on the lives of these women.

### **The intersections and intersection points of the writings: presenting the *sisters* of the research**

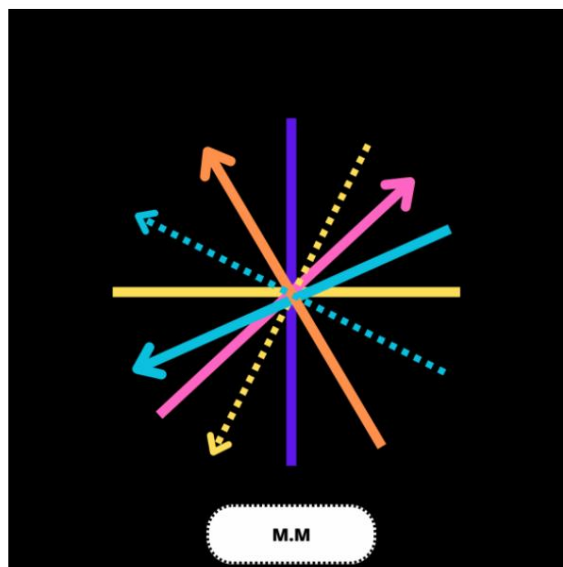
In this topic we seek to bring the findings that the construction of the figures of 'de(s)ingularity of crossings' provided us, through the presentation of the



*hermanas*, showing how their social belongings, their realities and their crossings influence their academic lives. The research volunteers are undergraduate students from the Teacher Training Center (CFP), at the University Federal University of Campina Grande (UFCG), located in Cajazeiras - PB, in the Alto Sertão region of Paraíba.

In total there are nine volunteer *sisters*, two of them living in the interior of Ceará and seven of them live in the interior of Paraíba. To preserve their identities, they were identified with the initial letters of their first two names. This choice was made with the aim of leaving their “signatures” in the research, understanding that they also wrote together with the researchers, through their writings. The following we will present the research *sisters*, showing the reality of each one.

**Figure II4 - De(s)ingularity of MM crossings**



Source: Soares (2023).

MM describes herself/self-declares as follows: she is a twenty-four-year-old woman old, white, from the northeast of Paraíba, married, mother of a five-year-old child old, housewife, poor, daughter of farmers and studied in public schools. About your commute to university, because you live far away, even though you live in the city you are in locates the university, depends on rides from university transport. They were found in their writings the following intersections: gender, student, night shift student, commute, lives far from university, parenthood.

<sup>4</sup> Consult the tables in the previous topic to read the figures in this topic.

Sister MM in her letter reports that upon finishing high school she had managed to a job opportunity as a saleswoman, but with three months left to go graduation, she discovers an unplanned pregnancy, at the time she was eighteen years old. During this period and during the postpartum period, she stopped studying and working to dedicate herself to her parenthood. However, this break from studies made it difficult for her to access university in the future:

*On the other hand, I didn't expect the process of getting into university to be an uphill struggle. I spent two semesters trying to get in through the Enem exam using my score.*

*Sisu at UFCG, and with each failed attempt I got further away from achieving my dream.*

*I ended up comparing and belittling myself because all my classmates were getting into college and I was left behind, like a beautiful baby who understood me better than I understood myself. I found family and friends judging me and disbelieving in my ability to get into college. I heard people telling me to give up and focus on work. Just as my mother's bills were mounting, I went out into the city streets frantically handing out resumes. ( Sister MM 's Writing Experience ) (Soares, 2023).*

In this excerpt taken from MM's writings we can see the impacts of intersections in your life and how they work together (a fact that we will notice as the presentations of the *sisters*). On the one hand, it is crossed by gender inequalities and parenting, being criticized by family and friends for wanting to go to university, for being a mother and involved in the challenges of reconciling motherhood and studies; on the other hand, she is crossed by class inequalities, having to look for work to help with expenses of her mother's house. She, in her searches, got a temporary job as saleswoman and was then selected for a preparatory course for the Enem, but due to your reality, your journey has intensified:

*With an eight-month-old baby and working all day, who would look after her so I could go to class at night? That's when I found myself asking one or another family member to watch her while I was away. But everyone had their own obligations, and the father [of the child] was also studying, I kind of felt like they were taking away my right to study, as a woman and a mother, and I had this verbal confirmation every day; some told me not to continue. ( Sister MM's writing ) (Soares, 2023).*

After three months of preparatory courses, MM managed to enter UFCG, on the Bachelor's Degree in Portuguese Language. Working, studying and caring for my daughter/son she remained until the COVID-19 pandemic. With the pandemic she had to redo her life, married her daughter's father and became a housewife, mother and student. With the end of the pandemic, she says that the difficulties increased:

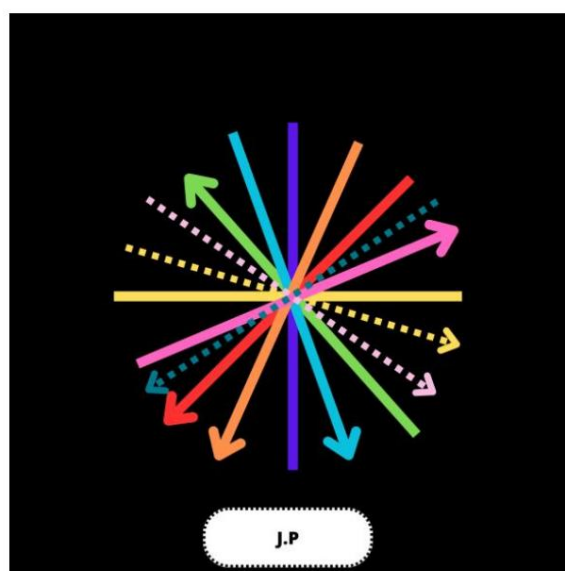




*I live in a small house given to me by my grandmother, it's me and [my daughter/son], [my daughter/son's] father lives in another city, which means I take care of [my daughter/son] Partially solo, I don't have transportation, which makes the journey to the university, which is located on the other side of the city, very complicated. This makes me have to rely on the goodwill of drivers to offer me a ride. It's important to note that many of them don't stop, and when I often don't have the money to pay for a motorcycle taxi, I walk to campus. [...] On night school days, I pick up [my daughter] from full-time school at 5 p.m. and drop them off at an aunt's house. The journey home is very complicated because it's late at night, and I don't have neighbors or anyone to wait for me from class. ( Sister MM 's Writing ) (Soares, 2023).*

In the last two excerpts above, the unequal sexual division of parenting and household chores, when, in her writing, she emphasizes that it is she who is responsible for the house and the care of their daughter/son; in addition to discrimination gender, due to the social pressure imposed solely on her. Another important factor to highlight is the the question of their movement to university, which involves class crossing, as does not always have money for transportation and, due to gender bias, because of finding getting home at night is complicated.

**Figure III - De(s)ingularity of JP crossings**



Source: Soares (2023).

JP describes herself/self-declares as follows: she is a twenty-five-year-old woman age, brown, from the Northeast of Ceará, single mother of a six-year-old child, poor, paid worker and studied only in public institutions. She is a student at night course in History, is in her thirteenth semester. She became pregnant in his second period of the course, due to the lack of effective policies in the institution, failed in some subjects and had to drop out of the course. This fact justifies the number of periods

more integrated. Regarding her commute to university, she uses public transportation. If moves from the State of Ceará to the State of Paraíba. The intersections found in their writings were as follows: gender, student, night shift student, race, class, paid worker, parenthood, single mother, commute, lives in another state.

When JP became pregnant, at the beginning of her graduation, she had no fixed income and lived with her sister and nephews. It was a very difficult time for her, as she was faced with the abandonment of his/her daughter's father, taking her/him to the "bottom of the well", which affected her/him all aspects of your life, including your formative process, due to the emotional shaken:

*It was incredibly difficult having to go to college every night for nine months, and working every morning and afternoon for nine months. Dealing with nausea, fatigue, and having to find the few moments I had to read the dense course texts, to get through the night and endure as much of the class as possible. All of this while emotionally shattered, with absurd pressure regarding my role. After all, I felt that if I wanted so badly to train to be a history teacher, then I would have to face all this in silence and without any help, or simply give up, leaving that space, the academic environment. Feeling this hurts, because you are already so fragile, so lost and so frail, that feeling pressured about everything only makes the process more cruel. ( Sister JP 's Writing Experience ) (Soares, 2023).*

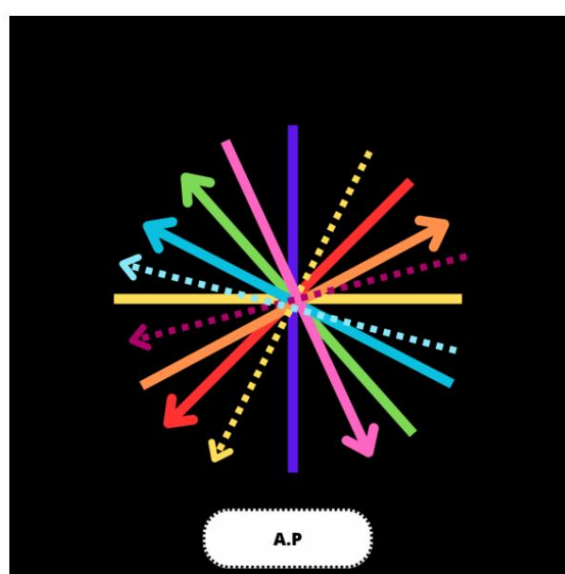
We observe how the beginning of JP's academic trajectory placed her in great vulnerabilities, especially emotional and psychological, which affected all dimensions of your life. From the beginning we come across many obstacles: abandonment, judgment, discrimination, financial difficulties, lack of time, work, tiredness, single motherhood, pregnancy, studies, regionality, etc., which placed her at a disadvantage in the academic space, making her feel like she doesn't belong there, excluded.

Close to giving birth to her daughter/son, she filed a maternity leave application at university, to continue the course remotely, but the missing assessments for her to finish, they arrived two days after JP had given birth. Being in the postpartum period, she was unable to complete them, resulting in his failure, delay in the course and drop in academic performance.

*With the start of the next semester, I found myself with a baby who was exclusively breastfeeding on demand. I couldn't go back to school and attend university, so my only option was to drop out for the entire semester, while my classmates followed their schedule. [...] If we've achieved the right to university, why doesn't the academic environment meet our needs? Why do we have to choose between dedicating ourselves to a good professional development and giving up motherhood? Why are there so many sacrifices on the part of women, and when it comes to men, aren't they asked to give up? ( Sister JP 's writing ) (Soares, 2023).*

JP's writings bring up many sensitive issues ranging from talking about the paternal abandonment, the importance of support networks for women who are mothers and/or paid workers, the lack of public policies to support women at university; even on the issue of regionality, she, for example, lives in another state (in the interior from Ceará) and having to travel interstate, I was unable to attend class with the her son who was, at the time, breastfeeding on demand.

**Figure IV - De(s)ingularity of AP crossings**



Source: Soares (2023).

AP describes herself/self-declares as follows: she is a twenty-eight-year-old woman age, brown, from the northeast of Paraíba, mother of a child with Down Syndrome seven years old, widowed, poor, a paid worker, she studied only in public schools and calls herself "out of the norm." She is a night-time undergraduate student. in Pedagogy, is in her ninth semester. Regarding her commute to university, she goes from public transportation, moving from one city to another. The intersections found in their writings were as follows: gender, student, night shift student, race, paid worker, class, parenthood, single mother of a disabled child, commute, residence in another city.

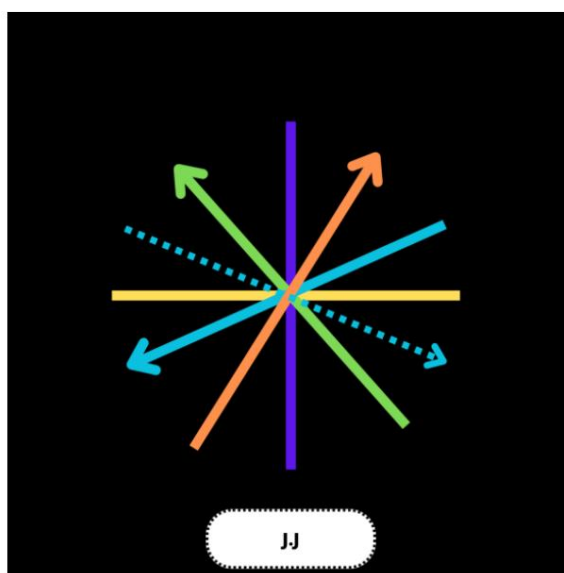
When hermana AP entered university, she needed to reorganize her time *and* her routine, because during the hours of her day she needed to combine parental care, paid work, unpaid work (housework), studies, therapies of the daughter/daughter and consider the time she spends traveling between home and university.

home, as he lives in another city. His struggle against time is evident in his letter and this arises from all the crossings that pass through your life, which directly affects the her academic performance. This statement is evident when she says: *"the only time that I have to study was what I was at university"* (AP, 2023). *Hermana AP* still he writes:

*To get home, I always told my mother I was arriving, and she would often pick me up at the bus stop or meet me on the way. Because I arrive late at night in the city, I'm still afraid of being robbed. [...] At university, I miss this support because I don't know of any public policies that can help academic mothers. There were days when there was no one to leave [my daughter/son] at home, and since I couldn't miss school, I took [her/him] with me, but thank God the professor empathized with me and [her/son], letting me stay with me in class. So, academic life demands a lot from us mothers, but the university doesn't provide any support for this. So many people end up dropping out of the course because they don't have support. At first, I thought I wouldn't be able to handle it. ( Sister AP 's Writing Experience ) (Soares, 2023).*

It is also crossed by the question of the route between home-university-home. For live in another city and study at night, her *sister AP* arrives in her city very late, which makes her feel insecure and afraid. Another important factor to be highlighted in AP writing is the lack of support for undergraduate mothers at the university, because, based on their reality and experiences she does not feel welcomed by the institution and she could see that many women who They are mothers like her, they gave up their degrees because they didn't have this support.

**Figure V - De(s)ingularity of JJ crossings**



Source: Soares (2023).



JJ describes herself/self-declares as follows: she is a twenty-four-year-old woman age, black, quilombola, from the northeastern interior of Paraíba, from a rural community, poor, the first in her family to enter higher education. She is a morning student of Bachelor's degree in Pedagogy, currently in her ninth year. At the time of the research, she lived in the city of institution where she studies, sharing an apartment with a colleague. About her commute to school university when you don't walk, you pay for transportation. The intersections found in their writings were as follows: gender, student, race, class, path, lives far from university.

JJ for living in another city and not having the option of using public transportation to make the journey home-university-home you need to live in the city where the university. At first she lived with her uncle, who at the time was married and had a child very young, because she lived "as a favor" in her uncle's house, she felt obliged to help with the household chores and baby care. Regarding her studies during this period, she says:

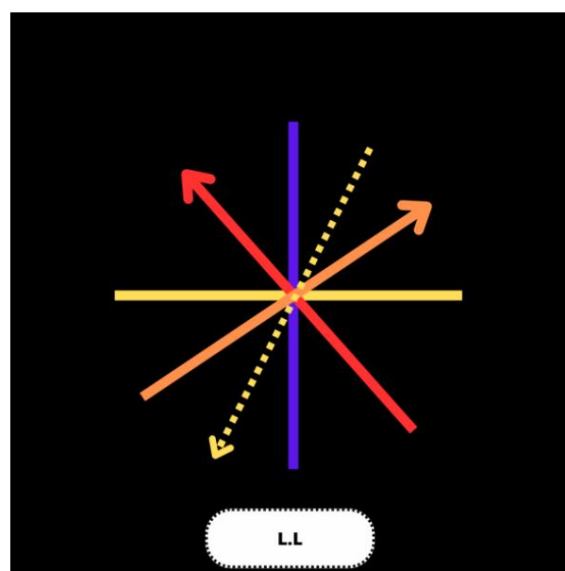
*The time I had to study was at night, which was very difficult. I rarely studied in the afternoon. The child was very restless, and I needed to support her and her mother. [...] As I wrote, I remembered that at that time I couldn't participate in university programs as a tutor. I remembered that I passed a tutoring program but didn't go because, since it was after school hours, my uncles were worried about getting home at night. I also had this fear, even though it was close (about a 10-minute walk). I remembered that when my mother told him to let me live with them, he asked me not to wear shorts to university because there was construction work on the way and lots of men. The world is a difficult and cruel place for women. Today, I understand that, although this phrase is intended to be caring, it is loaded with sexism. So, if I were violated, the blame would be on the clothes I was wearing, it would be mine. ( Sister JJ 's writing ) (Soares, 2023).*

Gender crossings are too present in this part of his writing, making it clear how they affected their formative process, taking away hours studies, confiscating their participation in university programs/projects and taking away their right to choose to dress as she wanted. After some time she began to share apartment with another woman/student, but the fear and insecurity did not leave her:

*I've thought about dropping out of the course several times (writing has helped me relive and relive my experiences, and I'm grateful for that). I've been scared. I always say that the worst part is being away from my family (I don't have any blood relatives here). I often feel alone, isolated in an apartment, fighting for a dream that isn't just mine (and that's a good thing, because perhaps if it weren't for that, I wouldn't be here anymore). I cry when I write because I relive my story, remembering how fragile and strong I was. I'm afraid to go home alone, at night, and with strangers, but I've done it; I needed to. (Writing of sister JJ) (Soares, 2023).*

Fear, loneliness and the thought of giving up were with her throughout her journey. academic. What they show us is that *sisters* like JJ (and I partly include myself in this group) who comes from a humble family and sees education as a reason to hope when faced with with the academic space that does not have our features in its structures, that feels what is burning is living in an unequal, sexist and patriarchal society - without having our family, friends, partners nearby, who are our refuge route - weakens us at the same time time that strengthens us, as JJ says. *Sister JJ* also brings a reflection very important, talking in as your meeting with women/friends/comrades/hermanas/feminists formed a support network at times like these: *"I only thought about the worst, about how difficult it is to be a woman, a black student in a city without family support, in a sexist society, while thanking this friend for her support and so many others who are my lap, who are always with me, even when I feel alone."* (JJ, 2023).

**Figure VI - De(s)ingularity of LL crossings**



**Source:** Soares (2023).

LL describes herself/self-declares as follows: she is a twenty-four-year-old woman age, white, from the northeastern interior of Paraíba, poor, a commercial worker, and studied only in public schools. She is a night student in the Bachelor's Degree in Pedagogy, in her tenth period. She lives in the same city as the institution where she studies. She sees in education the hope of better living conditions. About your movement to university, it does not depend on public transportation. The intersections found in its writings were as follows: gender, student, night shift student, class,





paid worker. She begins her letter by expressing how she feels about being crossed for different reasons:

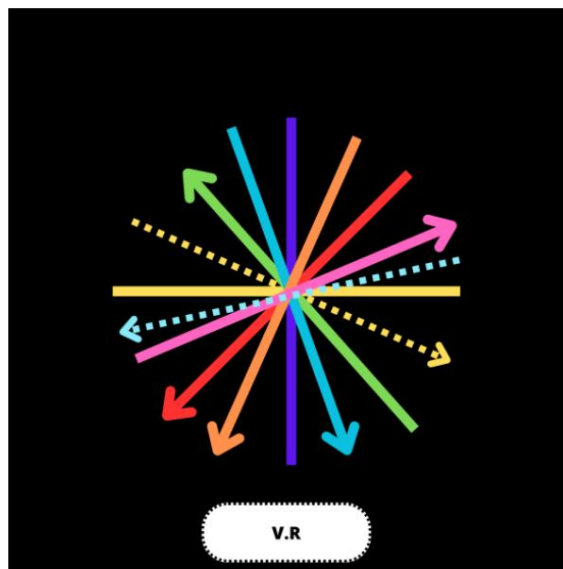
*[...] in a conversation with God, I said, "Lord, I should have been born brave, because I was born a woman." And when I said this, I was thinking, "Wow, life for women brings many challenges," especially when you're part of other minority groups and suffer daily from inequalities. Before I continue with my rant, I wanted to add something...*

*I'm writing on these sheets [different sheets than the ones the researcher provided] because I'm at work now. I haven't had much time to write before, because there are so many demands, working mornings and afternoons, studying at night, and still running around trying to find a break in the week to do my work. I often feel useless because I can't keep up with all my demands, but I still need to keep going. ( Sister LL 's Writing Experience )  
(Soares, 2023).*

Sister LL , for being a retail worker, working from Monday to Friday (morning and afternoon) and on Saturdays (half day), he is in a constant battle against time to being able to reconcile paid work with academic activities, which affects her so much physically and psychologically, as she feels tired and exhausted all the time. Everyone these aspects also affect your performance and full participation at university, making it clear that people who are in subordinate groups have difficulty both in access and permanence in this space:

*I really wanted to participate in events, tutoring, and various other programs, but I needed my job. It hurt so much not to go to the events, seeing most people going and me not. But if I quit my job, I would have time but no money. From the knowledge I gained about the university and the projects, I became enchanted and decided I wanted to participate, but how? If the programs aren't designed for people like me, who work all day. I cried for days because I wanted to be part of it, I wanted to learn, but it was impossible. [...] Regarding the university, the projects and programs, even the public ones, aren't designed based on the limitations of many students. ( Sister LL 's Writing )  
(Soares, 2023).*

Figure VII - De(s)ingularity of VR crossings



Source: Soares (2023).

VR describes herself/self-declares as follows: she is a twenty-three-year-old woman age, black, poor, mother of a three-year-old child, married, paid worker, A woman from the northeastern interior of Paraíba. She was the first in her family to enter higher education. She has studied at both private and public institutions. She is a student in the evening program Bachelor's degree in Pedagogy, she is in her ninth semester. Regarding her commute to university, she takes public transportation, moving from one city to another. The intersections found in their writings were the following: gender, student, night shift student, race, class, paid worker, parenthood, commute, lives in another city.

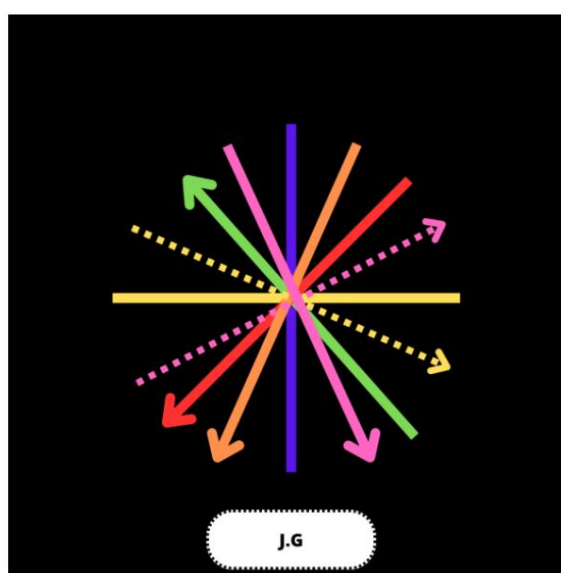
VR started working very early due to his economic conditions: *"it wasn't a forced labor, after all, we poor people don't have the option to choose, and so I did. I understood very early that our social class is scrapped and forgotten."* For being a mother, a worker paid, student and unpaid worker (household chores), it is difficult for she, being able to manage her time, due to the many demands in her daily life. With this, to carry out the work and academic tasks, Sister VR is waiting for her daughter/son sleep at night to get started, staying up until dawn carrying out these activities. About your participation in university projects and programs:

*The university offers many programs and projects, but I don't participate in almost anything, precisely because of all the demands already mentioned here. [...] Returning to the issue of our institution's lack of support, I feel a debt and a failure to all the mothers on campus. It's as if we don't exist, as if being a mother weren't a factor in our declining performance. And I'm deeply sorry. I feel for the mothers who have passed through here, and for myself, who feel it every day.*

of this weight and also for the student mothers who will feel the same anguish that I feel.  
 (Escrevivência da *hermana* VR) (Soares, 2023).

Like the other *sisters* already introduced, she also has difficulties participating of the university's programs and projects and says that he feels - from a collective conception, thinking about student mothers who share similar realities - invisible and, that university does not think about institutional public policies that guarantee the permanence and full experience for student mothers.

**Figure VIII - De(s)ingularity of JG crossings**



Source: Soares (2023).

JG describes herself/self-declares as follows: she is a thirty-seven-year-old woman age, black, poor, mother of three children (nine, five and two years old), married, working. She is a paid housewife from the northeastern interior of Paraíba. She attended public schools only. She is currently a ninth-year student in the evening program for a Bachelor's degree in Pedagogy. He lives in the same city as the institution he studies at. About his commute to school university, it does not depend on public transportation. The intersections found in its writings were as follows: gender, student, night shift student, race, class, paid worker, parenthood, mother of more than one child.

For *sister* JG, the demands of parenthood are even more intense, as she is a mother of three children, in addition to being a student, a paid worker and a non-paid worker paid. Due to the many crossings that permeate his life, his trajectory academic career has been difficult. When she joined UFCG, she was already the mother of her first child. daughter and then became pregnant with her second daughter, due to the overload

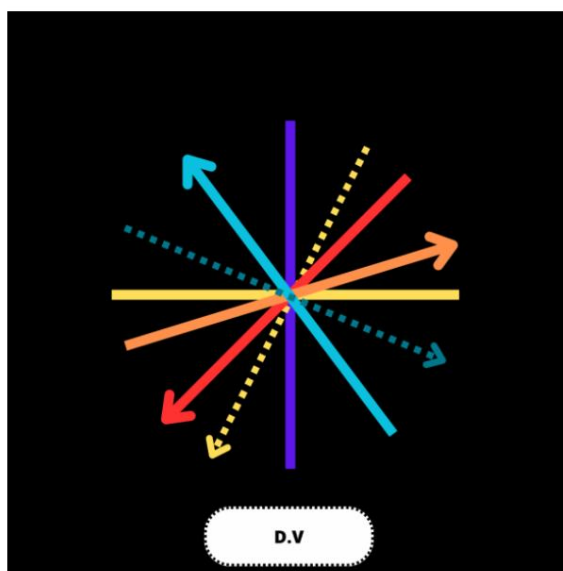
of tasks, he had to suspend his course for two periods. After returning to university

She became pregnant with her third child and decided to continue the course even though she knew about the difficulties he would face. Reflecting on his trajectory, JG says the following:

*Being a mother and a student is a huge challenge, and for a long time, I felt guilty for not being more present in my children's lives or for taking up my time on other things other than academic demands. [...] If I were to summarize everything I've experienced so far, I'd say I've always lived in a great inner conflict. If I were with my children and my husband, I felt I could be studying more or reading a book. At the same time, if I were studying or completing a project, I felt I would be neglecting my family. With all these inner conflicts, I've accumulated enormous exhaustion and discouragement over the years, and to be honest, these have been my greatest challenges. ( Sister JG 's Writing Experience ) (Soares, 2023).*

The feeling of guilt, exhaustion and discouragement accompanied her for a long period of time. her journey, because with the accumulation of activities she was unable to carry them out fully, integrates.

**Figure IX - De(s)ingularity of DV crossings**



Source: Soares (2023).

DV describes herself/self-declares as follows: she is a twenty-three-year-old woman age, white, poor, paid worker, from the northeastern interior of Ceará and single.

She studied only in public schools. She is a night student in a Bachelor's degree in Chemistry, being in the ninth period. Regarding her commute to university, she goes by public transport public. It moves from the State of Ceará to the State of Paraíba. The intersections found

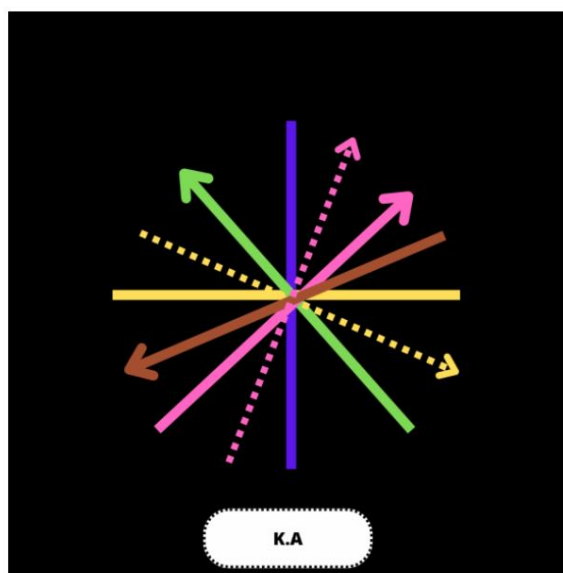


in their writings were the following: gender, student, night shift student, class, paid worker, commute, lives in another state. Regarding working and studying, she says:

*The challenges of working and studying are many, especially for those who need to move to another state to attend college, like me. My routine starts at 7:00 a.m., I start work at 8:00 a.m., and finish at 5:00 p.m. As soon as I leave work, I head to the bus stop that goes to college, arriving at 6:00 p.m. and returning at 10:30 p.m., finishing the routine at 12:30 a.m. Working all day, Monday through Friday, makes it impossible for me to participate in extension projects and research; I have little time to dedicate to studying and completing course activities. [...] With this routine, I sometimes feel behind in my course compared to my other colleagues, who have more time available. Unfortunately, I can't choose between working and studying, as both are essential. ( Sister DV 's writing experience ) (Soares, 2023).*

For carrying out paid work and needing to take an interstate route to go to DV's university hours are timed. She also cannot participate of programs and projects due to their intersections, which makes it impossible to experience the university in full.

**Figure X - De(s)ingularity of KA crossings**



Source: Soares (2023).

KA describes herself/self-declares as follows: she is a thirty-six-year-old woman age, has Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), brown, class average, housewife, mother of two children (one seven and one six months old), married and from the northeastern interior of Paraíba. She studied only in public schools. She is a student of the course night program of Bachelor's Degree in Pedagogy, currently in its eleventh period. He resides in city of the institution where you study and use your own transportation to get to the



university. The intersections found in their writings were the following: gender, student, night student, race, parenthood, mother of more than one child, has ADHD. She shares what it's like to juggle parenting, work, and paid and academic activities:

*The pedagogy course is a challenge! When I started, I had a 2-year-old daughter, which is a challenging age. As a first-time mother, I couldn't do long readings and a young daughter who craved attention. At the time, I wasn't diagnosed with ADHD, so I couldn't focus on performing well. I also didn't have a support network. I had a lot of support from my husband, who always encouraged me, but I failed two basic subjects: philosophy and sociology.*

*Although the course was at night and I had the day to study, doing the readings for a housewife during this period was very complicated, taking care of the house during this period was very complicated, managing household chores, caring for and playing with a young daughter, tests, projects and anxiety and lack of focus. ( Sister KA 's writing experience ) (Soares, 2023).*

KA even having the day “free” to study - I say free because housework and care are considered invisible work, hence the quotation marks - could not perform their academic activities due to the overload of unpaid work and the lack of a stable support network. Because of this, she also fell behind in her studies and considered dropping out, as other *sisters* who have a reality similar to yours.

While I present the research *sisters* we can notice that even though they have their different specificities, realities and contexts they talk to each other and their crossings meet. This reinforced the importance of the figures of *dis(s)ingularity of the crossings* for the discussion on gender and intersection, because at the same time that I respect their individualities I also show them as a collective, due to the encounters that we noticed throughout the presentations.

The figures also made it possible to find the intersections, from the writings, so that we can discuss, reflect and find solutions to problems and afflictions that the *sisters* went through/are going through to remain at the university. Highlighting that the *sisters* who are mothers, housewives, paid workers and who live far from universities suffer from disadvantages in the academic space. Due to work overload, class inequality, the sexual division of labor, regionalism, violence and gender inequality. Also highlighting that when these intersections occur, find the disadvantages are further magnified. In view of this, the greater the number of crossings, the greater the impact they will have on the lives of these women, influencing their public, private and academic lives.



## “With the fair understanding that the lyrics are not just mine”: some considerations

We title the final considerations with the quote from Conceição Evaristo (2020, p. 35) for understanding that it perfectly sums up what it was like to work with the writings and the intersections of the research *sisters*. The research was not only by the author with the collaboration of the advisor, other women wrote along with us. Therefore, it is done. It is important to point out to you, readers, before finishing this writing, how the letters of the *sisters* came to us. All of them, even though they were overwhelmed, over time short to carry out their own activities that were part of their daily routine, they were interested to contribute to research, even if it is necessary to open up more space in their busy schedules to carry out yet another activity that would take time and that would make it dive into your most painful memories.

We receive letters in different situations. Waiting to finish writing in the cafeteria college student with baby on her lap, on the way to university on the bus university student, leaving their homes with their non-kangaroo child just to make the delivery, in work. All this because they believed/believe in the power of our scientific work, of our collective writing, the non-neutrality of our speeches. All of us demanding, from our self-definition and experiences, for a more equitable academic environment that provides public policies to support women that consider their specificities.

In view of this, the writings of the *sisters* constituted theoretical contributions for research, be legitimate writings, which go beyond mere common sense. Understanding that at the same time in which the *sisters* had the space to speak for themselves, without being spoken to/nullified by “others”, from the enunciation of their places, we managed, together, to launch a spin epistemological in scientific practice (Figueiredo, 2020). Bringing research that was “[...] far from being an individual, restricted research, spoken by others in the third person”; contradicting the grammar of the Portuguese language, transforming “we” into the first person of singular (Soares, 2023, 107).

In this way, going against the neoliberal empowerment that according to Angela Figueiredo (2020) is an isolated empowerment, which does not think from a perspective of collectivity, only in individuality; and going towards an empowerment that from the enunciation of our places, we are also enunciating a collectivity. Thinking about the public good, justice and social transformation. Showing, from this unfolding, the importance of adhering to a methodology that brings us closer, where the sound of our voices can appear, where we can write and do science together.

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