

RESEARCH REPORT

Social Psychology

Editor

Raquel Souza Lobo Guzzo

Support

Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (CNPq) (Process nº 151336/2021-0). This study was financed in part by the Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (CAPES) - Finance Code 001.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

Data Availability

The research data are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Received

April 23, 2023

Final version

October 28, 2024

Approved

February 28, 2025

What is the perfect match? Neoliberalism, dating apps and development of affectional bonds in middle age

Qual o match perfeito? Neoliberalismo, aplicativos de relacionamento e construção de vínculos afetivos na meia-idade

Caroline dos Santos Spindola¹ , Eduardo Name Risk¹ 

¹ Universidade Federal de São Carlos, Centro de Educação e Ciências Humanas, Departamento de Psicologia. São Carlos, SP, Brasil. Correspondence to: E. N. RISK. E-mail: <eduardorisk@ufscar.br>.

Article based on the undergraduate research by C. S. SPINDOLA, entitled “*Uso de aplicativos de relacionamento e construção de vínculos afetivo-sexuais entre adultos na meia idade*”. Universidade Federal de São Carlos, 2022.

How to cite this article: Spindola, C. S., & Risk, E. N. (2025). What is the perfect match? Neoliberalism, dating apps and development of affectional bonds in middle age. *Estudos de Psicologia* (Campinas), 42, e230037. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1982-0275202542e230037>

Abstract

Objective

The present study had the aim of understanding how the middle age range, in the context of interpersonal relationships based on neoliberalism, has used dating apps to create affectional and sexual bonds.

Method

This is a cross-sectional descriptive exploratory qualitative study. Five men and two women (40-55 years old) participated. The participants answered social demographic form, use of social networks form and participated in a remote interview session based on a semi-structured script.

Results

From the refinement of the analysis, the following thematic categories arose: achievements and future; emotions, satisfaction, and deceptions; neoliberal ideology on relationships and affection hoarding.

Conclusion

Even though dating applications can be seen as a safe place, prejudice reports show that there are risks and frustrating interactions that could happen in virtual sociability.

Keywords: Interpersonal relations; Middle aged; Pair bond; Social interaction; Social networks.

Resumo

Objetivo

Este estudo teve por objetivo compreender como a faixa etária da meia-idade, no contexto de relações interpessoais fundamentadas no neoliberalismo, tem utilizado aplicativos de relacionamento para construir vínculos afetivos e sexuais.



Método

Trata-se de estudo qualitativo, exploratório, descritivo e transversal. Participaram cinco homens e duas mulheres (faixa etária 40-55 anos). Os participantes responderam formulário sociodemográfico, questionário referente ao uso de redes sociais, além de participarem de sessão de entrevista remota baseada em roteiro semiestruturado.

Resultados

A partir da análise dos dados emergiram as categorias: conquistas e planos; emoções, satisfação e decepções; ideologia neoliberal nas relações e entesouramento do afeto.

Conclusão

Embora os aplicativos de relacionamento possam ser vistos como espaço seguro, os relatos de preconceito denotam que riscos e interações frustrantes podem ocorrer na sociabilidade virtual.

Palavras-chave: *Relações interpessoais; Meia-idade; Vínculo do casal; Interação social; Redes sociais.*

Applications, popularly known as apps, are software developed for a specific purpose/service. They can be downloaded in mobile devices, such as tablets and smartphones with internet access, in a way to enhance all sorts of social, educational and/or commercial interactions and offer benefits to users (Gomes et al., 2019). In relationship apps, for example, Tinder and Happn, users can build up a network to benefit from meeting people, interacting, setting up casual dates, getting sexual satisfaction or even establishing lasting relationship, such as serious dates and even marriage.

The number of profiles created in dating apps raised during the period of social distancing recommended for the containment of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. In this regard, these platforms enabled virtual affective and sexual encounters, because of the restriction of physical contact. In addition, dating apps administrators identified an increase in the amount of messages sent daily and longer conversations, on top of the growing number of matches/profile matches (Jesus & Risk, 2024). From the point of view of affective-sexual relationships, dating apps made virtual encounters possible, a strategy that has succeeded from a market perspective due to changes in the setting of intimate life. According to Adelman (2011, p. 134, our translation)^{2,3}, there is today “a decline in the compulsory nature of marriage for the adult life, which allows a clear separation as well between sexual and erotic satisfaction and social coexistence for men and women”. Dating apps bring physically distant people closer and impose different forms of subjectivation marked by the instantaneity and instrumentality of the encounter.

In the current historical and social context of capitalist social production, the prerogatives of the economic system are not restricted to the level of monetary economy, once they cover interpersonal relationships based on neoliberal ideals. Beyond work institutions, neoliberal factors are present in the daily life of other institutions, such as family, for instance. Proposing an “impersonal, accurate, and objective rationality” (Nogueira, 2020, p. 12, our translation)⁴ in the labor sphere, neoliberalism expands to private life: space where individuals are encouraged to be responsible for success and failure in romantic and sexual performance through competition and individualism. In this ideological system, everything can (and should) be quantified, assessed, and compared (Nogueira, 2020).

Communication technologies, including dating apps, are primarily responsible for dissemination of the neoliberal logic in relationships beyond the labor market, once “social media have become a normalized characteristic of the daily life, causing neoliberalism to be present in these environments” (Sá et al., 2022, p. 32, our translation)⁵.

² The authors translated all quoted texts originally written in Portuguese.

³ In the original text: “um declínio do caráter compulsório do casamento para a vida adulta, o que permite também uma maior separação, para homens e mulheres, de satisfação de necessidades sexuais, eróticas e de convívio”. (Adelman, 2011, p. 134)

⁴ In the original text: “uma racionalidade impessoal, precisa e objetiva”. (Nogueira, 2020, p. 12)

⁵ In the original text: “as mídias sociais têm se tornado uma característica normalizada da vida cotidiana, fazendo com que o neoliberalismo esteja presente também nesses meios”. (Sá et al., 2022, p. 32)

The so-called selfie photographs support the neoliberal ideology by proposing self-entrepreneurship through social self-promotion. Therefore, attitudes inside and outside social networks follow the neoliberal rationality of investment, promoting ideals of freedom and success, as a choice possibility (Sá et al., 2022), an ideal also present in the logic of dating apps.

Neoliberalism has created and kept by moments of crisis exerts control over social practices by fostering the idea of freedom of choice and individual competence, as if they were responsible for success. Sá et al. (2022) pointed out that this control encourages competition among individuals and creates “certain ways of living, certain subjectivities” (Dardot & Laval, 2016, p. 16, our translation)⁶. In this movement of expansion and competition, the logic of permanent competition has also impacted affective social relationships, and the technological revolution has impelled the constant connection among individuals and a new shareholding economy (Sá et al., 2022), besides exerting impact on digital sociability relationships.

Workplace relationships have become more flexible, with no clear contracts and no pre-defined responsibilities, likewise affective and sexual relationships have also incorporated the neoliberal logic. In this system, there is a constant demand for self-worth, self-esteem, and self-care mediated “by the logic of goods (...), individuals are promoted to autonomous agents, capable of acting free to serve their interests” and they are converted into human capital, generating comparisons and constant ranking (Franco et al., 2021, p. 40, our translation)⁷.

This inflated subjectivity is associated with emptiness and causes anguish, frustration, and self-blaming upon personal failure. In other words, one can understand this autonomy and power conferred on human actions and the conception of the world as a large exchange market with possibilities for individual satisfaction, where every individual is built as the sole responsible for their choices and wellness, as the internalization of processes and a neoliberal market logic, without performing a critical analysis (Franco et al., 2021).

The neoliberal market logic that values individuals and is embodied in social relationships, when adopted in the construction of subjectivity, is health threatening (Andrade & Silva, 2019; Franco et al., 2021). “If the individual is ‘free’, in part due to the crisis of institutions and traditional disciplinary structures, they have on the other hand, a greater burden of responsibility when searching what is best for themselves” (Andrade & Silva, 2019, p. 148, our translation)⁸.

Such freedom can be noticed in the vast range of profiles in dating apps, deluding users into the idea that they would have endless possibilities of finding someone who will act as they expect for developing affectional bonds and, in turn, they will be able to recognize their success and performance.

An important analysis of approaching neoliberal conception and relationships is found in the book “The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money” by Keynes (1936/1996). According to the British economist, money is an asset that ensures safety against economic uncertainties (Val & Linhares, 2008). This asset has some economic functions such as: (a) a unit of account, capable of being expressed nominally; (b) general equivalent, in other words, it mediates exchanges, and it is (c) a store of value. Because of the store of value function, economic agents want to keep these assets for themselves in their liquidity (in cash), aiming at economic self-protection and exchange possibilities, enabling hoarding or liquidity preference. According to Keynes (1936/1996), there

⁶ In the original text: “*certas maneiras de viver, certas subjetividades*”. (Dardot & Laval, 2016, p. 16)

⁷ In the original text: “*pela lógica da mercadoria (...), os indivíduos são alçados a agentes autônomos, capazes de agir livremente para satisfazer seus interesses*”. (Franco et al., 2021, p. 48)

⁸ In the original text: “*Se o indivíduo é ‘livre’, em parte em função da crise das instituições e das estruturas disciplinares tradicionais, ele tem, por outro lado, uma sobrecarga maior de responsabilidade em sua busca do melhor para si mesmo*”. (Andrade & Silva, 2019, p. 148)

are three primary motives for money hoarding, namely: (a) transaction, (b) precaution, and (c) speculation.

The demand for money based on the transaction motive takes place when economic agents save money for everyday transactions, such as catching the bus, for example. The precautionary motive corresponds to a reserve for emergencies that could arise, such as the need for private medical care. And the speculative motive refers to investments for future opportunities, such as buying real estate that requires a reserve of money in large amounts with some urgency (Keynes, 1936/1996).

From the internalization of the neoliberal ideology in the construction of affective-sexual bonds and conjugality, the ideals of protection and exchange possibility are also ruled by the logic of store of value, in this case, store of affection. Therefore, the idea of depositing a great part of the store of affection in a relationship may seem risky for agents; exchanges of lower affective investment aiming at the satisfaction of precise and present needs seem to preserve individuals from possible losses and failures.

Although the general idea that 'love at first sight' should still prevail and guide the selection of partners, with the advent of digital media, dating apps users forge instrumental bonds with profiles: they select those who seem more attractive before considering the possibility of any emotional encounter with a potential partner in the search for the perfect match with romantic intentions (Illouz & Finkelman, 2009). Social networks and dating apps have influenced and mediated the creation and maintenance of affective sexual relationships, as historical and cultural constructions (Risk & Santos, 2021).

Dating apps anonymity and their specific use in the arrangement of affective and sexual encounters break taboos at the beginning of conversations and allow people to talk and flirt with no imposed inhibitions, molding a new way of meeting partners and building up relationships and bonds (Coleta et al., 2008). The apps have been used, in Brazil, by single middle-aged people who have never been married or by those who have recently gone through a breakup, marital separation or divorce. In our study, in terms of age, middle age comprises the age range between 40 and 60 years old.

Middle age is a concept used to describe biological, psychic, and social changes of the interval named adult life. Although it covers an important phase of the human life cycle, since it is the passage from adult to old age, it still corresponds to a gap in academic production (Antunes & Silva, 2013). Data from the demographic census of Brazil in 2010, recorded by the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE, Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics), estimate that there are 43,259,339 people between 40 and 60 years old.

Antunes and Silva (2013) pointed out that life periodization became necessary in modern Western society to ensure social organization and control; thus, it should not be considered and analyzed only in its biological and chronological nature. This phase of adult life is permeated by heterogeneity and complexity in accordance with the historical and social context. Yet, according to Antunes and Silva (2013, p. 131, our translation)⁹, after the decade of 1960, the category "adult" started to be understood as "a continuous process of construction and development", where at some points a standardized adult life with routine and stability, but also faces instability, professional mobility, family rearrangements, and individuality.

Despite the risk of generalization, as reported by Antunes and Silva (2013), women tend to become more introspective in the adult phase, since they do not have to keep assuming some roles

⁹ In the original text: "contínuo processo de construção e desenvolvimento". (Antunes & Silva, 2013 p. 131)

imposed by their gender and they start to notice body changes as age advances. On the other hand, men who were once compelled to be a productive family provider experience something alike, dealing with changes in their abilities and insertion in the labor market (Antunes & Silva, 2013).

In Brazil, data from the *Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios Contínua* (PNAD, Continuous National Household Sample Survey) of 2016 disclosed the increase in the share of men between 50 and 59 years old that do not work, do not seek for jobs, and do not receive a retirement pension, the so-called “neither-nor” (Camarano & Fernandes, 2018). Based on their analysis, the authors identified a change in gender patterns, given that the share of men in the condition of head of family has decreased and “in case of separation and/or for the lack of work/income, these men get back to their parents’ house” (Camarano & Fernandes, 2018, p. 56, our translation)¹⁰.

Middle age is a period of transition to old age when individuals create expectations and analyze their life plans. There is a lack of studies on this age range, because research has generally prioritized the investigation of psychosocial aspects in childhood, adolescence, and old age. It is worth highlighting that when middle age is the target of investigations, researchers’ interest has been narrowed to understanding the transition to old age, in other words, those studies do not address characteristics particular to this age range as a period of conflicts, difficulties, and specific accomplishments (Freitas et al., 2017).

Publicity speech and media ignore pitfalls of middle age, from 40 to 60 years old, because it is a heterogeneous group in terms of gender, class, ethnicity, and race, for example. Vital crises tend to be disregarded or socially poorly elaborated, such as hormonal, body/biological, social, and affective changes. In an “adult-centric” capitalist society, Antunes and Silva (2013) stated that productivity is a value exclusive to adults, an aspect that ranks them in an uneven power hierarchy in comparison to other age ranges.

The present study had the aim of understanding how the middle age range, in the context of interpersonal relationships based on neoliberalism, has used dating apps to create affectional and sexual bonds. For this purpose, we aim to identify their experiences, expectations, and frustrations concerning the interactions happening through these platforms.

Method

This is a cross-sectional descriptive exploratory qualitative study (Flick, 2019). It is based on a research cut developed with 86 participants, between 40 and 60 years old ($M = 45$, $SD = 4.87$), 70 (81.4%) men and 16 (18.6%) women; the first phase of data collection occurred between November 2021 and February 2022. The first phase of the study was to describe differences of race, gender, marital status, and sexual orientation in the use of dating apps by middle-aged individuals.

Participants

To achieve an even distribution between groups in terms of age range, 28 participants of the first phase of the study were invited to contribute to the second phase, seven agreed to participate (response/adherence rate – 25%) (Table 1).

¹⁰In the original text: “no caso de separações e/ou pela falta de trabalho/renda, esses homens voltam para a casa dos pais”. (Camarano & Fernandes, 2018, p. 56)

Table 1*Sociodemographic characterization of participants according to age, gender, sexual orientation, relationship status and education*

Fictitious name	Sociodemographic characteristics
José	53 years old, male, heterosexual, divorced with three children, complete postgraduate degree (master's degree)
Raul	50 years old, male, heterosexual, divorced and without children, completed higher education
Heitor	46 years old, male, heterosexual, separated and with two children, complete post-graduation (specialization)
Camila	45 years old, woman, lesbian, separated and without children, completed higher education
Danilo	43 years old, male, heterosexual, divorced with one child, completed post-graduation (master's degree)
Bruno	42 years old, male, heterosexual, single and without children, complete postgraduate degree (doctorate)
Flávia	41 years old, woman, heterosexual, single and without children, complete post-graduation (specialization)

Instruments

The social demographic form: aims to collect information on participants' social demographic conditions (age, gender, race, sexual orientation, relationship status, and education).

The form – Use of social networks and digital dating platforms: was adopted to gather information about the use of social networks, dating websites, and apps.

The script – Semi-structured interview: focused on recording individuals' perceptions of the affectional and sexual bonds established through social networks, digital platforms, and dating websites. This instrument covered the following topics: (a) previous and present bonds – investigating satisfaction, interests, and expectations for future relationships; (b) pandemic – investigating what changes and difficulties resulted from social isolation and how this restriction has affected the use of platforms; (c) applications – investigating users' profile and the importance of platforms for building up relationships; (d) age range – investigating particularities and varieties in the establishment of bonds in different people. Topics were defined based on the studies by Pelúcio (2022), Risk and Santos (2022) and Risk et al. (2023).

Procedure

Data collection referring to the second phase of the study was performed through remote interviews, between May and July 2022, because of the sanitary precautions required by health authorities for the containment of the COVID-19 pandemic. The participants recruited in the first phase of the study were invited to participate in the second phase by email. After accepting the researcher's invitation, a synchronous remote interview was scheduled, with interactions only between the interviewee and the interviewer through the Google Meet platform.

When they were invited to the interview, participants were instructed to do it in a safe, private, and confidential place so they could feel comfortable to talk about personal matters; the interviewer adopted the same procedure. The remote interview was held following a semi-structured format, with duration of approximately 50 minutes, based on the script outlined for this study as previously explained. Under the participant's agreement, the session was digitally recorded and transcribed in full by the researcher. According to Guazi (2021), the semi-structure interview allows a detailed investigation of important topics and concurrently enables us to expand answers and/or themes as the session develops.

Full transcriptions made up the material for analysis and the research cut prioritized the way middle-aged individuals establish affectional and sexual bonds through social networks and dating sites and apps, in addition to mutual and emotional support relationships. The material

collected was organized following the principles of Inductive Thematic Analysis, a method used to describe in detail the data obtained through the identification, analysis, and description of patterns (Braun et al., 2019).

For this purpose, we followed the methodological steps proposed by Braun et al. (2019): (a) researcher's familiarization with data (material readings and extensive rereading); (b) obtaining initial codes, characteristic of data, according to the general standard, confronting codes one by one; (c) checking codes with potential themes; (d) checking topics with the whole dataset and development of the analysis thematic map; (e) analysis progression to refine specific topics, creating clear definitions and naming every topic; (f) final analysis step, example extraction and final analysis, relating topics to the objective of the study and to the literature in the field.

We also followed the guidelines of the Consolidated Criteria for Reporting Qualitative Research (COREQ Guide), version validated to Portuguese language (Souza et al., 2021), which aimed to guide researchers through the development of interviews in respect of the formation of the research team, study concept, forms of analysis, and results.

Ethical Considerations

The Ethics Committee on Research of the Universidade Federal de São Carlos approved the study, under the number CAAE: 50463421.6.0000.5504. Data collection and analysis were conducted in compliance with the terms of the Resolution n. 510/2016 – Standards Applicable to Research in Human and Social Sciences National by the National Health Council (Conselho Nacional de Saúde, 2016). Participants gave their free consent to participate as volunteers by signing an Informed Consent Form (ICF). To protect anonymity and keep secrecy about participants' identity, we replaced names and other information that could by chance lead to their identification.

Results and Discussion

Interviewees pointed out that the recommendation for social isolation, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, was a determining factor for profile creation or reactivation on dating apps. In addition to this factor, a series of motivations for the use of the referred platforms were mentioned: search for social contact (even virtual), desire to build up romantic relationships, intention to meet new friends, peer pressure, among other motivations.

From the refinement of the analysis, the following thematic categories arose: (a) achievements and plans: middle age specific concerns in terms of achievements, legacy, attained goals, apart from intentions and plans for the future; (b) emotions, satisfaction, and deceptions: participants' thoughts on dating apps, satisfactory and disappointing experiences with the use of platforms and interaction with other users; (c) neoliberal ideology of relationships and affection hoarding: topic resulting from the relationship between neoliberal logic and expectations, goals, actions and life on social media, more specifically, on apps.

Achievements and Plans

Participants reported that their middle age experiences have made it possible to set new professional and family goals. Some described them as being in a hurry to these achievements, others pointed out only the need for arrangement in order to achieve these goals. All interviewees stated

that middle age impelled them to rethink their plans and life expectations. Among family goals, they reported that the social isolation recommended for the containment of COVID-19 hampered their goal to build and maintain affective-sexual relationships. Therefore, dating apps were the tool to develop romantic bonds. This goal was mentioned as an important part in this life stage, whether because of the recent end of relationships or the social pressure resulting from aging.

In this age period, marital separations and personal crises are common: there is an intention of “not losing what they have lived”, as if it were possible to “stop time” to prevent losses resulting from age and anguishes derived from losses. In middle age, people avoid confronting finitude and possible physical and social limitations imposed by age (Py & Scharfstein, 2001).

One of the characteristics of the middle age crisis pointed out by Erikson (1976) is generativity: concern about future success, achievements, and life accomplishments. People at this life stage tend to rethink their plans, goals, and wishes. As Danilo reported, a 43 years old participant, after a 15-year marriage, he understands that the divorce “was a good time to rethink some things” and apps were an important tool to “break the age and body parameters” that he had kept as ideal until then.

Generativity, combined with the personal event of divorce, instigated the participant to rethink his place in the world, his beauty and desire concepts. Such movement promoted by generativity impels the internalization and organization of professional and interpersonal expectations, guided by the neoliberal market logic that ranks individuals and experiences. This logic encourages the consumption of products and services designed to middle age, including the use of dating apps.

As for experience ranking and evaluation, when asked about what he showed in his profile on dating apps and what he had observed in women’s profiles, José (53 years old) pondered: “Me, for example, I’ve traveled to a lot of countries, I won’t put a picture of me there: me behind the Eiffel Tower (...). But, on the other hand, it could filter other people at the same sociocultural level”. He points out that he does not see this filter as something exclusionary, on contrary, he thinks of his partner’s wellness when included in his friendship circle:

(...) I have some experience, a cultural background that can often make the other person feel dislocated, because when you end up dating in a social environment where you look for people who have the same cultural level, not financial level, but cultural, this person feels dislocated for not having a topic of conversation to engage in. (José, 53 years old)

Participants showed some signs that they were rearranging their goals and expectations, presenting a variability of interests and plans. Those who had experienced marriage, with a union lasting longer than a decade and a recent separation, tended to prefer casual dates, with no commitment or contracts. For those participants, especially men, the use of dating apps seemed to work as a space for specific achievements. Long-term relationships would be possible if they were limited to friendship, a situation that frequently happened according to them.

When talking about labels, goals, and expectations for his affective-sexual relationships, Danilo (43 years old) reported that he always addresses these issues soon in early contacts. As he explained, his approach is: “We must make the most of today, and then we’ll see what happens. It doesn’t necessarily mean sex but seizing the day. Let’s get out and check what may happen”. He emphasizes that his honest approach, in his words, has resulted in pleasant dates and friendships that remain even after the absence of romantic encounters. When the interviewer asked about his expectations for his love future, he stated that he does not picture himself in a monogamous

relationship again, in case he comes to have a lasting and stable relationship (dating or getting married): “it’ll be very different from the pattern of what I have lived so far” and he concludes declaring that he does not plan to establish long-lasting relationships.

Female participants pointed to be in a life-restructuring phase. Flávia (41 years old) wishes to build a stable relationship; she reported that she started dating through the platform and she plans to get married. Camila (45 years old), after deceptions on apps, confessed that she misses human warmth, affection, sexual life; she misses especially the feeling that she has been seen. Although she recognizes she had a good experience related to the excitement of talking to different people, she considers that “it was like a new toy for a kid. The child will play until feeling tired, and then they will put it aside”. Today she evaluates that it does not make sense to keep using the app, she intends to focus on her professional and intellectual development, with new courses and new groups of friends.

In general, interviewees reported experiences and several levels of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with these apps. Male participants, when compared to female participants, mentioned greater sexual freedom and propensity to engage in casual relationships, autonomy that could be related to feelings of emptiness (Rodrigues & Caramaschi, 2022). Male interviewees were the only ones to identify body ranking. It is worth pointing out that this body valuation was not restricted to female bodies; men also aimed to understand which position they would hold in this ranking of desire. In this regard, Rocha (2021) expatiates on how the neoliberal ideology extrapolated the economic field and how it expanded to the ways of acting and desiring, since it covers the notion of corporeality as a consumption object, an issue also addressed by Santos et al. (2019). After reports of failures in advances and encounters, part of the participants wishes to dedicate themselves to a professional career, giving up, to some extent, affective-sexual relationships mediated by apps. There were also people who created a bond with a partner and wished to prolong this relationship through serious dating and marriage contracts.

In summary, all interviewees reported to be in a life rearrangement phase, whether in the development of new partnerships or in the beginning of professional and academic projects. Although in this restructuring phase there are questions and doubts about expectations and real possibilities of achieving goals and wishes, the participants of this study declared to be satisfied with their choices and plans. Either with romantic or professional goals, participants indicated that the reflection on this life stage enabled them to feel satisfied with their present development and enthusiasm for the future.

Emotions, Satisfaction, and Deceptions

Another factor that boosted the use of apps was the affective matter. Interviewees reported that they created profiles on dating platforms for several reasons, such as fun, peer pressure, curiosity or need for contact, apart from finding a way to relieve symptoms of depressive episodes. Danilo, 43 years old, pointed out that:

(...) experiences [on apps] strongly reflect his personal situation at that time. For one year [of use], I’ve been through many different moments. In a first moment, I had ended my relationship, I had just moved to a new house, I had a new job, I was feeling quite different. The use of the application was a very important moment (...). In a second moment, I had depression. The application almost came as a drug. I dated people in a compulsive way. (Danilo, 43 years old)

In addition, social isolation, as recommended for the containment of the COVID-19 pandemic, was considered an important factor for creating profiles in the referred applications.

In agreement with Recuero (2010), Danilo tried to establish social bonds through apps and social networks. Due to various changes that happened in his personal and professional life and to social isolation, the interviewee turned to virtual connections to feel less lonely and keep his self-esteem by feeling desired on apps.

Flávia, for example, said that she felt excluded from her friendship contexts, because she did not have a profile on apps; according to her, matches were a common subject among friends. The COVID-19 pandemic also had a defining role, since applications were seen as a leisure activity/pastime. Users reported using platforms to play, whether in activities to pool resources on the application itself (such as the tool of super likes) or to amuse themselves through the movement of liking or disliking, a perspective that bothered male interviewees. They used applications mostly in depressive episodes or upon friends' recommendations for meeting people.

Although his profile creation started with interest in fun and in creating bonds, Danilo reported that he noticed a problematic use: "the application was like a drug", because he used the platform to arrange dates compulsively. For Pantic et al. (2017), the extensive use of internet might be associated with low self-esteem, a condition that may contribute to feelings of loneliness, despair, and hopelessness.

According to José, the amount of matches he conquered "varied according to his psychological status, sometimes I felt really lonely and used it a lot". On the other hand, Heitor, 46 years old, stated that after his marital separation, he started to "have more time for this application used to catch 'little monsters', not Pokémon, but Tinder". Beyond the use restricted to showing or denying interest, the expectation of receiving replies was an anxiety-triggering factor for Camila. Interviewees revealed that they observed the psychological or emotional status of people using the application. This was a specific cut that they tended to observe, once they wanted to be involved with an "emotionally settled person"; thus, self-knowledge was something they valued in the bonds to be created.

Online spaces designed to affective-sexual encounters require self-knowledge from individuals. If on the one hand, middle age is propitious for the realignment of plans and life strategies, on the other hand, these platform users must be aware of and comfortable with their personality and desires. According to Illouz (2007/2011), to introduce themselves to possible partnerships, platform users describe themselves through expectations of relationship, achievements, profession, education level, political position, family arrangement, and possible subjective characteristics that they value. Pelúcio (2020) pointed out that straight men have positively evaluated these new social contact tools, because they facilitate the first contact with women of different profiles and with the characteristics they are looking for. However, the author identified that these individuals have noticed some difficulty in the interaction: women reject sexist behaviors and claim advancements in the custom agenda. This condition is contrary to the conservative custom and values of some male segments.

Although there have been advances in the custom and values related to gender equality, Heitor, 46 years old, noticed that traditional patterns of flirting remain in the first approaches. For him, because women get a higher number of matches, they expect that men have the initiative to get closer. Even though there are not explicit rules, there are implicit codes in the use of dating apps; in general, according to male participants, women wait for men to initiate contact.

In addition, it seems that applications instigate a profile of a "flawless almost perfect" individuals in whose life there is no sadness, troubles, just a life marked by high performance activities and productivity (Andrade & Silva, 2019). During the interview, interviewees reported

this demand for high performance. Camila said that she bothered with superficial profiles, where completeness and wellness seemed to be more important than a real conversation. She even said that apps were not for her that is why she preferred to inactivate them: “I like real exchanges and honest not standardized conversations and there [on apps] it’s all perfect, it makes you turn into a robot”. Heitor reported that he bothered with superficial profiles as well; for him, one creates a character in these spaces where people fantasize to be someone they are not. Raul agrees with this analysis of the interaction mediated by applications as a fictional and performative interaction.

On the other hand, as Raul stated, one has the notion that people do not consider the individual “on the other side of the screen as a real relationship (...)”, one considers the other person as “a character who does not have feelings, body, bone, heart”. In other words, it seems there is a demand for individuals to play a non-humanity role so they will not get hurt with rejections and play a part during interactions (Andrade & Silva, 2019). In this regard, Oliveira (2020) presented a legal discussion on how women are vulnerable in these spaces, because of anonymity and freedom presumed by male. The premise of overlooking users’ certification and identification promotes anonymity and a sense of safety for attacks; therefore, it is necessary to evaluate the limits of this great freedom in counterpoint to the guarantee of virtual safety.

In consequence, another inconvenience arising from the lack of credibility of the information users convey on applications is the suspicion of the interlocutor’s veracity, an issue that affects self-exposure on apps through profile construction. Although the neoliberal logic proposes constant self-promotion, the disclosure of personal information can be a source of fear, mainly for women. In the construction of her profile, Flávia tried to be as general as possible in her introduction. When she was asked about her profile, she replied that it was something simple and general, with minimal information, because she “didn’t want to be easily identified, you know? I didn’t want to convey information that could compromise my profession, my house, my family, because I could not ensure honesty on the other hand”.

The concern over preserving personal data and physical integrity was only reported by Flávia, the only female interviewee that dated men. During the interview, the participant pointed out some self-protection actions by sharing her location with friends, dating in public places, and not accepting alcoholic drinks, which was a regular thing that “any reasonable person would do”.

Despite the fact of reporting that this precaution is essential for face-to-face dates, the interviewee described cases of violence she suffered during chats. As documented by Rocha and Brandão (2020) and Bertagnolli et al. (2020), global internet access has promoted the increase in cases of gender violence and misogyny, which are not restricted to physical integrity, but include psychological, emotional, moral, and symbolic consequences. For male participants, these concerns have not been mentioned.

However, self-precaution exclusively imposed to the female gender is not the only type of prejudice experienced. Dating apps, as well as social networks and online interactions, have a dialectic relationship with offline customs and social values. Therefore, race, gender, and class discrimination are common and exert influence on the interaction among individuals. According to the analysis by Quadrado and Ferreira (2020), the culture of hate and intolerance observed in social networks corroborates the Brazilian custom that, historically, has difficulty in identifying and recognizing hate speech. Based on the assumption that it is less harmful than physical violence, the referred culture creates violence ranking and makes it difficult that perpetrators to respond in court for their crimes.

For male interviewees, considering that all of them had higher education, there is a need for intellectual leveling, which was pointed out as a booster or impediment to bond maintenance.

José referred to “sociocultural” level as an important filter to meet “quality people”. According to interviewees, the filter or cultural, social, and intellectual leveling is justified given the barriers that potential partners could experience, because having a different “cultural background” could make the other person feel “dislocated”. Thus, finding “someone alike” (José) is a hard task, because “when you filter by intellectuality, the offer is scarce” (Heitor); however, dating people at the same “level” would be essential for their own individual growth.

In women’s cases, the prejudices noticed put them in the place of object. For Camila, a lesbian woman, who used apps specific to this orientation, lesbophobia was something recurrent. However, it is not possible to conclude if other lesbian women who reproduced the hegemonic social structure committed homophobic acts or if men controlled those profiles.

In Flávia’s case, approaches often had a purely sexual content. She reported that men approaches show the aim of the contact and sexual desire, and her skin color was named as a source of fetish. When she questioned app users, with whom she was interacting, about this matter, they justified that “Black women draw more attention”. Another point of fetishism reported by Flávia is the profile of the men she used to exchange messages: Black subjects were not frequent on applications, whereas her matches were, in majority, “white men with blue or green eyes”.

Although the issue of desire grounded on racial fetishism bothered Flávia in her interactions, Heitor, a white man, expressed disagreement about this point of view. In his words: “Today everything is a sin” and it is not possible to have “sexual preferences for specific races”, he said: “it’s a preference that seems to turn into objectification and people judge”. Still according to the interviewee, when he dates Black people, he shares with them “literately on his own skin” the violence suffered from just being in the same place. However, he pointed out that he does not consider it racist violence, because there are “situations in which [Black] people overreact”, such as in the use of the term “racial prejudice”, a concept that does not exist for him.

In respect to the reports by Flávia and Heitor, the phenomenon of women hypersexualization, mainly of Black women, can be observed as the practice and ideology that founded the State and the Brazilian Culture. According to Viana et al. (2019), the objectification of Black bodies negatively affects their targets at a social and individual level through the marginalization and objectification of Black women. As a heritage of the colonial period, promoted by slavery and perpetrated by means of communication and, more recently, by social networks, the issue of hypersexualization passes unnoticed for those who do not suffer from it.

It is worth highlighting that although for some men applications seem to be a safe space for the search of partners, some male interviewees felt vulnerable. Such vulnerability was noticed in two aspects: abandonment of partners during conversations and scams they were exposed to. With more introspective profiles, some participants understood they were responsible for partner’s distancing. They believed that disinterest could have been the fruit of their lack of attractiveness or “competitiveness” on the apps.

As pointed out by Illouz (2007/2011), participants perceive the application as a window of possible partnerships, such as a “food chain” in which it is indispensable that individuals stand out during the chat in a way to keep interaction going, long enough to generate the motivation for an face-to-face date; all the interviewees of the present study and 96% of repliers of the forms, referring to the first phase of the research, marked it as important.

To circumvent competitiveness, some participants reported that they try to stand out right at the initial contact. According to them, there is a standardized approach script that sometimes is not sufficiently effective to arouse the interest of the interlocutor when it does not fulfill the expected

performance. Another vulnerability-related situation is associated with scams, expression adopted by male interviewees, the only ones to report these experiences. Although naming it that way, it does not seem that these participants had been deceived. Based on the stories they told, the most frequent approach consisted in a person on the other side of the screen, supposedly a woman who showed interest in their contact, established, and maintained a communication bond, and shared her life, which was later questioned by them, once it was not possible to check the veracity of facts. Next, these women asked for money and gifts.

Neoliberal Ideology in Relationships and Affection Hoarding

From the analysis carried out by Illouz (2007/2011), Andrade and Silva (2019), and Pelúcio (2022), when theorizing about the thematic of love in neoliberal times and its market crossings, it is necessary to analyze the impact of the neoliberal ideology on affective-sexual relationships, mediated by dating apps, through the interviews conducted.

Considering that participants consume products and services, the vocabulary and ways of establishing relationships is subject to neoliberal logic. Although this logic preaches free competition by the invisible hand of the market, it is known that such an ideal is not possible. The same happens in the illusory free competition of social relationships, more specifically romantic and sexual relationships, through dating platforms. This is because structural prejudices of society are present in love “choice” and in the construction of affectional-sexual bonds.

In accordance with this logic, Andrade and Silva (2019) analyzed application profiles and pointed out that there is correspondence between the characteristics of relationships and the neoliberal ideology, expressed in the sensation of an excessive amount of people/profiles, communication restricted to social networks, and life medialization. According to the authors, there is a subjectivity built from the need and identity of being on a network, shaped by constant communication technologies.

In this regard, social prejudices establish body and subject ranking. As Illouz (2007/2011) reported, there is a tendency to qualifying profiles that arise on the platform; users’ interest will be mediated by their perception of being able or not to reach profiles they considered the most attractive.

As for individual ranking and evaluation, Heitor described that, when talking to younger friends, he noticed a difference in women’s profiles that appear to him: “your profile has more beautiful women than mine. (...) You look at the filter and notice: at 20 [years old], 90% of women are beautiful and attractive; at 30 it falls by half; at 40, it falls to 10%”. Later he explained how he understands profile ranking: “there is a story about the Fundação Instituto de Pesquisas Econômicas (FIPE) table¹¹, we cannot be too demanding”. He evaluated that there are women who “are asking way too much the FIPE table” and he joked, “I know exactly where I am in the food chain, I know what I can ask and what I cannot”.

The classification in the “food chain”, as Heitor mentioned, is determined by the user’s goal/expectation and their self-image, as Camila demonstrated: “I was looking for a relationship, but I raised the bar way too much”. José exposed that the evaluation he had on dating apps was mediated by his self-esteem, “I was looking for someone that looked like me”, apart from idealizing possible partners: “I look for a settled woman who has emotional balance”.

¹¹ An organization that stipulates mean prices for vehicles in the Brazilian market.

After the choice of a partner and match, it seems that another approximation to the labor market occurs, from a pragmatic, utilitarian, and objective view (Chaves, 2010). Interviewees reported that there is a standardization in approaches, some stated that the initial contact takes place as a job interview, “very controlled questions and answers with goals that do not accumulate anything (...), the application puts you in an industrial place of opportunities”, in the way Danilo sees it. The application itself is considered a social field of opportunities, a tool with filters that are made available to help users to pursue their own interest in a flexible way, to be successful, and to show good performance, according to the model advocated by neoliberalism.

Flexibility and autonomy, supposedly ensured by dating platforms, allied to endless choice possibilities, seem to preclude users from establishing agreements, contracts, and naming the type of bond they are engaging in, at least, at early interactions. For Pelúcio (2022), these contracts are understood as freedom constraint and impediment to the impetus for adventure and happiness to which individuals are subject, such as precarious labor relationships.

The difficulty in naming relationships is not limited to interaction with the other person, users themselves do not know what they want or look for on the application. Whenever questioned about relationship ideals or future romantic wishes, male interviewees reported that they did not know how to name them, although they clearly know what they do not want.

In relation to the principle of store of value, savings against money devaluation and protection of purchasing power (Rosa & Lopes, 2015) and under motives for hoarding, namely transaction, precaution, and speculation; during the interviews, participants seem to use the same logic of store of affection, corresponding to money in the affective field. Affective agents, application users, seem to store and use their affection in the same liberal logic.

For example, Danilo explained that he establishes a three-day term to talk to partners, in case there is no manifestation of effective interest in a face-to-face date, the contact is abandoned. The interviewee pointed out that date casualty is needed for seizing the present moment, with no further intentions or as a possibility for anticipating relationships. He said that he likes specific exchanges and declared to have his needs fulfilled, since he makes his wishes and goals clear right at the beginning, showing the risks to interested women, as it happens in economic transactions. Camila, on the other hand, had a speculative use of affection, “I’m open to proposals, to business, I want a relationship because I miss the affection, but I want to meet people”, she had the goal to start an affectional-sexual relationship so she would no longer need applications.

Flávia reported using apps aiming at current exchanges of transaction and because she wanted a pastime when she felt very lonely. However, she was afraid of being “one among many” and that her interlocutors were not talking to her exclusively, thus, she does not engage emotionally in the contact, because of the fear of getting hurt after investing in a bond. She said that she uses her affective capital when she has accurate needs, but she is afraid of dedicating all her store of affection to fruitless investments.

Female participants highlighted that dating apps can be as well a scenario for the expression of sexism, lesbophobia, and racial prejudice. From interviews with some male participants, we noticed that profile ranking is often grounded on origin, class, and racial prejudice, although none of them has explicitly manifested these issues. Even though, at first, dating apps can be seen as a safe place, given physical distance, prejudice reports show that there are risks and frustrating interactions that could happen in virtual sociability.

Final Considerations

This study was not intended to homogenize the experiences, expectations and frustrations of the Brazilian middle-aged population regarding the use of dating apps. As this is a qualitative study, it was only intended to contribute to this discussion, since there are gaps in the study of the living conditions and psychosocial characteristics of the middle-aged population.

Middle age is a favorable stage for reviewing one's life path and building expectations in the professional and personal spheres, a condition verified in the participants in this study. Ideally, dating apps would help build stable emotional bonds. In practice, for most of the participants, this intention was not met due to the occurrence of unpleasant situations when interacting with users.

Although there were reports of negative situations, such as scams or love disappointments, all the participants mentioned pleasant situations, some having achieved their initial goal (establishing love or friendship relationships), as well as the opportunity to meet people from different places and profiles. Despite the experiences of frustration and dissatisfaction derived from using these apps, the interviewees do not regret joining these spaces.

Neoliberal values have shaped interpersonal relationships, intimacy, private life and sociability. In the case of dating apps, these values have marked interactions based on competition and the hierarchization of profiles based on the wide range of users available for encounters. The sociability built via dating apps can be understood in economic terms through affective investments or one-off exchanges which, often, frustrate the expectations of their users and cause suffering. On the other hand, the participants say that dating platforms facilitate contact because of their practicality.

About the neoliberal logic of emotional relationships, the interviewees seemed to follow an order of emotional investment. Initially, they wanted to have small emotional exchanges, whether it was to have interesting conversations, casual sexual encounters or company for lonely moments. Some sought to build a stable bond right from the start, understood as the establishment of a lasting relationship, in which they would invest affection, a condition that would lead them to stop interacting with the other profiles. Some participants reported using dating apps in times of emotional emergency, when they feel lonely and want deep, stable contact, but without any great promises of long-term investment.

Thus, it can be understood that the use of apps is closely related to the economic movement of hoarding. This affective use by users seems to fall under the neoliberal logic of relationships, where everyone is responsible for their success, happiness and performance in identifying profitable investments and avoiding losses, understood in this field as suffering and abandonment.

Although this study presents relevant results, it is important to recognize limitations regarding the generalization and interpretation of its results. The sample, made up predominantly of men with higher education, belonging to the middle classes and mostly white, does not reflect the diversity of the Brazilian population, limiting the applicability of the findings to other social and economic contexts. Social desirability is another relevant issue: the participants may have been inclined to respond to what they thought was more recommendable rather than expressing their genuine opinions. In addition, the remote format of the interviews, adopted due to health recommendations to avoid contamination by COVID-19, may have affected the spontaneity of the interactions and the expression of more intimate experiences. On the other hand, in the national literature, there are few studies on the affective and sexual life of the middle-aged population and the role of dating apps for this audience, a gap that this study aimed to fill.

Regarding the prospects for future research, new studies are suggested on the sociodemographic conditions of the middle-aged population and how these factors are involved in their personal trajectory and in the construction of affective and sexual bonds. It is also suggested that new studies be carried out on the use of dating apps by the middle-aged population, segmented by variables such as gender, social class, race and ethnicity.

References

- Adelman, M. (2011). Por amor ou por dinheiro? Emoções, discursos, mercado. *Contemporânea: Revista de Sociologia da UFSCar*, 2, 117-138.
- Andrade, E. R., & Silva, T. T. (2019). Excesso e positividade na constituição do sujeito: uma reflexão sobre aplicativos de relacionamento. *Revista Mídia e Cotidiano*, 13(3), 141-161.
- Antunes, P. C., & Silva, A. M. (2013). Elementos sobre a concepção da meia-idade no processo de envelhecimento humano. *Revista Kairós Gerontologia*, 16(5), 123-140.
- Bertagnolli, G. B. L., Silva, D. R. Q., Taschetto, L. R., & Torman, R. (2020). Misoginia em redes sociais: uma forma de violência contra mulheres. *Revista Contribuciones a las Ciencias Sociales*, 65, 1-21.
- Braun, V., Clarke, V., Hayfield, N., & Terry, G. (2019). Thematic analysis. In P. Liamputtong (Ed.), *Handbook of research methods in health social sciences* (pp. 843-860). Springer.
- Camarano, A. A., & Fernandes, D. (2018). Os homens maduros que não trabalham nem são aposentados: um estudo exploratório da PNAD contínua. *Mercado de Trabalho*, 64, 53-61. <http://repositorio.ipea.gov.br/handle/11058/8384>
- Chaves, J. C. (2010). As percepções de jovens sobre os relacionamentos amorosos na atualidade. *Psicologia em Revista*, 16(1), 28-46.
- Coleta, A. S. M. D., Coleta, M. F. D., & Guimarães, J. L. (2008). O amor pode ser virtual? O relacionamento amoroso pela internet. *Psicologia em Estudo*, 13(2), 277-285. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1413-73722008000200010>
- Conselho Nacional de Saúde (Brasil). (2016). Resolução nº 510, de 7 de abril de 2016. Dispõe sobre as normas aplicáveis a pesquisas em Ciências Humanas e Sociais. *Diário Oficial da União*, Seção 1, 98, 45-46. <https://www.gov.br/conselho-nacional-de-saude/pt-br/atos-normativos/resolucoes/2016/resolucao-no-510.pdf/view>
- Dardot, P., & Laval, C. (2016). *A nova razão do mundo: ensaio sobre a sociedade neoliberal*. Boitempo.
- Erikson, E. (1976). *Identidade, juventude e crise* (2nd ed.). Zahar.
- Flick, U. (2019). *An introduction to qualitative research* (4th ed.). Sage.
- Franco, F., Castro, J. C. L., Manzi, R., Safatle, V., & Afshar, Y. (2021). O sujeito e a ordem do mercado: gênese teórica do neoliberalismo. In V. Safatle, N. S. Junior, & C. Dunker (Orgs.), *Neoliberalismo como gestão do sofrimento psíquico* (pp. 47-76). Autêntica.
- Freitas, M. C., Campos, T. D., & Gil, C. A. (2017). Expectativas e concepções de trabalho na velhice em homens na meia-idade. *Estudos Interdisciplinares em Psicologia*, 8(2), 43-64. <https://doi.org/10.5433/2236-6407.2017v8n2p43>
- Gomes, P. M., Yokomizo, P., & Lopes, A. (2019). Engajamento social, aparência e velhice homossexual: caracterização de aplicativos de relacionamento. *Revista Kairós-Gerontologia*, 22(26), 31-57.
- Guazi, T. S. (2021). Diretrizes para o uso de entrevistas semiestruturadas em investigações científicas. *Revista Educação, Pesquisa e Inclusão*, 2, 1-20.
- Illouz, E. (2011). *O amor nos tempos do capitalismo*. Zahar. (Trabalho originalmente publicado em 2007)
- Illouz, E., & Finkelman, S. (2009). An odd and inseparable couple: Emotion and rationality in partner selection. *Theory and Society*, 38(4), 401-422. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11186-009-9085-5>

- Jesus, G. M., & Risk, E. N. (2024). Digital sociability: Implications of the COVID-19 pandemic among young adults. *Paidéia*, 34, e3435. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1982-4327e3435>
- Keynes, J. M. (1996). *Os economistas: teoria geral do emprego, do juro e da moeda*. Nova Cultura Editora. (Trabalho originalmente publicado em 1936)
- Nogueira, K. W. A. S. (2020). Por uma reflexão sociológica acerca da racionalidade neoliberal. *Revista Movimentação*, 7(13), 7-16.
- Oliveira, L. D. (2020). Reflexões jurídicas sobre anonimato, liberdade e vulnerabilidade da mulher nos aplicativos de relacionamento. *Revista Húmus*, 10(29), 290-310.
- Pantic, I., Milanovic, A., Loboda, B., Błachnio, A., Przepiórka, A., Nestic, D., Mazic, S., Dugalic, S., & Ristic, S. (2017). Association between physiological oscillations in self-esteem, narcissism and internet addiction: a cross-sectional study. *Psychiatry Research*, 258, 239-243. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2017.08.044>
- Pelúcio, L. (2020). Um match com os conservadorismos: masculinidades desafiadas nas relações heterossexuais por meios digitais. *Interfaces Científicas*, 8(2), 31-46. <https://doi.org/10.17564/2316-3828.2020v8n2p31-46>
- Pelúcio, L. (2022). A uberização do amor: aplicativos de encontros em cenário tecnoliberal e pandêmico. *Tomo*, 41, 199-232. <https://doi.org/10.21669/tomo.vi41.17480>
- Py, L., & Scharfstein, E. A. (2001). Caminhos da maturidade: representações do corpo, vivências dos afetos e consciência da finitude. In A. L. Neri (Org.), *Maturidade e velhice: trajetórias individuais e socioculturais* (pp. 117-150). Papyrus.
- Quadrado, J. C., & Ferreira, E. S. (2020). Ódio e intolerância nas redes sociais digitais. *Revista Katálysis*, 23(3), 419-428. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1982-02592020v23n3p419>
- Recuero, R. (2010). Redes sociais e sites de relacionamento: em busca de comunidades. *ComCiência*, 121, 1-4.
- Risk, E. N., & Santos, M. A. (2021). Estudos culturais, pesquisa qualitativa e mídias: critérios metodológicos para análise de dados audiovisuais. *Psicologia & Sociedade*, 33, e234657. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1807-0310/2021v33234657>
- Risk, E. N., & Santos, M. A. (2022). Construção da intimidade: Concepções sobre sexualidade e relações de gênero de jovens adultos estudantes do Ensino Superior. In F. C. Barbosa, A. M. R. Molina, P. S. Prado, & F. A. Pasqualin (Orgs.), *Islam, decolonialidade em diálogos plurais* (pp. 245-263). Ambigrama.
- Risk, E. N., Piran, M., Oliveira, W. A., & Santos, M. A. (2023). Relações afetivo-sexuais: concepções e representações de jovens universitários de classes médias. *Psico*, 54(1), e39108. <https://doi.org/10.15448/1980-8623.2023.1.39108>
- Rocha, T. H. R. (2021). Neoliberalismo e teoria dos discursos: os usos do corpo na contemporaneidade. *Revista Subjetividades*, 21(1), 1-16.
- Rocha, T. B., & Brandão, C. W. (2020). Violência contra mulheres nas redes sociais: o caso de Elaine Perez Caparróz. *Interfaces Científicas*, 8(2), 67-82. <https://doi.org/10.17564/2316-3828.2020v8n2p67-82>
- Rodrigues, B. B., & Caramaschi, S. (2022). Autoestima e intenções sexuais de usuários de aplicativos de relacionamento. *Barbarói*, 61, 175-198.
- Rosa, E. S. T., & Lopes, T. C. (2015). A economia monetária e a fórmula geral do capital: preliminar da fissão Marx-Keynes. *Nova Economia*, 25(3), 501-516.
- Sá, L. C. B. M., Moura, J. V. S., & Queiroz, A. R. (2022). A materialidade do neoliberalismo e mercantilização dos corpos em relações de força e dominação: breves apontamentos. *Revista Amor Mundi*, 3(1), 29-39. <https://doi.org/10.46550/amormundi.v3i1.152>
- Santos, M. A., Oliveira, V. H., Peres, R. S., Risk, E. N., Leonidas, C., & Oliveira-Cardoso, E. A. (2019). Corpo, saúde e sociedade de consumo: a construção social do corpo saudável. *Saúde e Sociedade*, 28(3), 239-252. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0104-12902019170035>
- Souza, V. R., Marziale, M. H., Silva, G. T., & Nascimento, P. L. (2021). Tradução e validação para a língua portuguesa e avaliação do guia COREQ. *Acta Paulista de Enfermagem*, 34, eAPE02631. <https://doi.org/10.37689/acta-ape/2021AO02631>

- Val, V. C., & Linhares, L. (2008). O papel da moeda em Marx e Keynes. *Leituras de Economia Política, 14*, 81-107.
- Viana, A. C., Santos, C., & Ezechiello, R. (2019). A hiperssexualização da mulher negra. *Materializando Conhecimentos: Revista Eletrônica, 9*, 1-14.

Contributors

Conceptualization: C. S. SPINDOLA and E. N. RISK. Data curation: C. S. SPINDOLA. Investigation: C. S. SPINDOLA. Methodology: C. S. SPINDOLA and E. N. RISK. Writing – original draft: C. S. SPINDOLA and E. N. RISK. Writing – review and editing: C. S. SPINDOLA and E. N. RISK.