

TALENTED WOMEN IN BRAZIL: TRAJECTORIES AND CAREER CHALLENGES IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY ¹

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ABSTRACT. This study investigated the trajectory of talented women according to the Mega-Model of Talent Development conceived by Subotnik, Olszewski-Kubilius and Worrell (2011), analyzing the relationship between individual, contextual and interpersonal dimensions in their professional career. Five interviews were conducted with eminent women in five areas: education, communication, human resources, advertising, and Brazilian literature. The results were analyzed according to the Grounded Theory. Regardless of the area where they work and the differences found in relation to age, educational background and family structure, factors such as resistance to gender stereotypes, work as a source of social transformation, presence of mentors, emotional family support, opportunities, optimism and resilience were decisive for the expression and development of their potentials. These factors were classified as facilitators and protection variables against the adversities faced in life. Understanding female talent involves considering the interrelationship of psychological, social, and cultural dimensions.

Keywords: Talent; professional career; women.

MULHERES TALENTOSAS NO BRASIL: TRAJETÓRIAS E DESAFIOS PROFISSIONAIS NA SOCIEDADE CONTEMPORÂNEA

RESUMO. Este estudo investigou a trajetória de mulheres talentosas de acordo com o Mega-Modelo de Desenvolvimento de Talentos, concebido por Subotnik, Olszewski-Kubilius e Worrell (2011), analisando a relação existente entre as dimensões individuais, contextuais e interpessoais no seu percurso profissional. Foram realizadas cinco entrevistas com mulheres eminentes em cinco áreas de atuação: educação, comunicação, recursos humanos, publicidade e literatura brasileira. Os resultados foram analisados conforme a Teoria Fundamentada nos Dados. Verificou-se que independente da área em que atuam e de diferenças encontradas em relação à idade, formação educacional e estrutura familiar, fatores como resistência a estereótipos de gênero, trabalho como fonte de transformação social, presença de mentores, suporte emocional da família, oportunidades, otimismo e resiliência foram decisivos para a expressão e desenvolvimento de seus potenciais. Esses fatores foram classificados como facilitadores e variáveis de proteção frente às adversidades encontradas.

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Comprender o talento feminino envolve considerar a inter-relaçãodas dimensões psicológicas, sociais e culturais.

Palavras-chave: Talento; carreira profissional; mulheres.

MUJERES TALENTOSAS EN BRASIL: TRAYECTORIAS Y DESAFIOS PROFESIONALES EM LA SOCIEDAD

RESUMEN. En este estudio e investigó la trayectoria de mujeres talentosas de acuerdo con el Mega-Modelo de Desarrollo de Talentos concebido por Subotnik, Olszewski-Kubilius y Worrell (2011), analizando la relación existente entre las dimensiones individuales, contextuales e interpersonales en su recorrido profesional. Se realizaron cinco entrevistas con mujeres eminentes en cinco áreas de actuación: educación, comunicación, recursos humanos, publicidad, y literatura brasileña. Los resultados fueron analizados conforme a la Teoría Fundamentada en los Datos. Se verificó que independientemente del área en que actúan y de diferencias encontradas en relación a la edad, formación educativa y estructura familiar, factores como resistencia a estereotipos de género, trabajo como fuente de transformación social, presencia de mentores, apoyo familiar emocional, oportunidades, optimismo y resiliencia fueron decisivos para la expresión y el desarrollo de sus potenciales. Estos factores se clasificaron como facilitadores y variables de protección frente a las adversidades encontradas. Comprender el talento femenino implica considerar la interrelación de las dimensiones psicológicas, sociales y culturales.

Palabras clave: Talento; carrera profesional; mujeres.

Introduction

Women's living conditions have undergone transformations resulting from social, economic, political and technological changes. Population aging, reduced fertility rate, female consolidation in the labor market, the achievement of new rights, increasing schooling and years of schooling are some examples of the reality of women in Western countries. Such advances impact on beliefs and values and generate adaptations to new roles and social demands (Bruzamarello, Patias, & Cenci, 2019; Diniz & Feres-Carneiro, 2012; Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada [IPEA], 2017; Prado & Fleith, 2018).

The progress made by women in recent decades, especially in the educational context, has not yet resulted in significant achievements in the professional domain. Many obstacles persist today and reflect the low female representation in various areas, such as engineering and technology, wage differences and unequal distribution of domestic tasks between men and women (Barros & Mourão, 2018; Organização Internacional do Trabalho [OIT], 2016; Prado & Fleith, 2012; Reis & Sullivan, 2009). It is even perceived in actions to promote female emancipation, or in favor of their empowerment, remnants of the valorization of attributes and behaviors that favor the permanence of the condition of inequality. An example is the naturalization of the 'difference' between men and women, attributing to the female gender, as intrinsic aspects of the individual, gender-idealized skills and behaviors that have been socially constructed since childhood, such as female sensitivity, fragility, and passivity.

The inequalities present in women's professional trajectories are related to the impact of stereotypes on the process of constitution of female subjectivity, and generate blockages and barriers in the development and expression of their skills and potentials. It is understood that the social role played by women and the patterns of development and expression of their skills and talents are strongly related to the context in which they live.

Studies indicate that personality characteristics and unique needs of women also need to be focused on promoting healthy development that can enhance their emotional well-being and mental health (Kerr & McKay, 2014; Noble, Subotnik, & Arnold, 1999; Reis & Sullivan, 2009; Tweedale & Kronborg, 2015; Zanello & Andrade, 2014). The ability to express talent or the chance to develop skills, in addition to resulting in a high level of personal satisfaction or self-fulfillment, may also favor scientific, aesthetic contributions, among other practical benefits to society (Subotnik, Olszewski-Kubilius, & Worrell, 2011).

Reis and Sullivan (2009) argue that the promotion of female talent requires effort, conscious choices and is based on the reality of the female condition. The authors draw attention to the role of society in the deconstruction of gender stereotypes that affect everyone and not only women, and for this, it is necessary, besides knowing the cultural barriers, to offer models of women who have overcome these barriers.

Given the above, this study sought to investigate the trajectory of talented and eminent women according to the Mega-Model of Talent Development conceived by Subotnik et al. (2011). This theoretical perspective highlights the contribution of psychological science to this process and integrates several existing theories and models. For the authors there is no distinction between the terms talent and giftedness and they suggest a comprehensive definition of this phenomenon that deals with the development of potentialities. They argue that talent is a developing construct with different stages in which variables stand out in each of them. Potential is the key factor at the beginning of the process, performance is measured at the next stage, and achievement of the eminence is the culmination of the talent development process. Childhood is associated with the identification of interests and possibly potentials. This is the exploration phase and the family plays a key role. In adolescence, it is noticed greater engagement in a specific area. In this phase, one should invest in the manifested potential and interests presented, as well as offer challenges and rewards for the performance resulting from the dedication. But it is during adulthood that creative and outstanding productivity can emerge. We highlight the presence of great knowledge, greater ability in a specific domain, high ability to learn and assimilate new information. It is noteworthy that the understanding of talent in life trajectory should also emphasize how these individuals are educated, oriented, encouraged, and supported over time.

Each phase of the life trajectory has its specificities and impacts the expression of talent. The model has five principles: (a) skills, general or specific, are important and can be developed; (b) each talent area or domain has different developmental trajectories; (c) at each stage of the talent development process, opportunities must be provided as well as seized and compromised by the talented individual; (d) psychosocial variables are determining factors in successful talent development; (e) eminence is the expected result of the education of the talented person. Another aspect to consider is the differences between the fields of knowledge. Certain areas require different skills and time in this process, such as sports versus academic talent. However, the ingredient that goes through the whole process, from latent potential to successful performance in one area, concerns the psychosocial variables associated with effort, access to opportunities, and how people respond to the chances presented to them.

In this sense, we understand the emergence of female talent as a dynamic and multifaceted process that privileges the interaction of contextual, social, personological and cognitive factors. There is no unique profile of a talented person, as we need to consider sociocultural, economic, racial and gender differences in characterizing a talented profile. Talented women, or women with high potential to be developed, are still underrepresented in various areas and positions of social prominence.

This study investigated the trajectory of talented women, analyzing the relationship between individual, contextual and interpersonal dimensions in their professional career. Three questions guided the research: What are the personal characteristics attributed to the development of talent, according to eminent women? How do eminent women evaluate the role of the family environment in talent development? During the professional career, what factors facilitated and/or hindered the development of talent in eminent women?

Method

Participants

The sample consisted of five talented women, thus identified for being nationally recognized for their outstanding professional performance in their areas of activity: education, communication, human resources, advertising and Brazilian literature. All participants were Brazilian. Ages ranged from 39 to 66 years old, all had children and four were married. Of the participants, only one was from a family with a disadvantaged socioeconomic status, characterized by extreme poverty and unschooled parents.

Inclusion criteria were: (a) to be recognized by receiving national and/or international awards or titles, and/or socially, by citations in newspapers or magazines of wide circulation and social reach; (b) be in professional activity; (b) hold a leadership position in the place or area in which she works.

Instruments

The semi-structured exploratory interview was used as the main instrument for data collection. The protocol was prepared based on studies by Araújo, Cruz and Almeida (2011), Csikszentmihalyi (1996), and Nakamura and Fajans (2014) and submitted for consideration by judges, experts in the field, members of a research group on giftedness and talent development registered with the Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (CNPq). A pilot study was conducted to check for the adequacy of the protocol to the objectives and proposed interview time. Some questions were reformulated and the final version consisted of 28 questions distributed among five thematic axes, described below.

1. characteristics, such as perfectionism, independence, autonomy, motivation, determination, focus, self-regulation.
2. Family Context: questions related to family structure and relationship, presence of family models, social support network, family and career balance strategies, impact on the family.
3. Professional Career: questions related to significant experiences along the professional career, identification of enabling and inhibiting factors, strategies and resources used to overcome barriers or challenges, and the meaning given to one's career, talent and professional position.

4. Presence of Mentors and Figures of Influence: questions related to the identification of significant people in the professional career and who contributed to the development of their talent or potential.
5. Factors Associated with Self Realization and Wellness: questions regarding participants' conception of wellness and self-realization, and their personal perception of these constructs and their relationship to future aspirations.

Procedures

Based on the established eligibility criteria, an analysis was performed on websites, and members of the aforementioned research group were also asked to nominate participants. After identifying and referring women who met the research criteria, an invitation letter was sent by e-mail, advising them about their interest and willingness to contribute to the study. Five agreed to participate.

Then, an appointment was proposed for the interview. Two participants asked to answer the protocol questions in writing, via e-mail, one by Skype, and the others, in person. Prior to the interviews, an analysis of public information was performed in websites on the participants. Regarding face-to-face interviews, one was conducted at the participant's home and the other at her workplace. Both face-to-face and Skype interviews lasted approximately two hours, were recorded with the consent of the participants, transcribed and analyzed together with the other interviews. This research is part of a macro-project entitled 'Identification and Promotion of Female Talent: Knowing Trajectories and Developing Potentials', which was submitted to a Research Ethics Committee and approved under opinion 1.418.639.

Data analysis

This was a descriptive exploratory qualitative study whose data analysis was based on the Grounded Theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2016). This is a qualitative approach that involves a non-mathematical process of interpreting the collected data to discover concepts and relationships between them, organized in a theoretical explanatory framework. This procedure favors the construction of conceptual bases on the investigated phenomenon, becoming important for the development of a field of knowledge. The first step is open coding. In this study, we used the sentence or paragraph analysis; after careful reading of each one, we made the reflection on the main idea and assigned a word or expression, forming preliminary codes and then grouping them together into categories. Axial coding was the next stage in which data (codes) were regrouped, relating the categories from the previous stage to their subcategories to generate more precise and complete explanations of the phenomenon. The final process of data analysis involved selective coding, in which categories were integrated and organized around a central explanatory concept.

Results

What personal characteristics are attributed to talent development, according to eminent women?

The results from the interviews were organized into two categories: Hereditary Factors and Psychosocial Factors. The first refers to characteristics attributed as natural or

inherited. Only one participant reported genetic inheritance as a personal trait that influenced her successful trajectory. As can be seen from the following statement, the genetic factor was considered to be the reason for its high motivation to work:

There must be some genetic issue, because I was always happy, I wake up with a smile on my face, full of energy to do millions of things. I never did anything to be like this. I like to work, get up early and do chores all day, never been the one who likes to lie on the edge of the pool sunbathing (participant 1).

The way individuals interact with the environment, their aspirations or ambitions, and how they deal with challenges and problems are examples of Psychosocial Factors that must be considered in understanding talent, and in this study, they fell into the second category. All participants indicated high commitment, engagement and dedication during their professional career as determinants of their success. These data were grouped into the subcategory Commitment, Effort and Dedication, illustrated in the following statements:

I do not consider myself a talented person, I am very surprised by your reading, this is not false modesty, always had many limitations in several areas. I was always very questioning [...]. One feature I always brought up is the issue of commitment, whatever I was doing I always had a lot of commitment (participant 2).

I do not consider myself a prominent person, of fame, but of knowledge, of good practice and effective results [...]. I was not the most brilliant of the college class, then I saw that these colleagues were not as well professionally as I (participant 3).

I can't believe I stand out [...] I consider myself more hardworking than talented. I work with equally or even more talented people. ... I feel a little weird answering about 'my' success. I believe I have a career that I dedicate a lot and that brings me a lot of joy (participant 4, emphasis added).

Characteristics attributed to talent, such as sensitivity, joy, self-responsibility, honesty, flexibility, adaptation, courage and patience, were identified and constituted the subcategory Emotional and Personality Characteristics Associated with Talent. Interestingly, among the five participants, three were uncomfortable identifying themselves as talented women. Regarding the results related to personal characteristics, or individual factors, attributed to the development of talent, we noticed a prevalence of psychosocial aspects. As mentioned, only one participant referred to the influence of genetic inheritance on her successful trajectory.

Participants also mentioned the satisfaction with achieving professional goals and feeling fulfilled in this dimension, as well as the perception that professional practice had sense and meaning. These data were organized in the subcategory Self-Realization and Life Purpose.

Regarding positive emotions and attitudes, despite the heterogeneity among the participants' personal and contextual characteristics, four mentioned an affective bond with work and joy in performing professional activities aligned with the purpose of life even in the face of barriers encountered throughout the life cycle. This willingness to look at situations positively even in unfavorable situations was grouped into the Optimism and Resilience subcategory.

This optimistic and positive attitude points to a high capacity to control emotions, deal with problems, resist environmental pressures (social or professional), and the ability to strategically face adversity without affecting mental health and the development of their potential. Resilience observed is a factor to be considered in the process of female talent

development, especially when unfavorable external factors prevail (risk factors). Here are some lines in this direction:

The big ace in the hole of my career was to be able to show a posture of a woman that is much more than a body ... because when you are very young, it is favorable, but over time this becomes a difficult issue and not all handle well with that, in my case it was a great challenge, and I deal with it very well (participant 2).

I have already felt fulfilled, but today I do not feel fulfilled, but I am satisfied. Each day I come to work I face every difficulty as a challenge. I made a choice. Faced with the adversities I experienced, I decided not to suffer and work it on myself. The way I found it was to do my best, give the best of me (participant 3).

I do not let this search for 'where I failed' drive me crazy. I have a lot of resilience but I have resignation when needed. It wasn't meant to be mine. I also try to escape easy excuses for what happened as 'I lost because I'm a woman' (participant 4, emphasis added).

In 2015 I was a finalist for an award and dreamed of winning the fifth statuette. It didn't come, unfortunately. I was a little sad, but I didn't get upset. I kept working hard. I keep up the daily task of writing and reading a lot. And I don't give up good literary quality. I often say to myself: let's go! (participant 5).

How do eminent women evaluate the role of the family environment in talent development?

The social context in which the individual is inserted and the type of relationships established in this environment can favor or inhibit the development of talent (Dessen, 2007). An example is the family that has direct influence throughout the life cycle. The influence of the original and current family environment was investigated in this study in order to understand the contextual and interpersonal dimensions in the process of talent development in eminent women. The results from the interviews that sought to answer the second research question were organized into two categories, one about Family Environment of Origin and the other about Current Family Environment.

Considering the first category, Family Structure, Paternal Influence and Maternal Support were the subcategories generated from the interviewees' reports. The characteristics of the Family Structure highlighted were union, emotional support, establishment of rules, and moderate and high expectations for school and professional performance. Although some participants mentioned the importance of the father in the development of characteristics that contributed to the professional performance or the attention given to the daughter's interests (Paternal Influence), it is clear in the reports presented by the interviewees that the maternal figure had a more significant impact on their trajectories, mainly because they represent affective and emotional support (Maternal Support).

All participants presented the family environment as a source of emotional support, appreciation of education, establishment of rules, and moderate to high expectations of participants' performance. These factors allowed the manifestation and development of their potentialities and corroborated the literature in the area (Dessen, 2007; Olszewski-Kubilius, Lee, & Thomson, 2014).

I suffered a lot at school, but I resigned myself, because my mother said that school would change my story. I didn't know what that meant, but it gave me the strength to continue. We had many limitations,

because of the situation of poverty, I lived the importance of knowing how to postpone [...] my mother said it would be worth waiting (participant 1).

Coming from such a consistent and cohesive home environment helped me a lot. Despite the differences, we have always been a close-knit family. I value that, which seemed difficult at the time today I think is good. We live on the same street as my parents (participant 2).

In the present study, all women interviewed chose to start a family, and this family played a decisive role in the process of talent development, acting in one case as a barrier and as a promoting factor in the others. These data constituted the second category, Current Family Environment. Among the aspects reported as favorable in the current family environment, the partnership of the spouse stood out. It was noted in the participants' reports the effect of changes that occurred due to greater female participation in the labor market, as well as family settings in which relationships are more egalitarian. The lower inequality between male and female roles meant greater distribution of tasks among parents and a relaxation of the family hierarchy. Three subcategories resulted from their reports: Spouse Partnership, Motherhood as a Driving Factor, and Positive Career Impact on the Family.

My husband is an extraordinary person, an amazing husband! I have no concern about home. He (husband) is a 'big partner'! He knows what I live for. It was a construction [...] My son is an important milestone in my life! (participant 1, emphasis added).

Investing in affection in well-structured family relationships helped me. I am very present in raising my children, I wake them up, we have breakfast together every day and pick them up at school every day. I organize myself so that my activities match the time they are at school (participant 2).

If it had been different, would my children be better than they are today? Today my children are so wonderful. I wasn't coming home without a little present for them. At one point I asked my children if I should have done differently, and they say no, they are proud! (participant 3).

Today my husband is a great source of wisdom, patience and advice. We are very partners and I know I can always count on him. (participant 4)

The only problem was the ex-husbands. The rest of the family are very proud of my work and help spread the word [...] I tried a second marriage, but it didn't work either [...] The separation was very dramatic and being financially independent was decisive (participant 5).

During the professional career, what factors facilitated and/or hindered the development of talent in eminent women?

Aspects that can favor and inhibit, which had the greatest impact during the participants' career in expressing their potential and developing their talents were investigated and the results organized into two categories, Barriers and Promoting Factors. As for the category Barriers, only one participant emphasized, at various moments of the interview, conflicts in the marital relationship due to the difficulty of the spouse dealing with their dedication and love for the professional area. This result generated the subcategory called Careers and Marital Conflicts, and referred to the difficulties encountered in the professional career of the participant resulting from marriage crises.

On the night of the release of the first book, my ex-husband said that I had taken the first step towards our separation. He, rude and sexist, could not stand the presence of so many friends, journalists, television, etc. (participant 5).

Also, with regard to Barriers, work organization was a limiting factor in the development of the participants' potential. Excessive workload and poor structure were some of the examples mentioned. In addition, while some participants pointed to difficulties in relationships with peers and bosses, especially in stages of professional advancement, where being a woman imposes ambiguities in this relationship, others stated that they did not suffer from the impact of gender on their work environment. These data constituted the subcategory Structure and Labor Relations.

School is a very tough workspace, teachers are subjected to terrible working conditions. Who gives 15 classes with 40 students to a teacher does not expect that teacher to do something effective. I was becoming aware (participant 1).

It's not easy being a boss, being a woman, and having to make decisions that impact. We have to maintain a posture, we cannot be authoritarian, but we cannot be so condescending either (participant 3).

I never saw myself as a gender. I know I'm an exception, but I don't feel that I was hampered by being a woman. I work in a predominantly male environment, but I have always had a lot of support from my peers and leaders (participant 4).

Still on the Barriers, one participant indicated as a limiting factor throughout her career, the distorted perceptions and thoughts about herself and about situations she experienced. This dysfunctional belief system lasted many years and was a major barrier to overcome. This result configured the subcategory Negative Beliefs, as illustrated in the following report.

I was called on to take on coordination and did not accept it, but when I was called on for an unrewarded function in the library, I said: then I will! I thought I was neither capable nor worthy of assuming a role with recognition and gratification (participant 1).

The participants of this study are successful women, eminent in their fields, with an outstanding and successful professional career. As reported in the topic of barriers, several obstacles were present in the process of developing their potential and expression of their talents, but the promoting factors, compared to the barriers, were more mentioned by the participants and constituted the category Promoting Factors.

Resistance to Gender Stereotypes, a subcategory of Promoting Factors, encompassed characteristics and behaviors that contrasted with the widespread belief of what is expected of women. The impact of the beauty industry, romance culture and motherhood, still present in contemporary society, does not seem to have affected the participants of this study. Other aspects such as the valorization of individuality and autonomy were also identified.

I was not a girl who met the beauty standards, beauty never brought me any advantage, on the contrary, I was always reminded that I was not pretty and would have no boyfriend. I have always been led to believe that if anything happened in my life it would be for my school and academic background and not for my appearance. Today I see that this was an advantage! (participant 1).

In childhood I played a lot of dolls. I was kind of 'childlike', really childish. But that was good, I stretched a phase of life and I take with me a light, optimistic, playful way of seeing life (participant 4, emphasis added).

I love living alone and deciding quietly about schedules and appointments without anyone's intervention. While married, it was very difficult and complicated because, as hard as I tried, the ex-husband didn't think I gave him the attention he deserved (participant 5).

The importance given to professional experiences as a relevant learning factor in a talent development path was highlighted by the participants. It should be noted that this aspect could be confused with privilege or luck, but in this study the participants demonstrated to make good use of the opportunities that arose, maximizing them. This aspect was the subcategory Opportunities. The occupation as a factor of social emancipation and intentional action in this direction was mentioned by two participants and constituted the subcategory Work as a Source of Social Transformation.

It was also identified in the participants' reports a feeling of satisfaction, commitment and positive emotional experiences that reflect in a strong affective bond with the work performed or area of activity. This feature was present in most speeches and seemed to contribute to the high involvement with the area, which in turn contributed to minimize the effects of the obstacles faced. These data were part of the subcategory Passion for Professional Area. Finally, it was found in the interviews a learning relationship through social development networks in which more experienced people and/or significant people acted as important models in the professional career of the participants, thus constituting the subcategory, Presence of Models or Mentors.

This person appeared in my life at 8 years old [...]. She believed I was going to learn, and she was thrilled with my learning [...]. She became someone so big to me that I said, people must have nothing more important to do in life than being a teacher. Just the fact that she gave me this dream was very important because she gave me a life project for me to grasp (participant 1).

My mentor is my mother, a great reader and case teller. My mentor is my father, who although he read almost nothing, was sensitive to my art and always encouraged me (participant 5).

Discussion and final considerations

National and international studies are in agreement with the realization that talent is a complex, multidetermined phenomenon and internal and external factors are in constant interaction. In the last decade, psychological and socio-emotional characteristics have been progressively evidenced as significant aspects in this process (Alencar, 2014; Chagas-Ferreira, 2014; Neihart, Pfeiffer, & Cross, 2015; Peterson, 2014; Prado & Fleith, 2016). This data points to a paradigm shift in the area where innate aspects are no longer recognized as the sole cause in a process of human and talent development.

Commitment, effort, dedication, self-fulfillment, life purpose, sensitivity, joy, self-responsibility, honesty, flexibility, adaptation, courage, patience, optimism and resilience were the individual factors reported by the participants as fundamental to their success. Interestingly, there was no tendency to associate high performance with luck or opportunity, according to previous studies with women (Manuel & Antunes, 2017; Noble et al., 1999). Nonetheless, most participants were uncomfortable recognizing themselves as talented and successful women, justifying that they reached this level with hard work. This nuisance may be the result of the myth spread in our society that talent is an innate and unchanging trait of the individual.

The participants had a positive belief about themselves and the possibility of improving their performance through effort, dedication, commitment and engagement. In this

sense, these women have a growth mindset, which, according to Dweck (2017), are characteristics associated with the realization of human potential and a trajectory of success. The author argues that talent development is a learning process in which failures and mistakes are present, but what distinguishes people who develop their potentials and are successful from those who do not develop them is the growth mindset. This mental belief is not fixed, can be learned and is directly related to motivation and high performance.

According to Dweck (2017), the human being has psychological needs that, when met and stimulated, favor the healthy development of the individual, resulting in a sense of satisfaction with life and personal fulfillment. However, Baumeister, Vohs, Aaker and Garbinsky (2013) argue that the identification of values and life purpose favors a meaningfulness life, which may indicate self-fulfillment, but not necessarily happiness and well-being. For the author, a life focused on a sense of purpose is more prone to the emergence of the potentialities of the individual, yet promotes greater anxiety, worry and stress than positive emotions.

Recent studies suggest that a high level of resilience is associated with more realistic and flexible thinking about lived situations (Seligman, 2011). Resilient people are less anxious, more assertive and cope better with complex situations that require frequent decision making. However, resilient behavior does not depend solely on internal factors (individual characteristics). The presence of social and affective support network has been highlighted in the literature as factors of protection and promotion of resilience, family involvement and presence of mentors, are some examples (Couto-Oliveira, 2007; Pinto & Monteiro, 2018; Seligman, 2011).

Another factor that draws attention to the results herein is the value given to education by the family of origin, regardless of the socioeconomic or educational level of its members. Education is considered a path to social mobility and better quality of life. This finding is also found in previous research involving talented and creative people (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Reis & Sullivan, 2009).

In this study, the current family played a decisive and favorable role in the process of female talent development, especially when there was a spouse's partnership and late motherhood. Family configurations favorable to talent have more egalitarian relationships in which there is better distribution of tasks among parents and greater flexibility of the family hierarchy. It was also found that the influence of talented and prominent women was positive in the family context.

Although participants did not refer to delaying motherhood as a positive aspect of their professional career, some studies show that both declining fertility and late motherhood may be protective factors for women in favor of the development of their talents. Thus, resistance to gender stereotypes or behaviors that conflict with social belief or expectation minimizes the risk of overexposure to the beauty industry, romance culture, early pregnancy and others due to group pressure, especially during adolescence (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Kerr & McKay, 2014; Reis & Sullivan, 2009).

This research made contributions to the understanding of female talent development, highlighting the influence of psychosocial factors in this process. However, it was a qualitative study with a small number of participants which may be a limitation of the study. In order to expand this understanding and complement the results, further studies are suggested, such as longitudinal research to identify the characteristics of female talent development over the course of life, and replication of this study with eminent women in just one field of activity; a quantitative research to identify motivational factors in the trajectories

of eminent women, and also a comparative research between eminent men and women regarding personal, family and professional characteristics.

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