A feminização da pobreza e a transmissão intergeracional da pobreza no Brasil.

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FEMINIZATION OF POVERTY AND INTERGENERATIONAL TRANSMISSION OF POVERTY

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1. Introduction

The concept ‘feminization of poverty’ represents the idea that women are becoming poorer over time relative to men. It has been used, since it was coined by Pearce (1978), to say that increasing in women’s poverty is particularly associated with rising rates of women-headed households. In fact, feminization of poverty can be regarded as a phenomenon caused by an increasing in the number of women headed households or as the prevalence of these households among the poor. In this study, we are focusing in their prevalence.

The study of Pearce (1978) and those that followed it (in time and approach) have focused on the consequences of the absence of a male provider for the women and their children. Hence, the rising rates of women-headed households is being taken as a kind of indicator of feminization of poverty as well as of intergenerational transmission of poverty.

The first women-headed households were acknowledged as such by the identification, in surveys, of households headed by women without a partner. The interest for this type of household increased together with the accumulating evidence that they were among the poor and that their number was increasing.

According to UN (1984:6-7), it could be found three types of households headed by women: “(a) one-person households of lone women; (b) households where there are women and children but no adult males; (c) households where adult males are present but where,
owing to invalidity, unemployment, alcoholism or other factors, a woman is the principal economic provider.”

Pearce (1978:28) has focused exclusively on the second type and has defined women-headed families as "those families in which there is only an adult woman and no adult male". We have taken for analysis women-headed households such as considered by Pearce (1978) so that we are certain that they are in fact headed by women alone. The presence of children is absolutely necessary as we are investigating intergenerational transmission of poverty.

According to Garfinkel and McLanahan (1986), women-headed families "are much more likely to be poor or to experience sharp drops in income than other families and ...the children of single parents are less likely to be successful as adults than those who grow up in two-parent homes". They have indebted this fact, similarly to Pearce (1978), to the following factors: their low earnings capacity; the lack of child support from fathers; and the meager benefits provided by public assistance programs.

Concern about these families has grown in proportion to the increase in their prevalence. Researchers have attributed this growing to the following factors:
(1) Men migration, resulting in left-behind women and children in the place of origin; or women migration and the creation of households in the place of destination.
(2) Marital disruption and increases in unpartnered adolescent fertility.
(3) Erosion of extended family systems and traditional support networks, which leaves single mothers and widowed women on their own.
(4) Gender rate imbalances caused by war deaths and civil conflicts, which result in a surplus of women in native or refugee populations.

In this perspective, the purpose of this paper is to assess the prevalence of Brazilian households headed by women among the poor population, taking for granted the relationship between it and feminization of poverty. In order to realize that assessment, we have observed the distribution of households headed by women into income quintiles groups. Women of the poorest quintile households and their children as well as the wealthiest ones have been compared. As exposed above, we will deal exclusively with households headed by women with no other adult present and with children living in the same household. It has been used data from 2000 Brazilian Censuses.
2. Feminization of poverty

Feminization of poverty is regarded as a phenomenon caused by an increasing in the number of women-headed households where there is only an adult women with children or can be caused also by the prevalence of this type of household among the poor. (Pearce 1978)

In the realm of feminization of poverty such as conceived by Pearce (1978), women-headed households must be examined through their sources of income that could be earned income, private and public transfer income, including the one provided by the welfare system. These different sources of income and their influence on feminization of poverty are described below.

2.1. Earned income

According to Pearce (1978), who analysed data from the U.S. Census Bureau, women were still at the bottom in the urban labor market: within occupationally segregated 'ghettos', the demand for cheap labor and the demand for female labor became synonymous. Women were much more concentrated in fewer occupations than were men. These occupations were concentrated in textile and electronics factories, banks and offices and household service. The higher the percentage of workers that are female in an occupation, the lower the average income in that occupation. Summing up, women were concentrated in relatively few, generally low-paying occupations.

The main constraint to women in the labor market is their reproductive functions. What means that women's job cannot be treated without considering child caring facilities because without such provision women are likely to drop out of the labor force. As a consequence, their employers will tend to view women's work as temporary or secondary and their home and family as their primary commitment. As a result women's salaries are less than men's, and it is more unlikely they benefit from training and social security.

2.2. Private transfer income

Most of the private transfer is made within the nuclear family: husbands gave their wives some portion of their salaries to pay for the expenses of the home and children. In the case of divorce or separation, fathers are obliged to pay alimonies for children support. However, among poor families, the likelihood of the same rate of transfer of economic support continuing after divorce or separation is very low.
2.3. Public transfer income

Public transfers include all unearned income received from the government and can be divided into two basic types: that which is received as a consequence of participation in the labor force, and that which is received as minimal income support, regardless of previous employment status.

In work-related benefits, women are generally underrepresented among the beneficiaries, and are even less represented in amount received. A large number of women are not eligible to unemployment insurance, because there are certain occupations that are excluded from unemployment insurance, such as household service work that are performed almost exclusively by women. Many women are not eligible to social security because of their temporary or part-time jobs or participation in the informal economy.

In the case of women heads of family, the most important public transfer income not conditioned on previous labor force participation is the minimal income support, in which women are likely to receive less than they need to overcome poverty. Pearce (1978) has analysed the role of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) in perpetuating women's poverty.

AFDC is the former name for a welfare program administered by the United States Department of Health and Human Services. It was created under the name Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) by the Social Security Act of 1935, among other four programs as part of the New Deal\(^1\). The name ADC was changed to AFDC in 1960. In 1996 under Bill Clinton the program was remade, imposing a lifetime limit of five years on the receipt of benefits there from.

AFDC was replaced in 1997 by Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). TANF was envisaged to move recipients into work and turn welfare into a program of temporary assistance. Its purposes are: (1) assisting needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes; (2) reducing the dependency of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work and marriage; (3) preventing out-of-wedlock pregnancies; and (4) encouraging the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

\(^1\) The New Deal was President Franklin D. Roosevelt's legislative agenda for rescuing the USA from the Great Depression. It was widely believed that the depression was caused by the inherent instability of the market and that government intervention was necessary to rationalize and stabilize the economy.
It is worth to note that AFDC had been strongly criticized by North-Americans researchers and planners who argued, on one hand, that it was stimulating out-of-wedlock births and divorces; and in the other hand, that the amount of the benefit would never allowed women and their children overcome poverty. However, North-Americans researchers and planners from World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank have argued for the implementation of similar (poverty-alleviation) program in developing countries.

In this study, we have identified the main sources of income of women heads, which were: wages and salaries, social security benefits, alimonies and gifts, and government assistance programs. Unfortunately, the impact of this last one on the income of the poor households could not be inferred because our source of data dated 2000 and the Brazilian’s government assistance program –the *Bolsa Familia* was launched in 2004.

3. Feminization of poverty: a brief review of the literature

Above, we have presented the main issues concerning feminization of poverty such as established by Pearce (1978). In this part of the paper, it is shown how the theme has been developed since then through some more representative studies, which are briefly described below.

Buvinic and Gupta (1994) have analysed 61 surveys realized in Africa, Asia and in Latin America and Caribe, in order to answer the questions: (1) whether women-headed households were overrepresented among poor households and the consequences for the children; (2) whether targeting women-headed households would be a cost-effective anti-poverty strategy. Thirty-eight out of these sixty-one surveys reached the conclusion that women-headed households were overrepresented among the poor. Other fifteen found that poverty was associated with only certain types of female heads. Only eight did not found empirical evidence of a greater poverty of female-headed households.

Buvinic and Gupta (1994), through the information obtained from these studies, had figured out that the association between women-headed households and poverty can be observed through the analysis of three factors which determine the greater poverty in this type of household: (1st) dependency burden: they tend to contain a higher ratio of non-workers to workers than do other households; (2nd) gender related economic gap: women have lower average earnings than men, fewer assets and less access to remunerative jobs.
and productive resources; and (3rd) women have to perform also their reproductive functions. As a consequence, they have to face greater time and mobility constraints, which lead them to dedicate a lesser number of hours to remunerative jobs or training and education.

Handa (1994) has analysed data from Jamaican Survey of Living Conditions 1989. His objective was to verify the existence of a significant difference in children’s conditions inside women-headed households and men-headed households. He has considered children’s school enrollment and labor force participation as well as diarrhoea incidence for those less than five years of age. His hypothesis was that children’s conditions would be better in households where the woman is the economic provider. According to him, “there is evidence that a lesser share of men’s income is devoted to other household members while women’s income tends to be family income.”

He has classified the households in quintiles according to their expenditure. In accordance with his initial hypothesis, in the women-headed households, resources are allocated in a manner that favors children. Partnered households present a higher children’s school enrolment and a lowest participation in the labour force as well as better health conditions than the households headed by women.

Barros, Fox and Mendonça (1997) have analysed some characteristics and behavior of women-headed households in urban Brazil. Their objective was to identify some of the consequences of the growth of this type of household in respect to children’s welfare. The following household characteristics were observed: household composition, family income, and dependency ratio. The following head of household characteristics were observed: age, schooling, mean income, percent economically active, share of household income earned by head. In respect to the children, they have considered: school enrollment and labor force participation.

According to Barros, Fox and Mendonça (1997), a certain class of households can be overrepresented among the poor if: (a) a few adults have positive income; (b) the income of the earners is low; or (c) the dependency ratio is high. They have concluded that women-headed households were overrepresented among the poor and that their children had the worst condition. This fact was attributed to income inequalities between this type of household and those headed by men.
Rogers (1995) has argued for the vulnerability of households headed by women, regarded as a consequence of their sources of income. Rogers (1995:2037) has pointed out that: "Female and male-headed households are about equally distributed among per capita expenditure classes, but the sources of household income are radically different in the two types of household." She named the categories of income as: (a) wages, (b) business income, (c) income from rent, (d) pensions and social security, (e) interest and dividends, and (f) transfers that include gifts of cash paid from family members living away from home. She has concluded that as women are more dependent on (d) and (f), they are more vulnerable to poverty.

3.1. Some Brazilian surveys on feminization of poverty

Castro (1989) has analysed data from 1950 to 1980 Brazilian censuses. She has regarded socio-demographic characteristics of women heads of household and their participation in the labour force compared to those of wives and daughters as well as men heads of household, husbands and sons. The author has concluded that women-headed households do not lead, necessarily to a feminization of poverty. According to her, conversely to the feminization of poverty hypothesis, heads of household, being women or men suffer poverty in a similar way.

Berquó (2002) has analysed some socio-demographic characteristics of the heads of household: age, schooling, income, race, and marital status. She has concluded that women without a partner and with children were the poorest.

Novellino (2002) has analysed feminization of poverty phenomenon in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in the nineties regarding families with children within the lowest quintile income. It was taken into account some characteristics of the heads, and their children as well as of their households. The author observed that life quality of the poorest families seemed to be equally unfavorable, independent of gender. But there is some differences between genders that deserve to be mentioned: (a) the number of women-headed households is increasing; (b) the proportion of unemployed women is higher; (c) women’s average schooling years is increasing but men’s average schooling years is still higher; (d) the proportion of children at school is small for women-headed without partner as well as for men-headed with a partner; (e) the proportion of children participating in the labor force is small for both type of household. The author has concluded that although the
feminization of poverty phenomenon could not be proved because poverty affects equally women-headed households without a partner and men-headed households within the lowest income quintile, the number of women-headed households had increased in this quintile.

The surveys that have reached the conclusion that there is indeed a phenomenon of feminization of poverty had, eventually, argued for public policies targeted to women heads of households, which is our next topic.

4. Public policies for poor women

The surveys on feminization of poverty are strongly associated with the proposition of public policies for poor women heads. What characterizes this kind of policy is that they are not concerned with the whole population neither with all the poor people, nor with all the poor women but exclusively with a kind of poor women, which represent a small part of the poor population.

Targeting poverty alleviation interventions to specific groups has become a practice of neo-liberal governments given the pressures exerted by organisms such as World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank over the State to reduce public expenditures on health and education in order to repay the loans. This way, governments expect to increase the cost-effectiveness of programs and assure that assistance reaches the neediest. A counterpoint to targeting is universalistic programs that provide benefits independent of income, age, gender or other. Governments facing the problem of poverty may target selected populations who either are poor, or are highly vulnerable to becoming poor.

As Buvinic and Gupta (1994) have said: "Female headship and poverty are strongly correlated in developing countries, and targeting female headship can reduce the poverty of women with larger benefits to children than those that would obtain from targeting male-headed families with the same amount of resources."

The rationale for targeting women headship is to reduce the transmission of poverty into the next generation and that women tend to invest in children when she is the household provider. So, women were preferable to be enrolled as beneficiaries of public benefits because they would expend more of them with their children.

These policies can provide income or be concerned with improving the skills of the women through training, equal employment opportunity and childcare facilities in order to allow and improve women participation at workforce. Or it can be children-centred,
launching programs to improve children skills and access to services and facilities in order to allow them to get better positions than their parents at the workforce.

The first Latin American country to establish a program targeted to women heads was Chile in 1992. The program objective was increasing their incomes, improve the welfare of the members of these households, and end the discrimination between women-headed households and men-headed households. The program developed by the Women's National Service jointly with other ministries, gave preference to the children of women-headed households in nutrition interventions and child-care; it had as a target increase the economic opportunities of these women as well as expand their access to housing and information. It started with a two-year pilot project launched in five municipalities identified as concentrating large proportions of poor households. The project targeted 500 women head of household in each municipality and 2500 in the total. Single mothers even if residing in male-headed extended households could benefit in the project.

The pilot project offered the following services: health assistance, job training, housing, child care (including educational programs), and legal aid. The pilot project relies on the infrastructure and services already in place in the chosen municipalities. It was financed by Chilean state and international donors.

Here in Brazil we do not have a program targeted exclusively to families headed by women. But we have one targeted to poor families in order to alleviate their poverty, it is the *Bolsa Família*, a family grant supported by World Bank and created in 2004 that provides cash transfers to families, based on income levels and household composition. The *Bolsa Familia* Program targets two groups: extremely poor families, with per capita monthly incomes below R$50,00 (US$17,00), and moderately poor families, with per capita monthly incomes below R$100,00 (US$34,00) but higher than R$50,00. Payments are preferably made to the women. The Program's transfer range from R$15,00 (US$5,00) to R$95,00 (US$33,00) depending on income and composition of the families. These cash transfer are conditional to school attendance for the children. According to data from 2006, the program covered 3,615,864 families. As the *Bolsa Familia* was launched in 2004 and the data we rely on were collected in 2000, we were not able to assess its impact over our sample of poor households headed by women.
After presenting the origins and the state-of-the-art of feminization of poverty as an area of research, we will, in the next section, present our own research upon feminization of poverty in Brazil in which we have taken as object households headed by women.

5. Data on poor households headed by women in Brazil

In this part of the paper we present the main results of the research we have carried out on households headed by women. This research relies on 2000 Brazilian Census data, from which had been extracted a sample of 2,068,081 households headed by women. This sample do not include all the households headed by women but those headed by women aged 18 and over with the presence of children 0 to 17 years of age where there were no adult male. From now on these households will be designated as HHW.

5.1. Distribution of HHW by Brazilian state

Brazil is a country with very great regional disparities in income and wealth. These disparities can be observed, for instance, in the Human Development Index (HDI) scores for the Brazilian states which have varied from 0.661 to 0.822. As we were concerned with the prevalence of HHW and its relation with feminization of poverty, we related, for each Brazilian state, the proportion of HHW with its HDI score. Our intention was to acknowledge whether the higher the proportion of HHW the worst the HDI score. In the table below it is shown the proportion of HHW and HDI score for each Brazilian state.
Regarding the Table 1 above, we can observe that there are pretty variations among the Brazilian states in respect to HHW proportions as well as HDI scores. The Brazil’s proportion of HHW is 4.9%. However, this proportion suffers variations throughout Brazilian states. The lesser the proportion of HHW the better the position in the HDI. Taking into account the values for Brazil, we can see that the states whose HHW’s proportions are under Brazil’s proportion, have their HDI score over Brazilian’s average.
On the other hand, Brazilian states that present a proportion of HHW above the national one, present an HDI rank lower than Brazil’s with the exception of 3 out of 20 states. The state that presents the lowest proportion of HHW (4.1%) has the best position of all states in the HDI. The state with the highest proportion of these households (7.1%) has as score 0.697. The state with the worst score –0.636 have a proportion of 6.1% of these households. Summing up, the Brazilian states with the worst HDI scores present a higher proportion of HHW. What allow us to establish a relationship between poverty or, at least, vulnerability and HHW.

5.2. Distribution of HHW by quintile of income

Carrying on with our assessment on the prevalence of HHW and feminization of poverty, we disaggregated these households according to their income in quintiles. It was inferred that there were a higher concentration of HHW in the lowest quintile. The distribution of HHW according to their income quintile is the following: 1st or poorest quintile, 36.4% of the HHW; 2nd, 27.6%; 3rd, 14.8%; 4th, 11.8%; and the 5th or wealthiest, 9.4% of the HHW. In the table below, we present the proportion of households and the average income per capita.

Table 2
Proportion of HHW by quintile and average income per capita in Reais (Brazilian currency)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>quintile</th>
<th>proportion of HHW</th>
<th>income per capita (R$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>poorest</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>23.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>86.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>162.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>302.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wealthiest</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>1045.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Brazilian Census 2000

According to the table above, almost 40% of the HHW had an average income per capita of R$ 23.30 while the average income per capita of the 10% wealthiest HHW was R$1045.60. So, the wealthiest’s income is 45 times higher than the poorest’s. As it can be seen, there are pretty disparities in respect to income among the studied women. This achievement led us to figure out the relevance of comparing the poorest set of HHW with the wealthiest one. So, it have been considered for analysis exclusively HHW instead of comparing them with households headed by men as have been usually done by researchers.
inside the feminization of poverty realm. So, we have taken the decision of addressing exclusively the 40% poorest HHW and the 10% wealthiest HHW.

5.3. Socio-demographic profile of women heads of households

This profile comprehends data about age, race, marital status, schooling, occupation and sources of income for women heads of households of both lowest and highest quintile of income. Let’s begin with women’s average age and its relation with marital status.

As it is shown in the graphic below, the average age for the poorest is 37 years and for the wealthiest, 40. For the married it is, respectively, 38 and 39; for the divorced, 38 and 39; for the widowed, 47 for both; only for the single there is a difference although slight: 34 and 39. The difference of average age between the poorest and wealthiest is not too much but indicates a trend for poor women to have to raise their children alone earlier than the wealthiest.

![Graphic 2](image)

Average age of the women heads by marital status

As it can be seen in the graphic below, there is a concentration of afrodescendent in the poorest HHW: its proportion (62%) is pretty above the proportion of Brazilian black population –44.6%. As the income improves, decreases the proportion of black women heads and increases the proportion of white heads. The proportion of black women goes from 62% in the poorest quintile to 20% in the wealthiest quintile. On the contrary, the proportion of white women goes from 37% in the poorest quintile to 78% in the wealthiest one.
Another feature considered had been schooling. In the table below, it is presented the schooling of the poorest and of the wealthiest. As it can be seen, there is a strong relation between schooling and income. Almost half of the poorest women have 3 and under years of schooling. On the other hand, 86.2% of the wealthiest women have 11 or plus years of schooling.

In analyzing these women’s schooling according to their race it could be observed that the poorest white concentrate in the schooling group 4 to 7 years; the poorest black concentrate in the group 3 and under. Both white and black wealthiest concentrate in the group 11 or plus. This information has led to the conclusion that it has been more difficult to black women to attend school.

Table 3
Schooling of the women heads

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>poorest</th>
<th>wealthiest</th>
<th>poorest</th>
<th>wealthiest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>white</td>
<td>black</td>
<td>white</td>
<td>black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 and under</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>47.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 to 7</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>35.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 to 10</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 or plus</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Brazilian Census 2000
Another feature of relevance to our research is marital status. As we can observe from the graphic below, there is a considerable difference in the proportions of divorced and single for the poorest and for the wealthiest. While 6% of the poorest are divorced, 23% of the wealthiest are. While 56% of the poorest are single, 32% of the wealthiest are. It is known that divorced heads are more likely to receive alimony from their children’s fathers than the single ones. Based on Pearce (1978) explanations for feminization of poverty and regarding the high proportion of poor HHW headed by single women, it is possible to argue for the existence of this phenomenon among poor Brazilian HHW.

**Graphic 4**
Marital status of the women heads

![Graphic](image)

Source: Brazilian Census 2000

The graphic below shows the occupations of the poorest women heads as well as of the wealthiest. The first four columns are respect to the poorest and the last three to the wealthiest. The main occupation for the poorest is domestic work –33.4%; if we add the proportion of domestic worker with contract this proportion will be 40%. If we add domestic worker without contract plus worker without contract we will infer that more than half of these women are at the informal sector. Meanwhile, almost half of the wealthiest women are engaged in the formal work market.
Lastly, we will see women’s main sources of income according to their marital status. The main sources identified were: wages and salaries, social security benefits and alimonies and gifts. According to the data presented in the table below, married, divorced and single poor women heads have as main source of income wages and salaries as well as the wealthy with the same marital status.

In respect to the widowed, the main source of income for the poor is social security benefits. For the wealthy, on the contrary, the main source is from wages and salaries although another pretty significative source is social security and benefits. Alimonies and gifts represent around 10% of the income of married being poor or wealthy. For the divorced there is a difference of 3% plus for the poor (10 to 7). For the single, this difference is almost half for the wealthy – 5% and 9.1% for the poor. A remarkable data is the one about ‘no income’. None of the wealthy has declared themselves as ‘no income’. But more than 30% of poor married, divorced and single and 21.6% of the widowed have declared themselves as ‘no income’.

Source: Brazilian Census 2000
5.4. Data on HHW’s children

At first, we will see the distribution of children by age according to their quintile. In the poorest quintile, the proportion of children under 4 years is the double of the proportion for the wealthiest. While in the poorest household 17% of the children are under 4 years of age, in the wealthiest ones, this proportion is 8.7%. On the other hand, for children between 15 and 17 years of age, the proportion in bigger in the wealthiest –24.3%, and for the poorest, 16%.

![Graphic 6: Children’s group of age](image)

Source: Brazilian Census 2000
In respect to enrolment at school of the children 7-14 years of age, practically a hundred per cent of the wealthiest household’s children are enrolled and 92% of the poorest are. In respect to children 15-17 years of age, 95.6% of the wealthiest are and drop to 71.6% for the poorest.

It has been said that the major the schooling of the mother the major the probability of keeping the children at school. Indeed, 66.3% of the children 15-17 years of age whose mother have less than 4 years of schooling are enrolled. This proportion increases as increase the years of schooling of the mother. 73.6% of the children whose mother’s schooling is 4-7 years; 82.4% whose mother have 8-10 years of schooling and 86.3% of the children whose mothers have 11 and plus years of schooling were attending school.

![Graphic 7: Proportion of children enrolled at school](source: Brazilian Census 2000)

In the table below it is showed the proportion of HHW’s children 10 to 14 years of age that were only studying, studying and working, only working or yet not studying neither working.

Before analysing these data it is worth to remember that our sample comprehends 596.743 children pertaining to the poorest HHW and 98.181 children pertaining to the wealthiest HHW. While almost a hundred per cent of the wealthiest were enrolled at school, 86% of the poorest were. While less than 2% of the wealthiest were studying and working, more than 6% of the poor were studying and working.

Only 103 children of the wealthiest HHW were worker and 8.004 children of the poorest HHW were working. While 865 children of the wealthiest HHW were not working neither studying, 38.823 children of the poorest HHW were not working neither studying.
Considering this information, we would say that the poorest HHW’s children were in worst condition than the wealthiest’s ones. Besides, their number is much more higher: to each child of the wealthiest HHW correspond a bit more than 6 children of the poorest HHW.

Table 5
School enrollment and labor force participation children 10-14 years of age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>poorest</th>
<th>Wealthiest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>student</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>97.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student and worker</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worker</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not student and worker</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Brazilian Census 2000

In the table below, it is showed the proportion of HHS’s children 15 to 17 years of age that were only studying, studying and working, only working, or not studying neither working. Our sample of children 15 to 17 years of age comprehends 298,587 pertaining to the poorest HHW and 63,903 pertaining to the wealthiest ones. For this group of age, a bit more of the half of the poorest HHW’s children were attending school and 85% of wealthiest ones were. More than 10% of the poorest’s were working while 1.4% of the wealthiest’s were. Taking into account children not working neither studying, we had 17% of the poorest’s or, in absolute numbers, 50,884 children and 2.9% of the wealthiest’s or 1,830 children. To each wealthiest’s child in this condition, there were, practically, 28 poorest’s children although there were 1 child in the wealthiest HHW to each 5 children in the poorest HHW sample.

6. Final remarks

In concluding this paper, we may say that there is indeed a phenomenon of feminization of poverty in Brazil. The strong prevalence of poor among the HHW provides clear evidence of that fact. Intergenerational transmission of poverty was a process evidenced in this research by the low rates of children’s school attendance. This fact
compromises the future of the children living in the poorest HHW. These data indicate the urgency for public policies targeted to these women and their children.

Table 6
School enrollment and labor force participation children 15-17 years of age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>poorest</th>
<th>wealthiest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>student</td>
<td>52,9</td>
<td>85,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student and worker</td>
<td>18,8</td>
<td>10,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worker</td>
<td>11,3</td>
<td>1,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not student and not worker</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2,9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Brazilian Census 2000

References


