

## Public policies for women and domestic violence

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Violence against women is a universal problem that affects thousands of people from different groups, and not usually restricted to a social, economic, religious, or cultural group. It is known that domestic violence is a serious problem that affects families from different countries and that there is a concealment of the offense occurred. Knowing that the complaint is a highly personal act inherent to the victim, hence its omission hinders the performance of possible assistance to these women who are assaulted in their family context. In this context, this study aimed to describe the policies for women in Brazil comparing them with the actions that occur in the municipality of Paripiranga, and also to discuss the importance of the complaint against the aggressors. Bibliographic information through a detailed study on the subject in books and journals in this field of study was collected. Interviews were conducted with the delegate and the city promoter of Paripiranga (BA) to collect information about the subject, especially the numbers of procedures referred to court, handling complaints, as well as the results of these procedures. There were also interviews with a sample of battered women in the municipality to identify the reasons, reactions and results of the aggression. The data analyzed highlighted that from 2006 to 2010 there was a considerable increase in the police procedures related to violence against women, showing that in 2006 there were 5%, in 2007, 21%, in 2008, 28%, in 2009, 33%, and in the first semester in 2010, 13%. It is also concluded that most of the attackers are their own companions, ex-husbands/ex-boyfriends, followed by fathers, uncles, neighbors, sons in law / daughters in law and nephews. The data also show that most abused were female, with 97% of cases, with only 3% of assaults against men.

Keywords: Public Policy; Public Security; Women; Domestic Violence

A violência contra a mulher é um problema universal que atinge a milhares de pessoas de grupos distintos, e não costuma restringir-se a grupo social, econômico, religioso, ou cultural. Sabe-se que a violência doméstica é um grave problema que afeta famílias de diversos países e que há a ocultação de ocorrência no delito. Sabendo que a denúncia é um ato personalíssimo inerente à vítima, conseqüentemente, sua omissão dificulta a atuação de possíveis assistências a essas mulheres que sofrem agressões em seu âmbito familiar. Neste contexto, este estudo teve o objetivo de descrever as políticas públicas para mulheres no Brasil comparando-as com as ações que ocorrem no município de Paripiranga, e ainda de discutir a importância da denúncia contra os agressores. Foi realizada coleta de informações bibliográficas através de um estudo minucioso sobre o assunto em livros e revistas científicas deste campo de estudo. Foram realizadas entrevistas com o delegado e com o promotor da cidade de Paripiranga (BA) para coleta de informações que diz respeito ao assunto, principalmente, os números de procedimentos encaminhados à Justiça, o tratamento das denúncias, bem como os resultados destes procedimentos. Foram realizadas ainda entrevistas com uma amostra de mulheres agredidas do município para identificação dos motivos, reações e resultados da agressão. Os dados analisados evidenciaram que de 2006 a 2010 houve um aumento considerável nos procedimentos, mostrando que em 2006 ocorreram apenas 5% dos procedimentos, em 2007 foram 21% dos procedimentos, 2008 – 28%, 2009 – 33% e no primeiro semestre 2010 – 13% dos procedimentos policiais relacionados com violência contra a mulher. Conclui-se ainda que a maior parte dos agressores seja os próprios companheiros, logo em seguida ex-marido/ex-namorado, seguindo pai, tio, vizinhos, genro/nora e sobrinhos. Os dados mostram ainda que a maioria dos agredidos foram do sexo feminino, com 97% das ocorrências, sendo apenas 3% de agressões contra homens.

Palavras-chave: Políticas Públicas; Segurança Pública; Mulheres; Violência Doméstica

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Women of the 21st Century conquered their space in society as a whole. In 2003 there was a great victory about the question regarding the creation of the Special Secretariat of Policies for Women, headed by the Minister Emília Fernandes. Still the women of the millennium suffer domestic and sexual violence, mainly from her companions.

Due to the domestic violence practice still prevailing in our country, on November 25th, 2004 one Law Project which creates instruments to curb the domestic violence against women was sent to the National Congress, proposing measures of prevention, assistance and protection to women victims of violence. The proposal previews the creation of one specific procedure, within the Law nº 9.099/95 (has on Special Civil and Criminal Courts and gives more), for the cases of domestic violence, and propose the creation of specialized jurisdictions on this type of violence [4].

In this context, this study aimed to describe public politics for women in Brazil, comparing them with the actions which occur in the municipality of Paripiranga, and also discuss the importance of the formal complaint against the attackers.

## 2. LITERARY REVIEW

### 2.1 *Woman's History*

The woman of the feudal society got a role of marital submission, where she was the reproductive and the husband was her lord. This happened due to the idea implanted by the Church that the marriage was indissoluble. In order to avoid dilution of the familiar patrimony, this encouraged and then forced – under threatening of severe canonical penalties – the permanence and stability of marital relationship [2].

For Bauer [2], according to common clergymen's concept, woman must revere and obey husband. She must be supported and not abandoned, except for adultery. "The female inferiority came from the sex fragility, from the fragility at the flesh temptations" [2]. Physical pleasure was convicted. Sexuality was extremely restricted, because woman only served for procreation. Couples' sexual intercourses were severely disciplined. "The ability to bear children, especially males, guarantees them a position within the family." [2].

In medieval society, the work of women was done poorly. Greater victims of exploitation, they acted in rural zone, developing many duties of the medieval economy; even working as much as men, they were paid much less than they. The female activity in work was concentrated in the textile industry, however, was not limited only to this activity. They acted as manufacturers of helmets and armours, needlemakers, cutlers, manufacturers of scissors, earrings confectioners, and even smiths, as also butchers, pork-butchers, bakers, dairywomen, fishmongers and oven-women, in the food industry. In England, they were brewers [2].

In conformity to Bauer [2] around the 16th Century, women were excluded of activities they did in the early times, like the case of medicine and also were mercilessly prohibited of attend university classes. Even the noble women were highly affected by law being unable to inherit the fiefs. Only in convents, they had the opportunity to develop the intellectual and cultural skills. However, the feudal noble woman still obtained some privileges, comparing to the others, since were considered ideological instrument to aggrandize fief.

The labor division was based on social and sexual aspects. The most valued and qualified tasks were destined to men, while women occupied primarily the home duties and other socially devalued tasks. However, besides the domestic administration, did another duties silently and cooperate to familiar income.

In the Modern Age, the urban woman was excluded of professional education and her participation in urban tasks remained with significant restrictions. Peasant woman sought alternatives to manage the work outside the home institutional control. In the old regime, in

Europe, in average, “women gave birth every two years. The contraceptive methods hardly existed or had their use very reduced.” [2].

The first struggles for women’s rights came up in the second half of the 19th century, with the main aim of fighting for the rights equality. “In that time, like nowadays, it was affirmed that female working outside home provoked the family’s degradation. Hence the State had included in the Civil Code (1916) that woman must have her husband’s authorization to work outside home, for family protection (even the poor one)” [3]. Concerning marriage, the reaction was to affirm that to remove the romantic environment, replacing it by “civilized” love, excluding passion, responsible for “bloody passion crimes”.

Passional crimes, one of the most serious problems of that era, constituted a real “epidemic” for some feminists. Heading the activity against these crimes, Public Promoters like Roberto Lyra, Carlos Sussekindde Mendonça, Caetano Pinto de Miranda Montenegro and Lourenço de Mattos Borges founded the Brazilian Counsel of Social Hygiene. They intended to curb and punish passion crimes still tolerated by society and Justice. The aim was not properly to defend women, but they intended, effectively, to protect family institution [3].

The industrial revolution allowed women to take part of market working as employees at textile fabrics; later, in mining and other economy sectors, like the paper industry, in the manufacture of tiles and shingles. In the beginning of the 19th century, education brought opportunities to women; who had not privileges or dowries, acted as teachers or ladies in waiting, to reach certain “independence”. In the second half of the 19th century, the nursery occupation emerged, due to the Crimea War (1854), and further they were introduced to administration enterprises offices. With passing years, the tertiary sector promoted great number of employments for women. In this same time, another context, the first evidences of female socialism and increasing women’s integration and their vindications’ of the workers organizations, till then exclusively masculine, started to happen.

The end of 19th century, with the world wars, provided the massive incorporation of women to work, the technical advances which released woman from certain domestic hard duties and the female participation on vindication actions. It is stressed that even incorporated to the trade sector did not mean abandoning their domestic responsibilities. In capitalism, the female activity got stronger and provided women revindication for property rights, because they considered marriage the *civil death*.

During the 1960 and 1970 decades, the middle-class feminist, political militants against the military dictatorship and intellectuals were adding to the trade unionists and workers of different sectors. Surely, they were united by the same democratic and equal vision about woman’s rights that supplanted party and ideological differences. With this, it was formed a vast united women’s movement, if we consider that the enemy was common. In contrast, the conservative women’s movement, linked especially to the Catholic Church and the military, also had their activity organized. The feminist movement has added a number of groups who have acted in favor of the rights to better living conditions, by Amnesty, for equal rights between men and women. The formation of entities intended to shelter women victims of domestic violence was not the form. Throughout the country, voluntary, activist groups, sought to deal with all types of violence: rape, incest, mistreatment, harassment of prostitutes, and endless violations of human rights of women and girls. Unlike the decades of 1910 and 1920, now hidden in the complaints of these crimes and the family became public. Initially received with discredit and sarcasm by the media in General, little by little were recognized. Much effort has cost women civil society afford this fundamental activity [2].

## 2.2 Domestic Violence

Violence against woman is a worldwide problem that affects thousands of people of different groups, without respect to any social, economic, religious and cultural level. And in most cases, this happens silently, because most victims prefer to close the violence done against them, perhaps for fear, shame or even due to economic dependence. The persons who see these scenes, neighbors, also shut at the attacks, preferring to act according to the saying ‘In a quarrel

between a husband and his wife, keep away', and remains only to the aggressor to control the situation and nobody does anything.

Many of the attacked women see no solution for their situation; some have children at home and are totally dependent of their partners for their livelihood, preferring not to denounce; others ashamed or scared, threatened, prefer shut up, making violence a lifestyle. The majority of the aggressors are their spouses, fathers and sons, followed by boyfriends, ex-boyfriends and even neighbors.

According to the United Nations General Assembly [6]

Violence against women is any act of gender-based violence that results, or is likely to result in physical injury, psychological or sexual, or suffering to women, including also the threat of committing such acts, coercion and deprivation of liberty, occurring both in public and in private life.

Pointing out this, Caravantes [8], brings one significant contribution when affirms that: "intra family violence can be understood as any action or omission that results in physical, sexual, emotional, social or equity injury of a human being, where there is intimate and family ties between the victim and aggressor".

For Guerra (1998) and Braghini (2000) [8]

Among the various forms of expression of violence are the physical, sexual, psychological and neglect. The first consists of the intentional use, accidental not through force, assaults, slaps, banging ill-treatment and beatings. Sexual violence is seen as an abuse of power exercised over particular victim without their consent as unwanted caresses, incest, sexual exploitation, children's pornography, exhibitionism and rape. Psychological violence is characterized by inadequate verbalization, disrespect, humiliation, intimidation, abuse, betrayal, death threats and emotional abandonment material, resulting in mental suffering. Finally, we have the negligence as a way to omit the fulfillment of basic needs mental suffering.

Considered a multicausal phenomenon, violence is a process of victimization that is expressed in "acts with intent to harm, subtract, underestimate and subdue, always involving power content, whether physical or intellectual, economic, political or social. Reach more hostile beings most defenseless of society such as children and adolescents, and also women without, however, save the rest". [1]

For Teixeira [9] "There are two modes of violence recognized by the legal system: the effective and the presumed ". This is the effective violence "contest of physical force or the employment of means capable of depriving or disturb the understanding of the victim, making it impossible to respond or defend herself".

Conjugal violence, occurring in the family context, tends to be silenced by their victims and veiled at the eyes of society, circumstances that tend to hide the magnitude of the problem. Facilitating in this way, distortions on the true reality of the conflict and statistics about them. [5]

According to Langley and Levy [5]: "The reasons for domestic violence are divided into nine categories: mental illness; alcohol and drugs; acceptance of violence on the part of the public; lack of communication; sex; a vulnerable self-image; frustration; changes; violence as a resource to resolve problems its revelation".

As we have seen there are many reasons why domestic violence occur; a very common example is the consumption of licit or illicit drugs. Alcohol is considered as a substance that causes family breakdown when consumed in high-scale, since it causes behavioral change causing mood changes that impact adversely on the woman, subjecting them to physical violence as fractures, bruises, burns, head trauma, jaw displacement, rape, and murder.

According to World Health Organization [6], violence represents a public health problem of serious dimensions, widely disseminated in all countries of the world. Violence against women is of particular importance, estimating that at least one fifth of the world female population has already suffered sexual or physical violence at some point in their lives.

It is known that domestic violence is a serious problem that affects families from different countries and social classes. According to Moreira [7], "there are estimates of 20% to 50% of physical violence against women perpetrated by the partner at least once in their life worldwide". It is also interesting to note that most of these women do not try to find any kind of help.

Violence against women brings multiple consequences for their personal development and for their health, in order that such violence has as a consequence the increased rates of suicide, the increased use of drugs and alcohol in addition to the psychic suffering, where the woman has to be able to withstand the situation.

A substantial initiative has been taken with regard to combating domestic violence against women. On September 22nd, 2006 the Law 11340/06 was approved, known as *Maria da Penha* Law, which was created with goal of reducing domestic violence against women, still counting proposals for measures of prevention, assistance and protection to women victims of violence.

The Act suggests the creation of specialized in domestic violence jurisdictions and other specific procedures for dealing with the theme, within the law 9.0099. It provides for the referral of attacked women and their dependents the protection programs and services, thereby ensuring the right to custody of their children and their property, as also the process of returning to his residence after the expulsion of the aggressor.

During the first year of application of the law (Oct/2006 to May/2007), were instituted 32.630 police investigations, 10.450 criminal proceedings, 864 prisons in flagrant and 77 preventive. Data provided by (SPM) Special Secretariat of Policies for Women [4].

In the Brazilian social reality, there is the concealment of occurrence in tort, due to several factors: prejudice, lack of awareness of the population, economic and emotional dependency among others. Knowing that the complaint is an act inherent to the victim, consequently, her omission makes difficult the State action and even possible assistance to those women who suffer aggression in their familiar environment.

### 3. METODOLOGY

This study used two types of field research, which was intended to achieve information and/or knowledge about the problem, for which demand a response, and the bibliographic search, which is developed from material already prepared, consisted primarily of books and scientific articles.

The data collection instrument was interview. In the first half of 2010 were held interviews with popular, with the delegate of the police and the promoter of the municipality of Paripiranga, State of Bahia, to collect information on the subject, mainly about the data forwarded by these procedures to Justice, and also about the handling of complaints and the outcome of these procedures.

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

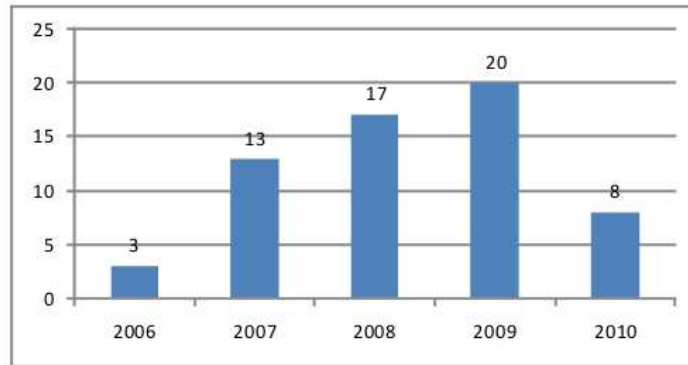
It was held one interview with the police delegate of the municipality where when asked about who to consider attacked in a domestic environment reported that could be women, children, nieces, aunts, grandmothers, or any other person who presents parenthood by affinity or cohabitation (to live under the same roof), being physically or morally attacked, when asked about the steps related to the procedures and the victims.

The Police representant commented that the changes occurred from the Law 11.340, 2006, named *Maria da Penha* Law, among them, the fact that the summons are not sent by the victims

anymore but by a policeman, thereby reducing the risks, what caused more process agility on the aggressor's flagrant.

Based on presented Police documents, it was possible to ensure that in 2007, 13, in 2008, 17, in 2009, 20 and in 2010 until May 14<sup>th</sup>, 8 procedures related to violence against women occurred. (Graphic 01).

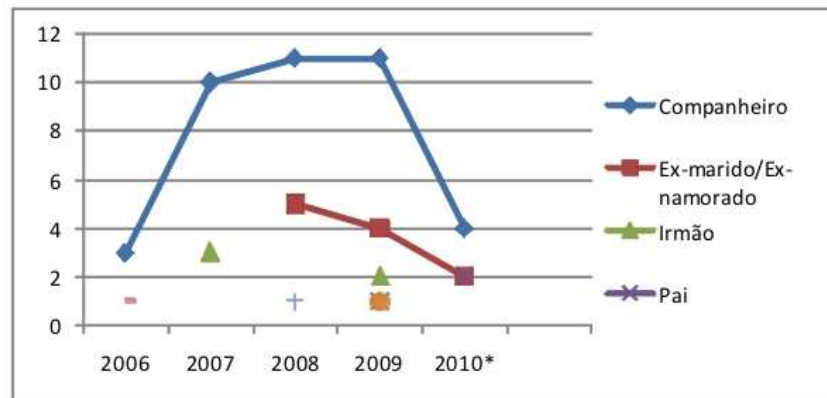
Graphic 01: Number of Procedures



Source: Archives of the Police Delegation of the Municipality of Paripiranga, 2010.

The data analyzed highlighted that from 2006 to 2010 there was a considerable increase of procedures, showing that in 2006 only 5%, in 2007, 21%, 2008 – 28%, 2009 – 33% and in the first semester 2010 – 13% of the police procedures related to violence against women took place.

Graphic 02: Types of Aggressors



Source: Archives of the Police Delegation of the Municipality of Paripiranga, 2010.

It is noticed that the major part of the aggressors are the own companions, followed by ex-husbands/ex-boyfriends, fathers, uncles, neighbors, sons in law/daughters in law and nephews (Graphic 02). The data still show that the most part of the attacked victims are female, 97% are female and only 3% male.

## 5. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The feminist activity has advanced gradually on popular participation and citizenship exercise in the process of woman's rights consolidation. The Brazilian protection system for women must be integrated and specialized, valuing actions for violence prevention and punishment. It's necessary to focus on the victim and not only on the aggressor, during the battle against those aggressive conducts, and that that the State ensures victim's physical and psychic integrity, focusing struggles to ameliorate injures caused to them. In this context, it is expected that the violence against woman is abolished in the near future.

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