**Triggers of violence against women in the pandemic COVID-19: Integrative review**

**Fatores desencadeantes da violência contra a mulher na pandemia COVID-19: Revisão integrativa**

**Desencadenantes de la violencia contra las mujeres en la pandemia COVID-19: Revisión integradora**

*Ildenir Nascimento Sousa1, Fernanda Campos dos Santos2, Camila Cristine Antonietti3*

**How to cite:** Sousa IN, Santos FC, Antonietti CC. Triggers of violence against women in the pandemic COVID-19: Integrative review. REVISA. 2021; 10(1): 51-60. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.36239/revisa.v10.n1.p51a60>



**RESUMO**

**Objetivo:** Analisar os dados disponibilizados na literatura nacional sobre os fatores associados ao aumento da violência contra a mulher durante a pandemia COVID-19. **Método:** Trata-se de uma revisão integrativa da literatura, a partir das bases de dados publicados no portal BVS, referente ao ano de 2020, em língua portuguesa. **Resultados:** Foi identificado que o isolamento social impactou a vida da população em geral, nos aspectos sociais e econômicos, com queda no número de denúncias de violência doméstica contra a mulher e aumento nos casos de feminicídios. **Conclusão:** Com o distanciamento social, as vítimas se restringiram em realizar as denúncias, pelo aumento do tempo convivência no mesmo ambiente familiar com o agressor e diante disso, é preciso refletir sobre as formas utilizadas para garantir proteção e segurança para essas mulheres. Pontua-se a necessidade da realização de mais estudos no Brasil, com o intuito de identificar novas estratégias de abordagem em Saúde Coletiva, com participação efetiva da equipe multidisciplinar de saúde nesse processo.

**Descritores:** Violência contra a mulher; Violência doméstica; Isolamento social; COVID-19.

**ABSTRACT**

**Objective:** To analyze the data made available in the national literature on the factors associated with the increase in violence against women during the COVID-19 pandemic. **Method:** This is an integrative literature review, based on the databases published on the VHL portal, referring to the year 2020, in Portuguese**. Results:** It was identified that social isolation impacted the lives of the population in general, in social and economic aspects, with a decrease in the number of complaints of domestic violence against women and an increase in cases of femicide. **Conclusion:** With the social distance, the victims were restricted to making the complaints, due to the increase in the time spent living in the same family environment with the aggressor and, in view of that, it is necessary to reflect on the ways used to guarantee protection and safety for these women. The need for further studies in Brazil is pointed out, in order to identify new strategies for approaching Public Health, with the effective participation of the multidisciplinary health team in this process. **Descriptors**: Violence against women; Domestic violence; Social isolation; COVID-19.

1. Universidade Anhembi Morumbi, Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo, Brazil. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9784-4474>

2. Universidade Anhembi Morumbi, Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo, Brazil. <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0876-629X>

3. Universidade Anhembi Morumbi. Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo, Brazil. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3542-7691>

REVISÃO

**RESUMEN**

**Objetivo:** Analizar los datos disponibles en la literatura nacional sobre los factores asociados al aumento de la violencia contra las mujeres durante la pandemia COVID-19. **Método:** Se trata de una revisión integradora de la literatura, basada en las bases de datos publicadas en el portal de la BVS, referidas al año 2020, en portugués. **Resultados:** Se identificó que el aislamiento social impactó la vida de la población en general, en los aspectos sociales y económicos, con una disminución en el número de denuncias por violencia intrafamiliar contra la mujer y un aumento en los casos de feminicidio. Conclusión: Con la distancia social, las víctimas se vieron restringidas a hacer las denuncias, debido al aumento del tiempo de convivencia en el mismo ambiente familiar con el agresor y, ante ello, es necesario reflexionar sobre las formas utilizadas para garantizar la protección y seguridad de estas mujeres. Se señala la necesidad de más estudios en Brasil, con el fin de identificar nuevas estrategias de abordaje de la Salud Pública, con la participación efectiva del equipo multidisciplinario de salud en este proceso. **Descriptores:** Violencia contra la mujer; La violencia doméstica; Aislamiento social; COVID-19.

**Received: 10/10/2020**

**Accepted: 22/12/2020**

**Introduction**

Violence against women has existed since the beginning of humanity, it is one of the main forms of violation of her dignity, it can be understood as any action or conduct based on gender that causes death or inflicts physical, sexual or psychological damage or suffering to women. , in the public or private spheres.1

According to the Maria da Penha law, five types of domestic and family violence against women are foreseen: physical, understood as any conduct that offends the integrity or bodily health of the woman, with the use of physical force by the aggressor; psychological, understood as any conduct that causes emotional damage and decreased women's self-esteem; sexual, understood as any behavior that constrains you, to witness, maintain or participate in any unwanted sexual intercourse; patrimonial, characterized as any conduct that constitutes retention, subtraction, partial or total destruction of your belongings, which are of any nature; morality, understood as any conduct that constitutes slander, defamation or injury against women.2

Femicide cases grew 22.2% between March and April of the year 2020, in 12 states of the country, compared to the year 2019 and public records still confirm a drop in the opening of police reports. In the state of São Paulo, the number of murders of women increased by 44.9% in March 2020, compared to the same period last year and women who already lived in situations of domestic violence without a safe place, were forced to remain more time in their own home with their abuser, often in precarious housing, with their children, without social interaction, thus reducing the chances of denouncing or fear of accomplishing the approach of the partner.3

he Covid-19 pandemic, was announced by the World Health Organization (WHO) on March 15, 2020, and has significantly affected the lives of the general population. In order to minimize the harmful effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, based on scientific evidence, WHO proposed that national authorities implement changes in habits in populations, among them, social detachment and became the most effective measure in preventing against spread of the virus, preventing the disease curve from reaching the top in an accelerated manner, with risk of overload in health services. However, these recommendations have triggered sudden changes in the lives of families and the population in general, with a negative impact on economic activities, and at all levels in life in society. However, when facing social distance, there were repercussions in interpersonal relationships, especially between intimate partners.

Due to the information presented here, before the pandemic one in three women of reproductive age was a victim of physical violence or sexual violence perpetrated by an intimate partner during their lifetime, and more than a third of homicides of women are perpetrated in their relationships. interpersonal. However, the current pandemic has amplified cases of domestic violence against women and girls, with a prevalence up to three times higher in cases of domestic violence compared to the same period last year.4

Since violence against women is a social and public health problem, which can lead to trauma, disability, even death, it can indirectly lead to health problems, such as physiological changes caused by stress, substance use, lack of control of fertility and personal autonomy. Victims of domestic violence have more health problems, consequently greater the need to use health services, generating higher treatment costs, in addition to presenting more frequently to emergency care units in urgent and emergency situations.5

In this scenario, the countries that experienced the greatest increase in violence against women during the period of social detachment were China, the United Kingdom, the United States, France and Brazil.6 In Brazil, the events that were carried out through the hotline 180 by the women's ministry , family and human rights from March 1 to June 2020, totaled 18,586 cases, and among these, 424 daily complaints are of violence against women. Thus, physical violence was characterized as the type committed.7

In view of the relevance of the impacts caused as a result of social isolation during the pandemic, this study aims to analyze the data made available in the national literature on possible factors associated with the increase in violence against women during the pandemic by COVID 19.

In this sense, the objective of the study was to analyze the data available in the national literature on the factors associated with the increase in violence against women during the pandemic COVID-19.

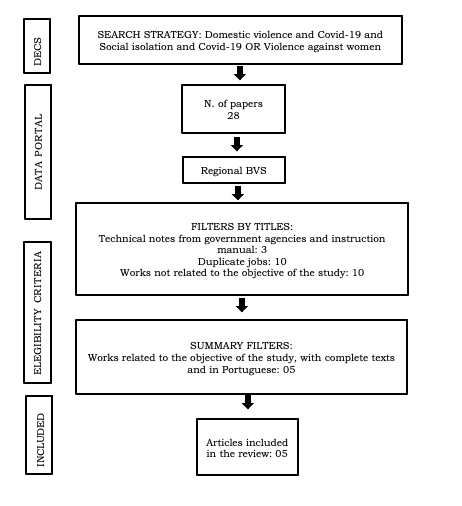
# Method

An integrative literature review was carried out.8 The following stages for the development of the research were delimited: the identification of the theme and selection of the research question; the establishment of criteria for inclusion and exclusion; Which are they? Example of inclusion criteria: study design and exclusion criteria: articles that were not published during the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2020 the definition of the information to be extracted from the selected studies and; the evaluation of the studies included in the integrative review; interpretation of results, presentation of the review; and the synthesis of knowledge.9

As a theme, studies were determined in order to answer the following guiding question: What are the main factors that resulted in the increase in violence against women in the context of COVID-19? In the construction of the appropriate question for the resolution of the researched clinical question, the PICO10 strategy was used: “P” corresponds to the population of women in situations of domestic violence; “I” to the intervention (research articles); "C" to the comparison (not applicable, as this is not a comparative study) and "O" to the outcome: to analyze which factors triggered the increase in violence against women during the COVID-19 pandemic period.

We used, as controlled descriptors, identified in the Health Science Descriptors (DECs). The search strategy using the Boolean operator AND and OR was: Domestic violence, social isolation and Covid-19, published in Portuguese. Data collection took place between September and November 2020. The databases searched were the Latin American and Caribbean Literature in Health Sciences (LILACS) and the Nursing Database (BDENF), through the VHL portal.

Original research articles, whose theme answered the guiding question, published in 2020, in Portuguese, were included. Studies that lacked research methodology (case reports, reflections, recommendations), reviews and studies that focused on other topics were excluded. The studies were also included because they consider the limitation in the number of studies with the studied population, in order to achieve the maximum information about this population. An exhaustive reading of the titles and abstracts was carried out, independently, between two authors, to ensure that the texts contemplated the guiding question of the review and met the established inclusion and exclusion criteria. In case of doubt regarding the selection, it was decided to initially include the publication, and to decide on its selection only after reading its contents in full. The analysis of the data of the integrative review was elaborated in a descriptive way. A table, constructed by the authors, was used for the extraction and synthesis of data from each study included in the review, with the following information: article, country of origin, area of ​​activity of the authors, objectives, participants, study design, main results and conclusions. Figure 1 shows the methodological path for selecting articles.

**Figure 1-** Flowchart of the study inclusion process, São Paulo, Brazil, 2020.

**Results**

This table allowed the comparison and organization of data, according to their differences, similarities and the review question, which were critically analyzed and grouped. (Chart 1). Below is the summary table of the 5 analyzed articles.

**Table 1-** Synthesis of selected articles, São Paulo, Brazil, 2020.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Title** | **Author/ year 2020** | **Objective** | **Methods** | **Results** | **Conclusion** |
| Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on violence against women: reflections based on Abraham Maslow's theory of human motivation | Santos et al3 | Reflect on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on violence against women, based on the analysis of Abraham Maslow's theory of human motivation. | This is a reflective study with documentary analysis carried out in June 2020, whose theoretical framework was Abraham Maslow's theory of basic human needs. | The hierarchical levels were described according to the Maslow pyramid and a parallel was drawn with the data on violence against women before and during the COVID-19 pandemic period, making it the most affected among women living with the aggressor in the same family environment. | The present study demonstrated that the COVID-19 pandemic can affect women who suffer domestic violence at all hierarchical levels in the Maslow pyramid. The basic, physiological, security, relationship and affection, self-esteem and self-realization needs. |
| Masculinity in times of pandemic: where power shrinks, violence sets in | [Santos, et al14](https://pesquisa.bvsalud.org/portal/?lang=pt&q=au:%22Santos,%20Dherik%20Fraga%22) | The objective of this essay is to reflect on man-power-violence relations based on Hannah Arendt's conceptions, problematizing the normalized concept of hegemonic masculinity | Essay sought to deconstruct the idea that there is a single model of hegemonic masculinity and that proposes a global domination of men over women. | An increase in domestic violence was observed as an effect of the decrease in patriarchal power, in an attempt to stabilize the masculinity model defined by this patriarchal power, or attempts are made to reconstitute it in new configurations. | In view of this reality, it is necessary, within the scope of Collective Health, to reflect on the reformulation of the National Policy for Integral Attention to Men's Health, being the main one to gender changes, giving rise to new strategies in the power relationship. |
| COVID-19 violence against women, children and adolescents in times of pandemic: overview, motivations and ways of coping. | Marques, et al6 | As a result of social detachment and the sudden increase in the number of cases of violence in the context of a pandemic, international research organizations and the lay media are concerned about the signs of increased domestic violence. | Review on the subject on social media and internet. | Violence against women and against children and adolescents was noted during the period of social detachment. | Based on the evidence and arguments described throughout this article, complementing the need for actions to combat violence against women, children and adolescents. |
| Intersectionality and other views on violence against women in times of pandemic by the covid-19 | [Barbosa, et al15](https://pesquisa.bvsalud.org/portal/?lang=pt&q=au:%22Barbosa,%20Jeanine%20Pacheco%20Moreira%22) | To problematize oppression and domestic violence during social isolation in times of pandemic | The essay sought to foster dialogue from an analysis of complexity, where it would be possible to articulate the local-singular, with the representations and forms instituted in a broader-social context, favoring the analysis of the socio-historical-political implications by the collective | When society fails to incorporate established standards, to distinguish wars, violence against women, racial / ethnic prejudices, among others. | We tried to show that the increase in violence against women during the pandemic can be understood as tension between resistance to racism, sexism and the inequalities built by capitalism. |
| Social isolation and the increase in domestic violence: what does this reveal to us? | [Vieira, et al 4](https://pesquisa.bvsalud.org/portal/?lang=pt&q=au:%22Vieira,%20P%C3%A2mela%20Rocha%22) | The article sought to establish some relationships between social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic and the increase in violence against women, taking into account the context of a patriarchal society | Data, still incipient, published by the press of several countries were analyzed, as well as reports from international organizations and organizations aimed at facing domestic violence. | The confrontation of violence against women in the context of the pandemic cannot be restricted to the reception of complaints, efforts should be directed towards the increase of teams in the direct lines of prevention and response to violence, as well as expanding the dissemination of services  available. | The state and society must be mobilized to guarantee Brazilian women the right to live without violence, although women are excluded from decision-making processes, the majority of the Brazilian population and make up the majority of the health workforce. |

# Discussion

According to the results evidenced in the research developed by Santos et al 3, the COVID-19 pandemic can affect women who suffer domestic violence at all hierarchical levels of the Maslow pyramid, as well as in their physiological, security, relationship and health needs. affection, self-esteem and self-realization, and although the containment strategy guided by health authorities is necessary and fundamental to coping with COVID-19, this social isolation has contributed to the exponential increase in domestic violence in several countries. In China, the country of origin of the virus and the first epicenter of the pandemic, a record number of divorce requests were registered, with evidence of the increase in marital conflicts, given the situation of family incarceration 15.

Similarly, factors related to masculinity contribute to the increase in violence against women in the context of the pandemic, as evidenced in the study conducted by Santos et al 14. Within the scope of Collective Health, it is necessary to reflect on the reformulation of National Policy of Integral Attention to Men's Health, being the main one to gender changes, giving rise to new strategies in the power relationship, because where violence settles where power shrinks, according to the concept of hegemonic masculinity and this cannot be understood as an inherent characteristic of men, it is necessary to abandon this essentialist character.

It is clear that cultural power and hierarchy is still a global aspect of men over women and in times of pandemic by COVID-19, it is essential to seek to understand the instrumentalization of the subject, the fragility and the annihilation of the source of legitimate power. more egalitarian human interactions and the consequent loss of human condition, related to the growing domestic violence. During the pandemic period, although the numbers of official records in police reports have declined, so-called underreporting, the numbers of female homicides and homicides are on the rise, indicating that domestic and family violence is on the rise, with an urgent need to implement new ones. strategies to enable women to access services to combat domestic violence. Crime by feminicide in the country increased by 22.2% during the months of March and April 2020, compared to the same period in 2019.14

Marques et.al6 pointed out in his study national data and in Rio de Janeiro, the State Prosecutor's Office revealed a 50% increase in cases of domestic violence, in the first weekend after a decree from the state government recommending the distancing from the social, the largest part of the occurrence reports that involved violence against women. In the same way, in Paraná, which obtained a 15% increase in the records of domestic violence attended by the Military Police on the first weekend of social distance. Similar situations are reported in Ceará, Pernambuco and São Paulo. In the same line of argument, the author Santos et.al evidenced, in São Paulo, the increase of crimes by feminicides reached 46% in the comparison between March 2020 and March 2019, having doubled in the first half of April. In Acre, the growth was 300%, in Maranhão, the variation was 166.7%, and in Mato Grosso the increase was 150%. Only three states recorded a reduction in the number of femicides: Espírito Santo (-50%), Rio de Janeiro (-55.6%) and Minas Gerais.14

The selected studies also highlighted possible factors, such as the impacts generated on economic activities, as facilitators in the increase in violence against women, as many workers faced a reduction in their monthly incomes, making it difficult to fund basic items for survival, such as food. , water and clothes. In many homes, the payment of basic bills such as water, sewage and electricity has been postponed, with the aim of prioritizing essential items. The widespread economic difficulty, makes the family environment weakened by insufficient access to basic items 3.

Due to the information described here, to receive reports of domestic and family violence, MMFDH launched digital platforms for NDH's service channels: the Human Rights BR app and the ouvidoria.mdh.gov.br website, which can also be accessed at disque100.mdh.gov.br and ligue180.mdh.gov.br. Where family members, neighbors or even strangers can send photos, videos, audios and other documents that record situations of domestic violence and other human rights violations.

However, tackling violence against women in the context of the pandemic cannot be restricted to the reception of complaints, strategies must be created to increase the number of teams in the direct lines of prevention and response to violence, as well as for the wide dissemination of services available, empowering health workers, especially public health workers to identify risk situations, as well as the expansion and strengthening of support networks, including ensuring the functioning and expanding the number of places in shelters for surviving women . Informal and virtual support social networks need to be encouraged, as they are means that help women feel connected and supported and also serve as a warning to aggressors that women are not completely isolated. The State and society must be mobilized to guarantee Brazilian women the right to live without violence, although they are excluded from decision-making processes because women are the majority of the Brazilian population and make up the majority of the health workforce 4.

# Conclusion

According to the present study, the increase in violence against women is associated with concerns about safety, health and money. The social isolation imposed by the national, health and epidemiological authorities, had an even greater impact on the lives of women victims of violence, who in turn, were forced to be “trapped” in their homes along with their aggressors, often prevented from keeping a social contact, and with difficulties to make complaints, ask for help or even because of the fear of leaving home and contracting the disease. There was also an impact on economic activities, which increased tensions within the home, generating more stress, fear and uncertainty, making cases of violence against women even more frequent, making it necessary to reflect on the ways used to guarantee protection and safety in these times of calamity.

It points out the need for further studies in Brazil, in order to identify new strategies for approaching Public Health, with the effective participation of the multidisciplinary health team, in the face of cases of violence against women, in order to reduce the incidence of new cases and provide appropriate treatment for victims.

**Acknowledgment**

The authors did not receive funding for this study.

# References

1. Fagner VC, Santiago SM, Audi CAF. Fatores associados à violência contra mulher na vida pregressa de mulheres encarceradas. Reme 2019 [acesso 15 set 2020] Disponível em: DOI: <http://www.dx.doi.org/10.5935/1415-2762.20190097>

2. Brasil, Lei nº 11.340, de 07 de agosto de 2006. Lei Maria da Penha. [acesso em 26 de set 2020] Disponível em <http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2004-2006/2006/lei/l11340.htm>

3. [Santos LSE](https://pesquisa.bvsalud.org/portal/?lang=pt&q=au:%22Santos,%20Luisa%20Souza%20Erthal%22), Nunes LMM, Rossi BA, Taets G. Impactos da pandemia de COVID-19 na violência contra a mulher: reflexões a partir da teoria da motivação humana de Abraham Maslow. Scielo preprints, 2020 [acesso 15 set 2020] Disponível em: DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/SciELOPreprints.915>

#### 4. [Vieira PR](https://pesquisa.bvsalud.org/portal/?lang=pt&q=au:%22Vieira,%20P%C3%A2mela%20Rocha%22), Garcia LP, Maciel ELN. Isolamento social e o aumento da violência doméstica: o que isso nos revela? LILACS, 2020 [acesso em 26 de set 2020] Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1590/1980-549720200033>

5. Machado ASM, Bhona FMC, Lourenço LM. Intervenção com mulheres vítimas de violência doméstica: uma revisão bibliométrica. Pesqui. prát. Psicossociais 2020 [acesso 15 set 2020] Disponível em: <http://pepsic.bvsalud.org/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1809-89082020000100013>

6. Marques ES, Hasselmamm MH, Deslandes SF, Reicharheim ME. A violência contra mulheres, crianças e adolescentes em tempos de pandemia pela COVID-19: panorama, motivações e formas de enfrentamento. Cad. Saúde Pública vol.36 no.4 2020 [acesso 15 set 2020] Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1590/0102-311x00074420>

7. Ministério da Mulher, e da família e direito humano [acesso 15 de out 2020] Disponível em: <https://ouvidoria.mdh.gov.br/portal/indicadores>>

8. Whittemore R, Knafl K. The integrative review: updated methodology. J Adv Nurs. [Internet]. 2005 [acesso 2020 Set 15];52(5):546-53. Disponível em: [https://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1365- 2648.2005.03621](https://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-%202648.2005.03621)

9. Mendes KDS, Silveira RCCP, Galvão CM. Integrative literature review: a research method to incorporate evidence in health care and nursing. Texto Contexto Enferm. [Internet]. 2008 [acesso 2020 Set 15];17(4):758-64. Disponível em: <https://dx.doi.org/10.1590/S0104-07072008000400018>

10. Santos CMC, Pimenta CAM, Nobre MRC. The PICO strategy for the research question construction and evidence search. Rev Latin-Am Enferm. [Internet]. 2007 [acesso 2020 Set 15];15(3):508-11. Disponível em: <https://dx.doi.org/10.1590/S0104-11692007000300023>

12. Fórum Brasileiro de Saúde Pública. Violência doméstica durante a pandemia de Covid-19. Disponível em: https://forumseguranca.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/violencia-domestica-covid-19-v3.pdf. Acesso em: 18 de Set de 2020.

13. ONU Mulheres Brasil. Gênero e COVID-19 na América Latina e no Caribe. Disponível em: http://www.onumulheres.org.br/covid-19/. Acesso em: 18 de junho de 2020

## 14. Santos DF, Lima RCD, Dermarchi SM, Barbosa JPM, Cordeiro M, Sipioni ME, et.al. Masculinidade em tempos de pandemia: onde o poder encolhe, a violência se instala. Scielo preprints, 2020 [acesso em 28 de set 2020] Disponivel em: Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1590/SciELOPreprints.900>

## 15. Barbosa JPM, Lima RCD, Santos GBM, Lanna SD, Andrade MAC. Interseccionalidade e outrosolhares sobre a violência contra mulheres em tempos de pandemiapela covid-19. Scielo preprints, 2020 [acesso em 28 de set 2020] Disponivel em: DOI:<https://doi.org/10.1590/SciELOPreprints.328>

**Correspondent Author**

Ildenir Nascimento Sousa

58 Germano Augusto St. ZIP: 03277-110, Vila Ema. Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

[ildenir.sousa@outlook.com](mailto:ildenir.sousa@outlook.com)