

Homeless women: An analysis of violence and structural machismo

RESUMO | Objetivo: descrever como as mulheres em situação de rua vivenciam o machismo estrutural. Método: trata-se de uma revisão integrativa da literatura utilizando o fluxograma PRISMA. A busca foi realizada no período de 2018 a 2022, nas bases de dados, SCIELO, LILACS e BDNF, sendo selecionado 09 artigos. Para a pergunta norteadora, utilizou-se a estratégia PICO e, para análise dos resultados foram elaborados 03 eixos temáticos para síntese de conteúdo. Resultados: A análise dividiu-se e, 03 (três) categorias: Por quê essas mulheres foram morar na rua; Os ambientes em que essas mulheres são encontradas com maior frequência e a Vulnerabilidades das mulheres em situação de rua relacionadas ao machismo. Conclusão: conclui-se que a população de mulheres em situação de rua apresenta uma realidade distante da desejada, demonstra muitas vezes precarização social e no acesso à saúde.

Descritores: "Saúde da Mulher"; "Pessoas em Situação de Rua"; "Violência Contra Mulher"; "Mulher".

ABSTRACT | Objective: the objective was to describe how homeless women experience structural machismo, Method: this is an integrative literature review using the PRISMA flowchart. The search was carried out from 2018 to 2022, in the databases, SCIELO, LILACS and BDNF. For the guiding question, the PICO strategy was used and, for analysis of the results, 03 thematic axes were elaborated for content synthesis. Results: The analysis was divided into 03 (three) categories: Why did these women live on the street; The environments in which these women are most often found and the Vulnerability of homeless women related to machismo. Conclusion: the population of homeless women presents a reality that is far from the desired, often demonstrating social precariousness and access to health street situation.

Keywords: "women's Health"; "Homeless People"; "Violence Against Women"; "Women".

RESUMEN | Objetivo: el objetivo fue describir cómo las mujeres que no tienen donde vivir viven el machismo estructural. Método: Esta es una revisión integradora de la literatura utilizando el diagrama de flujo PRISMA. La búsqueda se llevó a cabo de 2018 a 2022, en las bases de datos, SCIELO, LILACS y BDNF. Para la pregunta orientadora, se utilizó la estrategia PICO y, para análisis de resultados, se elaboraron 03 ejes temáticos para la síntesis de contenidos. Resultados: El análisis se dividió en 03 (tres) categorías: Por qué estas mujeres se fueron a vivir a la calle; Los entornos en los que se encuentran más a menudo estas mujeres y la vulnerabilidades de las mujeres sin hogar relacionadas con el machismo. Conclusión: La población de mujeres sin hogar presenta una realidad lejos de la deseada, a menudo demuestra precariedad social y acceso a la salud.

Palabras claves: "Salud de la mujer"; "Personas en situación sin hogar"; "Violencia contra la mujer"; "Mujer".

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INTRODUCTION

Often, when we walk through the streets, whether in large centers or small cities, we find people working, wandering, domiciled on sidewalks, squares, viaducts, inhospitable places, but that shelter a range of vulnerable people. These suffer stigmati-

zation, prejudice, discrimination, deprived of rights governed by the constitution of Brazil, common to all Brazilians such as: housing, education, mobility and health. ¹

In Brazil, the most recent survey carried out in March 2020 estimates that approximately 222,000 people are homeless, 82% men and 18% women, indicating a growth of 140% from 2012. These numbers tend to increase due to the economic instability caused by the SARS-coV-2 pandemic. ²

Research indicates that there are multiple causes that lead the individual to the homeless situation, among them economic inconsistency, abusive use of legal and illegal drugs, marital violence, family disputes and, less frequently, willingly yearning for freedom. Unders-

tanding that diversity is a fundamental characteristic for understanding the way of life of these people facilitates the improvement of public policies and transforms society's view of criminalization to a view focused on the vulnerability and exclusion imposed on these individuals.³

The 2004 event, known as the "Massacre da Sé", provoked a feeling of revolt and indignation on the part of this population that joined forces and mobilized in the construction of the National Movement of the Street Population, with a view to the incessant struggle for their rights. In memory of the sad event and to remember the arduous fight for a dignified life, the 19th of August is celebrated as the "National Day of Struggle for the Homeless".¹

With a view to all the movement caused by the facts and with the intention of providing access to the programs that make up the public policies of all the aforementioned rights and other benefits, Decree No. 7053/2009 was drafted, thus instituting the National Policy for Homeless People. This policy defines them as a heteroclite population group, which has similar characteristics such as extreme poverty, mitigated or abolished family ties, and lack of housing.⁴

In view of this conjuncture, we bring to light the female gender that, factually both in other countries and in Brazil, were impelled to the most diverse types of aggressions and caesarisms alluding to them. Inserted in the capitalist mode of production (CMP), women experience the simultaneous appropriation of their bodies, their sexualities and their work forces. Although in smaller numbers, homeless women have less access to education, are more prone to job instability, and are still most often in charge of caring for their offspring.⁵

In the face of such contemplations, it is assumed that this gender inequality contributes negatively to the experien-

ce of these women on the streets, considering that there is, in a certain way, a hierarchy and power relationship arising from the history and patriarchal society in which it is inserted, bringing as patriarchy, a standardized structure that causes disadvantages for women so that their strength, time and even their bodies are at the service of men, thus originating this regime of domination concerning women.⁶

In Brazil, the violence suffered by women in general is underreported because they are afraid to file a complaint against the offender, often because they feel unprotected in relation to the State. With women living on the streets, this circumstance is also present, but in a more critical way, due to their invisibility and the inefficiency of public policies that fully assist them, which corroborates the fact that they seek to establish relational bonds that enable a safer daily life on the streets, while alone they become more susceptible to aggression, sexually submitting their bodies, which show signs of such subservience by developing physical and psychological traumas that are sometimes irreparable.⁷

Há uma desarmonia de gênero na convivência entre homens e mulheres em situação de rua e, de certo modo, uma hierarquia e relação de poder, decorrente da história e da sociedade patriarcal, apesar dos homens se encontrarem em maior número, as dificuldades encontradas pelas mulheres nesse contexto de rua são maiores e mais hostis.⁸

Health professionals are considered a fundamental tool for greater visibility of the living conditions of homeless women, because even in smaller numbers, they are more vulnerable to violence and are also exposed to gender determinism established by the remnants of patriarchal society and structural machismo. From this perspective, this study is justified by the need to expand the production of research

on this topic. Therefore, the question that guided this investigative proposal stands out: How do homeless women experience structural machismo?

Thus, the present article aimed to describe how homeless women experience structural machismo, verifying the health problems and diseases acquired through these transgressions; in addition to identifying the forms of violence suffered by these women.

METHOD

This is an integrative literature review, as it contributes to the systematic and analytical processing of the results, because it is characteristic of the search for information on a subject or theme that summarizes the situation of science on a research problem, aiming at the clarity of the given theme.⁹

In the first phase, the guiding question of the research was elaborated. For the construction of the guiding question of this work, the PICO / PCC strategy was used, as described below: P - Population; I/Co - Interest/concept and C - Context. In this direction, the question raised was: How do homeless women experience structural machismo?

For the second phase, a search strategy was built using the descriptors: "Woman's health (Saúde da Mulher)", "Homeless People (Pessoas em Situação de Rua)", "Violence against women (Violência Contra Mulher)", "Mulher (Women)". In the electronic databases Scientific Electronic Library Online (SCIELO), Scientific and Technical Literature of Latin America and the Caribbean (LILACS), Database on Nursing (BDENF), Portal of Electronic Periodicals (PUC Periodicals) and Electronic Periodicals in Psychology (PEPSIC).

It was refined, contemplating the third phase of the research with the application of the inclusion criteria previously established in the search strategy: articles published online in

the last 05 years (2018 to 2022); available in Portuguese and in full; studies in the format of original articles from diverse scientific productions.

In the fourth phase, the summaries of the retrieved studies were critically read, excluding duplicates and those whose objective, results or conclusion did not address how street women experience structural machismo.

The flowchart presented below (Figure 1) outlines the course of the bibliographic survey used by the researchers to prepare this research, describing the results obtained from the search strategy according to the PRISMA flowchart.

The literature search resulted in a total of 32 articles captured and, of these, 15 were in SCIELO, 11 in LILACS and 04 articles in BDEF, 01 article in the PUC Journal and 01 article in PEP-SIC. The number of occurrences was reduced from the application of inclusion filters: in SCIELO, 09 (50%) studies were retrieved; in LILACS 03 (16.7%); and in BDEF 04 (22.3%) studies; periodicals PUC 01 (5.5%) and PEP-SIC 01 (5.5%). A total of 18 articles were submitted to the reading of abstracts and the application of exclusion criteria, resulting in the rejection of 14 articles.

After the complete reading of the articles, 09 articles were still rejected for not answering the research question. Thus, the revised sample of 09 articles was constituted.

RESULTS

General description of selected articles

Table 1 presents information about the 09 articles contained in this integrative review. All the results were interpreted and synthesized, through a comparison of the data evidenced in the analysis of the articles.

Regarding the year of publication, of the nine articles analyzed, it was found that the largest amount was published in the year 2021 with 05 articles (55.5%), followed by 2020 with 02

articles (22.2%), 2019 with 01 articles (11.1%), and finally 2018 with 01 articles (11.1%). The journals with the largest publications were Revista Textos e Contextos with a total of 02 articles (22.2%) and Revista Psicologia: Ciência e Profissão with 02 articles (22.2%). As for the profession of the first author of the articles, in 03 (33.3%) the first authorships were by psychologists and in 06 (66.6%) specific information related to the formation of the first author was not found, because only the academic connection was presented.

As for the region of the country in which the research was carried out, 04 (44.4%) were developed in the south region, 03 (33.3%) in the northeast region and 02 (22.2%) in the southeast region.

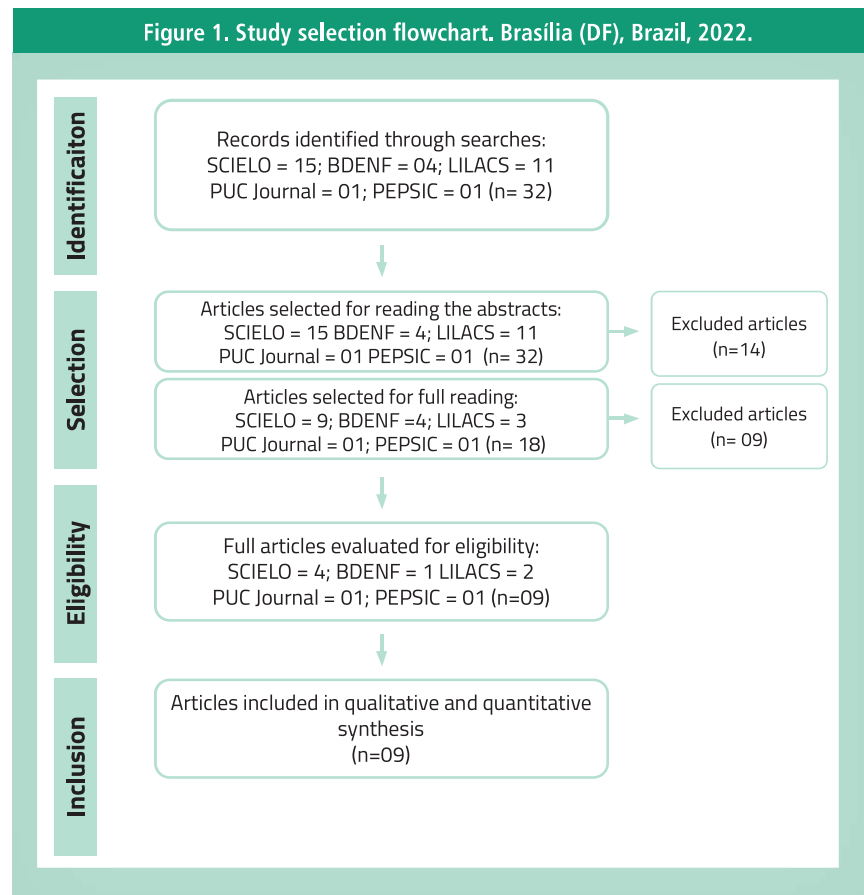
Regarding the place where the stu-

dy was carried out, it was identified that four studies were carried out in Specialized Reference Centers for Homeless Population (Centro POP) (44.4%), 02 in the National Movement of the Street Population (MNPR) (22.2%), 01 in the Pastoral de Rua de Belo Horizonte (11.1%) and 02 were not included in this interpretation because they are systematic reviews of the literature (22.2%).

DISCUSSION

Based on the descriptive analysis, it was evidenced that all the articles that proposed this review present considerations about the experiences of women living on the streets. In this context, it was decided to define three thematic axes, which are described below:

Figure 1. Study selection flowchart. Brasília (DF), Brazil, 2022.



Source: Authors. 2022

Why did these women go to live on the street; Environments in which these women are found more frequently and Vulnerabilities of homeless women related to machismo.

WHY DID THESE WOMEN LIVE ON THE STREET?

With the growing inequality in Brazil and the consequent increase in people on the streets, the first study involving this group was prepared, mediated by the Ministry of Development and Fight against Hunger, which took place between the years 2007/2008, listing circumstances that led these people to life on the streets, such as family conflicts, unemployment, alcoholism and drug addiction, disagreement over sexual orientation.^{10, 11}

Currently, this population includes migrants, such as women released from the penitentiary system, with fragile or non-existent family ties, among other situations they experience and lead them to make the streets their home and work, applying their own ways of inhabiting the city and changing the urban scenario.¹

Research indicates that domestic and/or marital violence, drug abuse, trafficking, prostitution, environmental stress, exposure to crime and systematic subjugation are factors that most trigger the existence of women on the streets.¹²

Due to the belief that the woman is the possession of the man, conjugal violence can happen through verbal, physical, psychological, material, sexual, moral or patrimonial violence. Conjugal violence is the main reason for abandoning homes as a form of escape and seeking safety, because the home, which was the place that should be safe and offer protection, was often where security was most lacking.²

On the other hand, a study carried out in the capital of Rio Grande do Norte revealed that there are women who took to the streets in search of

Table 1. Distribution of articles according to title, author(s) and year of publication, objective and methodology. Brasília (DF), Brazil, 2022.

Nº	Title of the Article	Author/Year	Objective	Methodology Adopted
1	Narratives of way of life on the street: Stories and paths. (Narrativas de modo de vida na rua: Histórias e percursos.)	Nobre TM, Moreno SN, Amorim AMDKA, Souza DCE 2018.	Knowing their ways of life, survival tactics and resistance practices in the face of daily violations of rights.	Qualitative Study.
2	Maria, Maria: Conceptions about being a homeless woman. (Maria, Maria: Concepções sobre ser mulher em situação de rua.)	Sanchonete PL, Antoni DC, Munhós RAA 2019.	To investigate the conceptions of homeless women in Porto Alegre, RS, Brazil, about being a woman in this context.	Exploratory, Qualitative, Descriptive Study.
3	Dialogues between genders and experiences with the homeless population. (Diálogos entre gêneros e as experiências com a população de rua.)	Schuck LA, Gesser M, Beiras A -2020.	Understand the relationship between the experiences of the homeless population - articulated with the National Movement of Street People in Santa Catarina (MNPP/SC) - and gender issues.	Qualitative Study.
4	Homeless women: Memories, daily life and access to public policies. (Mulheres em situação de rua: Memórias, cotidiano e acesso às políticas públicas.)	Nardes S, Giongo RC - 2021.	To analyze the experiences of homeless women in Vale dos Sinos, in Rio Grande do Sul, rescuing their memories, daily life and access to public policies.	Exploratory, Qualitative, Descriptive Study.
5	Gender, poverty and health: a systematic review on the health of homeless women. (Gênero, pobreza e saúde: revisão sistemática sobre saúde de mulheres em situação de rua.)	Coldibeli PL, Paiva DSF, Batista BC - 2021.	To know what has been researched on the health of this group of women in the national and international context.	Systematic review of the literature.
6	Gender and experiences: Relationship of homeless women with sexuality, violence and pregnancy. (Gênero e vivências: Relação de mulheres em situação de rua com a sexualidade, violência e gravidez.)	Pereira OL, Magalhães LC, Lopes DMC - 2021.	Recognize the different realities that violate the experiences of women who are on the streets.	Qualitative Study.
7	Homeless women: Psychosocial implications of stigma and prejudice. (Mulheres em situação de rua: Implicações psicossociais de estigmas e preconceitos.)	Esmeraldo AFL, Ximenes VM - 2021.	To analyze the psychosocial implications of stigma and prejudice in the lives of homeless women.	Exploratory, Qualitative, Descriptive Study.
8	Homeless people in Brazil: Systematic review. (Pessoas em Situação de rua no Brasil: Revisão sistemática.)	Sicari AA, Zanella AV. 2018.	To investigate what was produced about people in this condition between 2006 and 2016 in the Capes Periodicals Portal and in the Capes Theses & Dissertations Bank.	Systematic review or literature review.
9	Social support for homeless people: interface with health, human rights. (Apoio social para pessoas em situação de rua: interface com saúde, direitos humanos.)	Ximenes VM et al. 2021.	To analyze the social support of PSR in Fortaleza (Ceará/Brazil), from the health, human rights and subjective dimensions.	Exploratory, Qualitative, Descriptive Study.

Source: prepared by the authors, 2022.

freedom, others because of disappointment in love, These situations permeate the issue of conjugal violence and portray themselves as a way of life chosen by them, resisting difficulties with art, work, solidarity, confirming the idea that they are there by choice. ¹

ENVIRONMENTS IN WHICH THESE WOMEN ARE MOST FREQUENTLY FOUND

These homeless women experience extreme circumstances of social exclusion, due to the fact that they are inserted in a context of abandonment and misery, they live in public squares, bus terminals, sidewalks, abandoned places and public spaces, under overpasses and marquees, which configures high psychosocial vulnerability. ⁷

Research carried out in Goiânia showed that there are support houses for these women, in order to guarantee their physical and psychological safety and integrity, however, are not enough and, because of this, many choose to sleep in front of shops, to get some kind of food at dawn. ¹³

This support house, also known as a hostel, in addition to being a shelter for sleeping, is also a search for help, on the part of these women, to get rid of rain and physical aggression that can occur during the night. However, difficulties are found in serving the entire homeless population, due to the lack of structure, resources or public policies that are not favorable to serve this minority. ¹³

A study carried out in Porto Alegre, RS, reports another reception point for these homeless women, the CENTRO POP (Specialized Reference Center for Homeless Population), characterized as a point of individual or collective social support, where it offers workshops and social coexistence, providing actions that aim to make users more autonomous, encouraging relations of solidarity and respect among its users. ³

A study carried out in the region of

Vale dos Sinos, in Rio Grande do Sul, also presented the Psychosocial Care Center (CAPS) as a reception point. However, it was reported that they are little sought after, due to the fear of women being indicated, adhering to drug treatment and becoming susceptible to violence. ⁸

VULNERABILITIES OF WOMEN IN STREET SITUATIONS RELATED TO MALE

The homeless population is mostly male, although women are in smaller numbers, their vulnerability is increased due to gender asymmetry. Historically, there has always been this dissociation where they are described as fragile, docile, held back to domestic tasks, while men with their virility provided the sustenance of the home, the physiological variation of strength in relation to men is also an important factor. These circumstances are exacerbated in the street scenario, where they suffer transgressions, deprivation and are subject to the most diverse types of violence. ³

The reports shared by participants of a survey carried out at Centro pop de Maracanaú, Fortaleza-CE reveals that homeless women have the perception in their daily lives that women are more fragile than men, mainly due to their physical fragility in such a masculine environment that often requires the use of force. In this way, this stigma of oppression surrounds the lives of women who live on the streets. ⁷

According to the analyzed literature, the street is the means of escape for so many women who have their experiences of violence instituted in their own homes, however, when faced with this new space, they are revealed again to the attacks previously established in their homes. Feelings such as shame and impotence make them move away from their families, making it even more difficult to survive in this context of "rualization". ¹⁴

In search of survival, most of the

time they make themselves available to some individual who is also on the street, in order to obtain protection or even financial assistance, which causes them to move to a position of submission, making it impossible for them to impose limits on their partner. This in turn makes use of his hegemonic masculinity becoming dominators of these women, and yet they remain with them in order to avoid being shared by other members of the group, since rape is indicated as the greatest difficulty experienced by homeless women. ¹⁴

In this context, there is an intensification of the violation of rights suffered by women living on the streets, whether through relationships with their peers or by institutions that neglect their specific demands. These violations are alarming with regard to their health due to the conditions and ways of life in which they live, it marks a different health-disease process, so it is not possible to treat women's health as something disconnected from their role within society, as well as a construction of social relationships. Based on these considerations, it is believed that gender can influence the experience of being homeless. ^{6 10}

A study carried out with homeless women in Porto Alegre - RS, states that the trauma of rape suffered on the streets is directly linked to the use of drugs by these women who experience this context. The drug is used most of the time as an attempt to reduce their martyrdom, a way to forget or mitigate the consequences brought by the violation of their bodies such as physical and psychological damage, in addition to the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancy. These situations are due to the imbalance of gender roles and the sustained position of men. ³

In this scenario, the concept of hegemonic masculinity applies violence as a characteristic of men, generating irascible human bonds and is linked to

harmful peculiarities that express them as insensitive, self-sufficient, violent and impassive beings, traits that are etiologically responsible for abusive practices.¹⁵

CONCLUSION

This review made it possible to identify the problems experienced by homeless women. The conditions of

inequality imposed by this culture of misogyny that surrounds women's lives in general become more arduous when faced with the homeless situation. Therefore, the population of homeless women presents a reality that is far from the desired one, often demonstrating social precariousness and access to health care.

However, even though there is still a scarcity of studies that give true im-

portance to this topic, it is clear how great is the lack of knowledge of professionals about structural machismo in relation to women living on the streets, it is suggested that professional nurses, as they are always at the forefront of care and work with a holistic view, develop more studies on the theme presented here. 🐦

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