# BASED GENDER VIOLENCE: CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS SUPPORTED BY ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

# VIOLÊNCIA DE GÊNERO: ANÁLISE CONCEITUAL APOIADA POR INTELIGÊNCIA ARTIFICIAL

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**Resumo**: O objetivo desse artigo foi analisar o conceito de violência de gênero, por meio da relação com seus termos substitutos. Foi utilizado como base empírica definições publicadas nos idiomas português, inglês, espanhol e francês. As buscas dos artigos foram realizadas por termos estruturados. Foram identificadas 222 definições e extraídos termos definidores. A partir desses termos, foi realizado o processo de "*knowledge discovery in databases*" para geração de regras de associação. O conteúdo das regras foi analisado para identificar as regras generificadas. Os termos que compuseram as regras generificadas foram organizadas em antecedentes, consequentes e atributos. Como principal resultado, foi verificado que a violência de gênero é composta por um conjunto de tipologias de violência, destacando as violências psicológica, sexual, econômica e física, além de vitimizar de forma hegemônica as mulheres, sendo perpetuada por um homem com o qual a vítima se relaciona.

**Palavras-chave**: Violência de Gênero; Violência Contra Mulher; Violência Doméstica; Violência Sexual; Formação de Conceito.

**Abstract**: This article aims to analyze the concept of gender-based violence and its substitute terms. The empirical basis was definitions published in Portuguese, English, Spanish, and French. Articles were searched using structured terms. Two hundred twenty-two definitions were identified, and defining terms were extracted. Based on these terms, the "*knowledge discovery in databases*" process was carried out to generate association rules. The content of the regulations was analyzed to identify the gendered rules. The terms that made up the gendered rules were organized into antecedents, consequents, and attributes. The main result was that gender-based violence is made up of a set of types of violence, including psychological, sexual, economic, and physical violence, as well as hegemonic victimization of women perpetuated by a man with whom the victim has a relationship.

**Keywords**: Gender-Based Violence; Violence Against Women; Domestic Violence; Sexual Violence; Concept Formation.

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## 1 Introduction

Concepts are complex formulations of empirical experiences. The operationalization of a concept is the synthesis of a set of definitions of the phenomenon with a search strategy built according to the application need identified (Madureira *et al.* 2021). This operationalization is generally done by applying concept analysis methods, including Rodgers' evolutionary method (Rodgers, 1989), the Wilsonian method - described and adapted by Walker and Avant (Rembold *et al.* 2018), and the hybrid model (Catlin, 2019), all considered qualitative approach methods.

Phenomena that involve human behavior, such as violence, are complex, as they tend to be conceptualized in a non-specific way and with subjective attributes. The definition of gender-based violence, conceived and used by some authors, is any act committed against a person because of their gender, capable of causing physical, psychological, or sexual harm, and perpetuated in spaces of power relations (Bannister; Moyi, 2019; Iyanda *et al.* 2019; Werwie *et al.* 2019; Kosterina; Horne; Lamb, 2021). From this perception, the attributes of this concept are not enough for it to be properly recognizable or operationalizable in the domain of gendered relations.

The non-specific form of the concept of gender-based violence is identified by its similarity to the concept of violence. The World Health Organization (WHO) accepts the definition of the phenomenon as the use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that results in or is likely to result in suffering, death, psychological harm, impaired development, or deprivation (Krug *et al.* 2002). There is a need for greater understanding because, when operationalizing the concept, it is not possible to identify whether gender-based violence or violence has been characterized. This limitation interferes with understanding the phenomenon and, consequently, limits the implementation of appropriate interventions to cope with it.

Looking at health terminology, taking the International Classification of Nursing Practice (ICNP®) as an example, the need to operationalize the concept becomes even more relevant since, in the 2019-2020 version, the term "violence" is described as a phenomenon of nursing practice and "gender-based violence" is not considered an isolated phenomenon (Bonamigo; Carvalho; Cubas, 2021). This absence makes it impossible to identify the phenomenon assertively, resulting in its invisibility in the

database of services that use standardized terminologies to generate morbidity and mortality reports.

It is important to note that, before applying traditional conceptual analysis methods, it is essential to check the maturity of the concept to estimate the expected benefits of specifying, detailing, and operationalizing it[11]. For a concept to be sufficiently mature, it needs to be widely defined in the literature, and its definitions must contain essential characteristics that allow it to be recognized, as well as explain its limits and consequences (Morse, 1995).

The concept of gender-based violence is considered immature because it has generic attributes that reflect its connection with violence without giving it specificity. It should be noted that, as it is a structural phenomenon and rooted in society, gender violence is normalized (Marinho, 2020), justifying the need for greater understanding and more robust methods for a satisfactory analysis of the concept (Cubas; Nóbrega, 2022).

While immature concepts are impossible to specify using the conceptual analysis methods available, the structures of health terminologies are becoming increasingly systematic. As an example, the *Systematized Nomenclature of Medicine International - Clinical Terms* (SNOMED -CT) does not allow the insertion of vague, comprehensive, or nonobjective terms, which justifies the offer of methods that enhance the conceptual analysis of complex phenomena immersed in subjectivity (Cubas; Nóbrega, 2022).

To this end, we proposed a conceptual analysis method capable of using substitute term definitions to enrich the corpus of analysis of the concept "gender violence", using artificial intelligence tools to identify patterns between the definitions. This strategy sought to answer the following research question: "What are the attributes, antecedents, and subsequent aspects of the concept of 'gender violence', using substitute terms to make their relationships explicit?".

The objective of this article was to analyze the concept of gender violence through its relationship with its substitute terms. Substitute terms for a concept are those that are used as synonyms for the term in scientific texts (Rodgers, 1989).

The model proposed by Joan Scott (Scott, 1995) was used as a theoretical framework for gender studies. The author argues that the term "gender" was first used by American feminist theorists to emphasize the social construction of distinctions based on sex. At the time, it was used to replace the term "women" in a neutral way to avoid referring to the essentialism previously employed by feminists. This neutrality removed
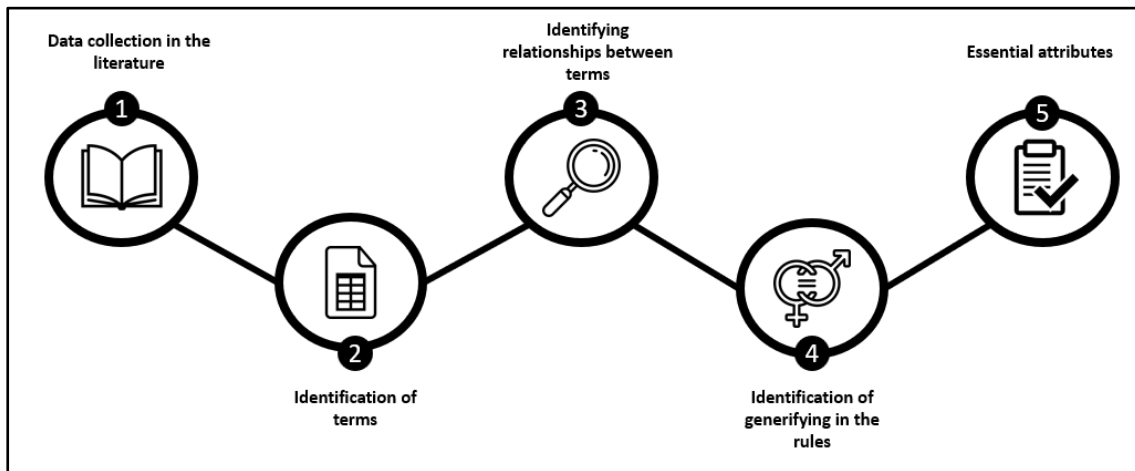
women from the role of historical subject, but because it was non-threatening to a male academic society, the term was accepted as a female quest for academic legitimacy.

In addition to the neutrality bias, its use implied that any knowledge about women was necessarily a study of men since their world is part of their world and is constructed by the male system. Thus, the term "gender" rejects the duality of the sphere of the male world separated from the female world, rejecting biological explanations, and describing that the relationships between the roles of men and women in a society are a social construct, disconnecting sexual practices from the roles assigned to men and women (Scott, 1995; Firmino; Porchat, 2017).

## 2 Methods[4]

This is a methodological study, organized into five stages: i) data collection; ii) identification of terms; iii) identification of consequential and causal relationships; iv) identification of gendering, and v) drawing up a list of essential attributes (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Methodological stages of the proposed conceptual analysis – Curitiba/PR – Brazil



Source: The authors, 2023.

### Step 1: Data collection

Data were collected from the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personel (CAPES, in Portuguese) journal platform, an online library that includes MEDLINE *(Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System Online)*, *Scopus,* and *Web of Science*, using structured descriptors. This platform was chosen because it

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[4]This research was exempt from evaluation by the Research Ethics Committee because it was limited to the use of publicly accessible databases.

covers various fields of knowledge, increases the area of application of the concept, and provides institutional access to the full versions of the articles.

Searches were carried out for each of the five descriptors: *"gender violence",* "*physical* violence", "*psychological violence*", " *domestic* violence" and *"sexual violence*", without Boolean link The choice of descriptors was justified by their identification as substitute terms in previous research[16]. Articles published in peer-reviewed journals were retrieved, within a time frame of one year (2018), in English, Portuguese, Spanish, and French. The time cut-off was due to the significant number of publications related to the topics mentioned. In addition, the definitions in the articles refer to the year in which they were constructed and not the year of publication of the article that used them.

The inclusion criterion was to contain an explicit definition of the concept of interest in the body of the text, in other words, the term must be the subject of the sentence. Mixed definitions were excluded, meaning that they covered two or more concepts in the same sentence. As this was not a literature review, no specific *guideline* was used for any type of review.

## Step 2: Identification of defining terms

In order not to lose the epistemological characteristics of each term, the extraction was done by one of the researchers, freely and without modifying the original text. The definition was separated into words, except for linking expressions (articles and prepositions), generating a bank of terms with defining characteristics.

## Step 3: Identifying consequential and causal relationships between terms

The *Knowledge Discovery in Databases*[5] process (KDD) aims to identify new and useful patterns in a data set and is organized into three phases: pre-processing, data mining, and post-processing (Fayyad; Piatetskty-Shapiro; Smith, 1995).

In this stage, the data was pre-processed and mined. During pre-processing, duplicate terms were excluded from the database of defining characteristics. For data mining, the task of discovering association rules was used, using the Apriori algorithm (Agrawal *et al*. 1996), to find patterns between terms of the type SE <A> THEN <B>.

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[5] From now on, all references to *Knowledge Discovery in Databases* will be made by the acronym KDD.

This algorithm discovers the patterns that represent all the possible associations between the terms of defining characteristics, considering the selection criteria: support and confidence. The support (probability of the term <A> occurring in the set) was parameterized at 10%, the confidence (conditional probability of <B> occurring given that the term <A> occurred) at 50%, and only one term in <A> and one in <B> were guaranteed to occur.

**Step 4: Identification of gendering in the rules**

Considering the use of substitute terms for analyzing the concept of gender-based violence, during post-processing, it was necessary to define association rules that contained a gender relationship, and for this, we used the strategy of identifying the gendering of phenomena based on the work of Joan Scott (Scott, 1995).

For the author, gender is a construct that can be summarized in four pillars: a constructive element of social relations; a way of giving meaning to power relations based on culturally available symbols; normative concepts for social organization, and a definition of subjective identity[14]. Four pillars were considered to identify gendering: the rules whose first term of each rule (antecedent) fit into the gender construct theorized by Scott (1995) were gendered.

To avoid biased reading, the verification of the gendering of the rules was carried out by the main researcher and checked by members of the research group: three doctoral students, three master's students, two scientific beginners, and three nurses in a face-to-face meeting of the research group.

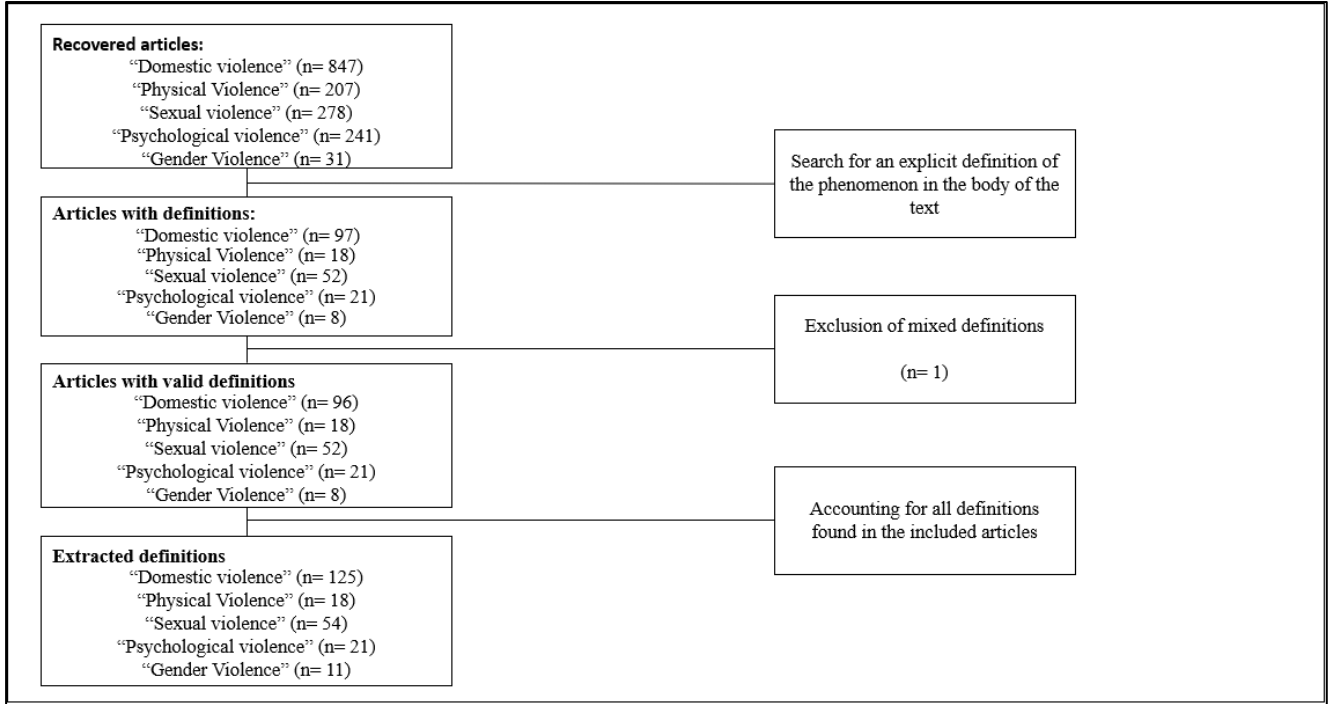**Step 5: Writing the list of essential attributes**

Based on the conceptualization of antecedents, consequents, and proposed attributes by Rodgers (1989), the essential attributes were classified as attribute, antecedent, and consequent and represented in Figure 3.

It should be noted that for Rodgers (1989) the defining characteristics of the concept are attributes, the preconditions for the phenomenon to happen are antecedents and the outcomes are consequents.

## 3 Results

The search strategy retrieved 1604 articles, and 229 definitions were included in the analysis corpus, extracted from 195 selected articles (Figure 2).

**Figure 2**: Flowchart of the number of articles found, selected, and definitions found-Curitiba/PR-Brazil



**Source**: The authors, 2023

From the 195 articles with definitions found, 229 defining terms were extracted to make up the term bank. The data processing identified 63 association rules, which will be presented in the next subsection.

Chart 1 shows the association rules identified by the algorithm, their antecedents, consequents, and whether the rule was considered generified and included or not generified and excluded.

**Chart 1**: Rules identified by the algorithm, organized by their antecedents - Curitiba/PR - Brazil.

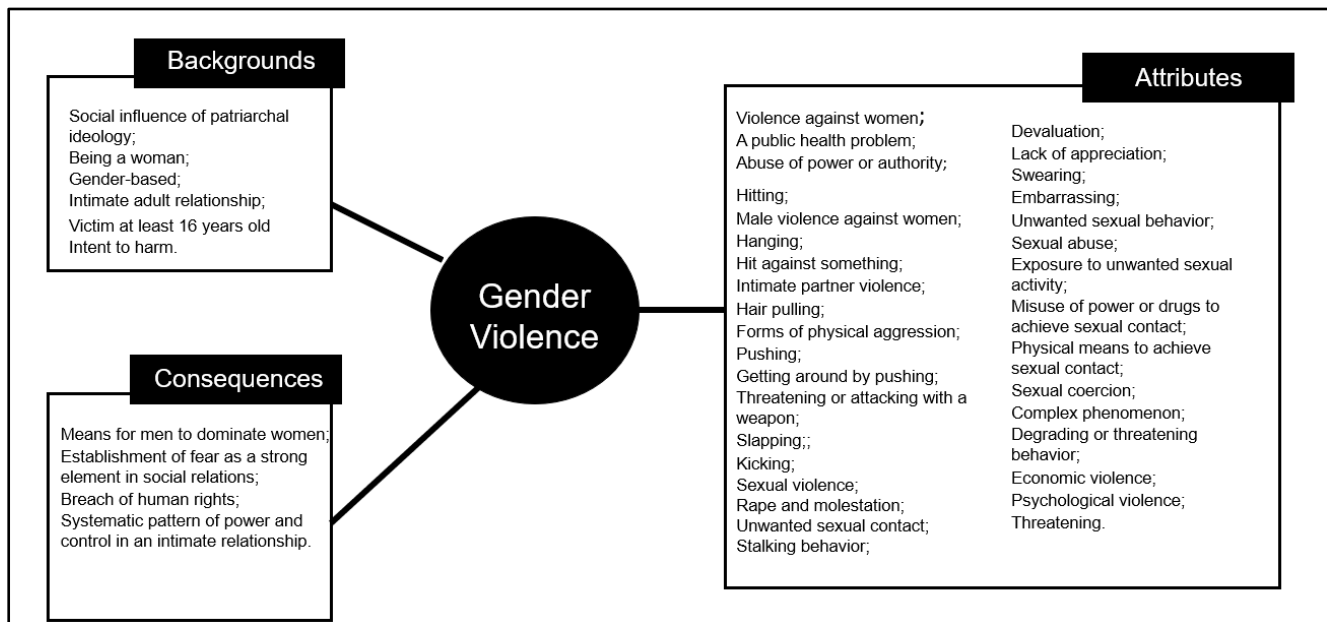| Rule antecedent | Rule consequent | Generified rule | Non-generified rule |
|---|---|---|---|
| Violence against women | Male violence against women | X | |
| | Intimate partner violence | X | |
| | Being a woman | X | |
| Public health problem | Violation of human rights | X | |
| | Complex phenomenon | X | |
| Child or elder abuse | Sexual violence | | X |
| | Violence between intimate partners | | X |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Physical violence | | X |
| Abuse of power or authority | Degrading or threatening behavior | X | |
| Social influence of patriarchal ideology | Gender-based | X | |
| Ways for men to dominate women | Systematic pattern of power and control in an intimate relationship | X | |
| Offense against a romantic partner | Intimate partner violence | X | |
| Stalking behavior | Intimate adult relationship | X | |
| | Economic violence | X | |
| | Sexual violence | X | |
| | Psychological violence | X | |
| | Violence between intimate partners | X | |
| Based on sexuality | Victim aged at least 16 | X | |
| Hitting | Violence against women | X | |
| | Slapping | X | |
| | Intent to harm | X | |
| Punching | Slapping | X | |
| Male violence against women | Violence against women | X | |
| Hanging | Violence against women | X | |
| Hit against something | Violence against women | X | |
| Intimate partner violence | Slapping | X | |
| Hair pulling | Violence against women | X | |
| | Slapping | X | |
| Forms of physical aggression | Slapping | X | |
| Pushing | Slapping | X | |
| Getting around by pushing | Slapping | X | |
| Threatening or attacking with a weapon | Violence against women | X | |
| | Slapping | X | |
| Slapping | Violence against women | X | |
| Kicking | Violence against women | X | |
| | Slapping | X | |
| Sexual assault | Establishment of fear as a strong element in social relationships | X | |
| | Threatening | X | |
| Establishment of fear as a strong element in social relationships | Sexual violence | X | |
| Devaluation | Cursing | X | |
| | Cursing | X | |
| | Defaming | X | |
| | Lack of appreciation | X | |
| Lack of appreciation | Defaming | X | |
| | Devaluation | X | |
| | Cursing | X | |
| Cursing | Lack of appreciation | X | |
| Defaming | Devaluation | X | |
| | Lack of appreciation | X | |
| Hurting women or those they love | Embarrassing | X | |
| Embarrassing | Hurting women or those they love | X | |
| Hurting women or those they love | Violence against women | X | |

| Non-consensual vaginal/anal penetration | Exposure to unwanted sexual activity | X | |
| | Misuse of power or drugs to achieve sexual contact | X | |
| | Rape and molestation | X | |
| Unwanted sexual behavior | Unwanted sexual contact | X | |
| | Sexual coercion | X | |
| Sexual abuse | Rape and molestation | X | |
| Exposure to unwanted sexual activity | Rape and molestation | X | |
| Misuse of power or drugs to achieve sexual contact | Non-consensual vaginal/anal penetration | X | |
| Physical means to achieve sexual contact | Unwanted sexual contact | X | |
| | Sexual coercion | X | |
| Sexual coercion | Physical means to achieve sexual contact | X | |

**Source**: The authors, 2023

Figure 3 shows the antecedents, consequents, and attributes identified during the conceptual analysis process.

**Figure 3**: Antecedents, consequences and attributes of the concept "gender violence" – Curitiba/PR Brazil



**Source**: The authors, 2023

## 4 Discussion

Regarding the method developed, the limitations indicated by Madureira et al. (2021) can be seen to have been overcome, especially concerning the contextualization of the concept of interest through the identification of patterns between terms supported by Artificial Intelligence. It is important to note that, although the KDD method has a quantitative approach, the method developed is essentially qualitative, as it depends on the researcher's analysis of the material resulting from the processing carried out by the

KDD algorithm. In this case, the computational tool helps to organize the terms and identify the association rules in less time than if it were done by manual extraction and association. Another important factor is that KDD identifies a broad set of associations, offering greater sensitivity to the process.

As for the terms identified, the term "social influence of the ideology of patriarchy" as an antecedent to the concept of "gender violence", while seeming to support a logic well known to gender scholars, raises a very important question: is patriarchy a "social ideology" that may or may not influence society? In a brief retrospective, before feminist studies even thought of gender as a social construct, the concept of patriarchy came to be used to refer to the system of domination and exploitation of women, a system that is structural to the exercise of power from the parameters of the bourgeois social order (Drehmer; Falcão, 2019; Colling, 2020).

Considering that patriarchy is ingrained in our society as a structuring factor, could we consider it merely as an ideology capable of being present or absent? This is not to disregard the advances that the feminist struggle has made for women, but to understand that gender liberation cannot be a more equal distribution of violence or, even worse, an acceptable form of violence (Preciado, 2022, p.23).

The term "being a woman" as an antecedent to "gender violence" corroborates the patriarchy rooted in our culture. For the concept to evolve, a question should be asked at this point: are only cisgender people victims of gender violence? Throughout the conceptual analysis, no attribute, antecedent, or consequent was identified that openly included non-cisgender or non-binary individuals, despite there being scientific evidence that trans women suffer various types of violence (Marinho, 2020; Silva *et al*. 2022). Non-cisgender and non-binary people are marginalized even in academic productions as if there were two types of gender violence: that which affects cisgender people and that which affects non-cisgender people. Producing knowledge in this way affirms the epistemology of sexual difference that was inserted as truth in our society in the last century.

The terms "gender-based", "intimate adult relationship" and "victim aged at least 16" appear as antecedents to differentiate "gender-based violence" from other types of violence. To exclude violence against children and adolescents, a model of domestic violence against children and adolescents is identified that is separate from domestic violence against adults (Minayo, 2001).

In the attributes, various terms represent the concrete facet of gender-based violence, i.e. how it is perpetrated in a way that is perceptible in a physical examination, such as "hitting", "kicking", "slapping", "hanging" and "forms of physical aggression". It is also possible to identify the invisible forms that are considered normal and accepted by society, such as "devaluation", "lack of recognition", "shaming", "psychological violence" and "economic violence" (Preciado, 2023, p. 23). The invisible forms, despite being more recurrent in the domestic environment and associated with the term "intimate partner violence", are the forms that women least perceive (Oliveira *et al*. 2017; Minayo; Pinto; Silva, 2022). In this context, we can return to the discussion about patriarchy: it's not enough to survive a world with gender violence, you must live without being afraid to perform your gender (Firmino; Porchat, 2017).

Psychological violence has the *status* of maintaining violence that is still seen as acceptable since the victim thinks they could be suffering much more[25]. It also lowers the person's self-esteem, making them feel guilty or deserving of other types of violence.

As consequences of gender violence, we have the maintenance of patriarchy, represented by the terms "means for men to dominate women", "establishment of fear as a strong element in relationships" and "systematic pattern of power and control in an intimate relationship". Fear is shown to be a mediating factor of gender violence in its different facets, corroborating the maintenance of the patriarchal social structure, in which women are subordinated to men and punished if there is no subordination (Firmino; Porchat, 2017; Sikweyiya *et al*. 2020; Tsapalas *et al*. 2020).

To further the development of the concept, it is important to note that at no point in the analysis was any term presented that represented race relations permeating the concept of "gender violence," despite the latest Atlas of Violence reporting that, in 2019, the mortality rate of black women in Brazil was 65.8% higher than that of non-black women (Cerqueira *et al*. 2022). This omission in scientific production demonstrates how the knowledge produced corroborates structural racism and makes it invisible.

## 5 Final considerations

The findings indicate that the concept of gender-based violence encompasses acts of physical, psychological, and sexual violence, with women as the victims and men with whom the victim has a relationship as the perpetrator. This operational description corroborates the structural violence present in a patriarchal society, denoting how women

are more vulnerable to being violated and how bodies that do not perform the expected gender in a society that reaffirms its heterosexual standards become abject; in other words, they are not even mentioned. To paraphrase Judith Butler, violence becomes a gender problem when your fear of walking down the street alone depends on the gender that society recognizes you as.

This discussion of gender needs to be careful not to become a first-wave feminist discourse in which women are vulnerable and non-binary people are made invisible. Therefore, there is a need for a closer look at the violence suffered by individuals of non-binary gender, transgenders, and transvestites and their relationship with other structural social issues such as racism and classicism. This limitation is not a methodological one, as the attributes were not present in the definitions identified in the selected articles.

Focusing on the conceptual analysis method developed, it was found that the methodological steps help the researcher systematize the understanding of a concept, from the moment the consequential and causal relationships are found by an algorithm, reducing the researcher's bias when compared to the qualitative method presented in the other methods. The stage in which the researcher validates the rules identified by the KDD process maintains the qualitative nature of other conceptual analysis methods.

The use of substitute terms to enrich the research *corpus* in the data collection stage proved essential to establishing the consequential and causal relationships of a concept as complex as gender violence.

As an implication for future research, the method presented facilitates the conceptual analysis of immature concepts, corroborating the development of various concepts.

As a limitation of the study, data collection was carried out using a national database aggregator and a cross-sectional time frame; this data collection strategy may not have found other definitions for the subject. However, the corpus of definitions was considered sufficient when compared to the number of definitions used by other conceptual analysis studies[1]. It is suggested that other researchers, using the proposed method, expand the corpus according to the number of definitions identified.

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