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CRIMES AGAINST HONOR IN THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT: ANALYSIS OF LEGAL CHALLENGES AND THE NEED TO UPDATE AND IMPROVE BRAZILIAN CRIMINAL LEGISLATION

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ABSTRACT

This work promotes an investigation of the legal challenges faced by the Brazilian criminal legislation in the fight against crimes against honor in the digital environment, namely, slander, defamation and injury, in view of the rapid technological evolution and the wide dissemination of virtual communication, which have intensified the practice of these crimes. Thus, the study aims to offer the reader a view on the main obstacles to the effectiveness of current rules, such as anonymity on the internet, the difficulty in obtaining digital evidence and the transnational nature of infractions. To this end, a qualitative approach is adopted, based on bibliographic research and legislative analysis, examining doctrines, jurisprudence and applicable norms. That said, the article points out that although the legal system seeks to monitor this type of crimes gradually and consistently, it still needs a more specific and improved application to keep up with the new dynamics of cyberspace, ensuring greater protection of the honor of individuals and ensuring the effectiveness of punishments.

Keywords: Crimes against honor. Digital environment. Criminal legislation. Legal challenges. Regulatory update.

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INTRODUCTION

This article deals with crimes against honor in the digital environment, analyzing the challenges that the national criminal legislation faces to deal with these offenses effectively. In the face of the current scenario, technology advances and the internet acquires more and more space and importance in the lives of the Brazilian population, with the use of digital media increasing and more present in daily life as it is a tool for entertainment, work, study, instant and easily accessible communication; which has the power to transport the Internet user to a world of possibilities.

However, along with ease, the practice of crimes in this environment has also grown and according to a survey by the Cyber security solutions company Fortinet, based on data from FortiGuard Labs, Brazil is the second most affected country in Latin America, with 103.1 billion attempted cyber attacks in 2022, An increase of 16% compared to what was recorded in 2021 and registered more than 36%, corresponding to the total of 23 billion in the first quarter of 2023, these data show the increase in infractions in the virtual environment.

In view of the above, the choice of this theme is justified by its social and legal relevance, since honor is an asset protected by the Federal Constitution of 1988 (art. 5, X), and its violation can cause irreparable damage to the victims. Therefore, it is essential to analyze the current criminal legislation and discuss proposals for its improvement, in order to ensure a more effective protection of the honor of individuals and to hold offenders accountable.

In this context, the central problem of the study is to answer the following question: What are the challenges that the Brazilian legal system faces in the fight against crimes against honor in the digital environment and how does this justify the need to update and improve existing laws? To this end, the general purpose of this article is to analyze the Brazilian legal system in the face of crimes against honor in the digital environment, identifying the obstacles in their effective application and suggesting legislative solutions. To achieve this objective, the research will unfold into the following points: (a) understand the concepts and typification of crimes against honor in the Penal Code; (b) investigate the consequences of legislative ineffectiveness, considering its impacts on victims; (c) analyze the laws applicable to virtual crimes; (d) identify the main legal obstacles, highlighting proposals for legislative improvement.

Finally, the work is structured as follows: the first section addresses the concepts and foundations of crimes against honor, as well as verifies the incidence of these crimes in the digital environment, demonstrating concrete cases. The second section discusses the laws

applicable to these crimes. Finally, the third section points out the legal challenges faced by these legislations to effectively punish offenders and highlights the main proposals for legislative improvement, given the inefficiency of the current legislation.

In view of the aforementioned arguments, it is hoped that this study will contribute to the academic and legal debate on the need to update criminal rules in Brazil, aiming to build a safer and more balanced digital environment between freedom of expression and the protection of human dignity.

METHODOLOGY

Regarding the methodology used in this study, a qualitative and exploratory approach was chosen, based on a literature review and analysis of legislation. To do this, sources such as the Federal Constitution, the Penal Code, the Civil Rights Framework for the Internet, the Carolina Dieckmann Law and the LGPD are consulted, as well as scientific articles and reports on cybercrimes. Based on this investigation, it seeks to offer a critical view of the difficulties and limitations of the current legal system and to contribute to the debate on the modernization of the rules that govern crimes against honor in the digital environment.

DISCUSSION

CRIMES AGAINST HONOR

The purpose of this section is to address the initial premises for the understanding of crimes against honor that are listed in the Brazilian Penal Code, however, before entering specifically into the proposed subject, a brief analysis is made of the right to honor that the Brazilian citizen has.

RIGHT TO HONOR

Honor is considered a fundamental right of the individual before the law, and can be defined as a set of physical, moral, and intellectual characteristics that make him worthy of respect in the social environment and increase his self-esteem (Greco, 2022). Thus, its constitutional protection considers reputation and personal conduct based on ethics and honesty.

In this bias, the doctrine distinguishes objective and subjective honor. For Masson (2021), objective honor refers to the evaluation that third parties make of a person's physical, moral, and intellectual attributes. In short, this implies considering someone's reputation and the respect they enjoy in society and public opinion.

It is precisely in this aspect that slander and defamation act, as they harm the social value of the individual, resulting in a bad reputation in the community and causing personal or property damage. For example, a person may lose their job, face discrimination, or even lose friendships due to a false rumor.

A common phenomenon today is the fake news that circulates on the internet. This news spreads quickly and has the power to influence public opinion, and when false information is spread intentionally, the damage to the victims' reputations is significant.

Subjective honor, on the other hand, refers to the individual's perception of himself, including his qualities, intellectual and moral attributes, and his self-esteem, characterizing injury.

It is worth noting that a legal entity may also be a victim of crimes against honor, Masson (2022) states: "The legal entity has a reputation, so that the disclosure of facts that discredit its concept to society can cause irreparable damage. Thus, he can be a passive subject of defamation".

The legislator, in article 5, item X of the Federal Constitution of 1988, recognized the need to protect honor, as a legal good, having as its material object the person of the victim.

> Article 5 - All are equal before the law, without distinction of any kind, guaranteeing to Brazilians and foreigners residing in the country the inviolability of the right to life, liberty, equality, security and property, in the following terms:
> X- The intimacy, private life, honor and image of people are inviolable, ensuring the right to compensation for material and moral damage resulting from their violation" (BRASIL, 1988).

That said, honor is considered an extremely relevant aspect within a complex legal system, being a dynamic and current theme, which transforms with the development of society and continues to be the subject of discussions over time.

CHARACTERIZATION OF CRIMES AGAINST HONOR:

In the digital age, where many believe they have the freedom to express any thought without fear of consequences, it is essential to clarify that not all statements constitute opinions. Often, what is said can be considered a crime. However, the "average citizen" is often ignorant of how crimes against honor are defined, and in attempting to gossip or issuing seemingly harmless comments about others, he may actually be committing one or more of these crimes.

In view of this, it is relevant to mention the typification of each of them according to the Brazilian Penal Code, which in its Special Part, dedicates Chapter V, of Title I, to crimes against honor, which are slander (art. 138), defamation (art. 139) and slander (art. 140).

Slander (Art.138 of the CP)

Provided for in article 138 of the Penal Code, which provides:

> Article 138 - To slander someone, falsely imputing to him a fact defined as a crime:
> Penalty - detention, from six months to two years, and a fine.
> Paragraph 1 - The same penalty is incurred by anyone who, knowing the imputation to be false, propagates or disseminates it.
> Paragraph 2 - Slander against the dead is punishable. (BRAZIL, 1940).

In this sense, Slander consists of falsely attributing to someone the practice of a fact defined as a crime, it affects the objective honor of the person, attributing to him a false act that must necessarily be a crime.

In addition, it is essential to impute the practice of a specific fact, that is, of a concrete situation, containing the author, object and its circumstances. Thus, it is not enough to call someone a "thief", as such conduct would characterize the crime of injury. The typification of slander demands, for example, the following narrative: "On March 20, 2025, around 8:00 p.m.,

'A, with the use of a firearm, threatened to kill victim 'B', then stole his watch from her".

The fact must also be credible, because otherwise there is no slander, as when it is said that someone stole the moon.

It is interesting to note that slander is the only crime against honor that protects the dead, however, the imputation that characterizes the crime, obviously, must refer to a fact corresponding to the period in which the offended party was alive.

In this context, the law protects the honour of the deceased in relation to the memory of the good reputation, as well as the interest of the family members in preserving the dignity of the deceased. Victims of the crime are the spouse and family members of the deceased, as the latter no longer has rights to be criminally protected.

Defamation (Art.139 of the CP):

Provided for in article 139 of the Penal Code, which establishes: "Defaming someone, imputing to him a fact offensive to his reputation: Penalty - detention, from three months to one year, and fine."

Defamation is a crime that offends objective honor, and, as with slander, it depends on the imputation of some fact to someone. This fact, however, does not have to be criminal. It is enough that it has the capacity to tarnish the victim's reputation, that is, the good reputation that he enjoys in the community, regardless of whether it is true or false.

Thus, the subject must refer to an event that contains descriptive circumstances, such as time, place and people involved, not simply to offend the victim.

Injury (Article 140 of the CP)

Typified in article 140 of the Penal Code, with the following provision: "Insulting someone, offending their dignity or decorum: Penalty – detention, from one to six months, or fine."

Injury is a crime against honor that offends subjective honor. Consequently, contrary to what occurs in slander and defamation, there is no imputation of fact.

The crime is characterized as the simple offense of the dignity or decorum of the victim, through cursing or attribution of a negative quality.

Dignity is offended when the moral qualities of the person are attacked (e.g., calling him "dishonest"), while decorum is undermined when his physical (e.g., calling him "horrible") or intellectual qualities (e.g., calling him "dumb") are attacked.

According to Cleber Masson (2021), injury can be absolute or relative. In absolute injury, the word directed against the victim is indisputably offensive to subjective honor, regardless of the time in which it was uttered or the region of Brazil in which it was uttered, as is the case when someone is called "retarded" or "feeble-minded". On the other hand, in the relative insult, the apparently offensive word can be considered acceptable, depending on the time or place in which it was uttered. Calling a woman "macho", for illustrative purposes, reveals itself as a criminal attitude, but in some parts of Brazil - the state of Ceará, for example - it is something common among people who admire each other.

INCIDENCE OF CRIMES AGAINST HONOR IN THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

With the development of the internet, the incidence of virtual crimes has increased significantly. Whereas, they have particular characteristics compared to those committed in other media. As Silva (2021) discusses, the main characteristic of these crimes in the digital environment is the speed with which information spreads, reaching a significant number of people in a short period of time.

In Brazil, the predominant social platforms include Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, which are widely used for the practice of slander, defamation, and slander. According to Dantas and Santiago (2019), the internet should be seen as a democratic space that ensures the diversity of ideas and thoughts. This perspective is in line with the Federal Constitution and the principle of individual freedom. However, these guarantees, as demonstrated, have their limitations, because, although the internet is a space that

promotes the expression of different points of view, everyone must assume the responsibilities and legal consequences that arise from their manifestations.

Thus, considering the number of people who use these applications and the ease of interaction between them, it is notorious that this tool becomes a gateway to carrying out these acts, since there are people who use this mechanism in order to practice some illegality.

Consequently, Dantas and Santiago (2019) understand that such criminal practices have serious impacts on the lives of victims, both in the social, emotional, and even professional spheres; In view of the fact that the significant humiliation faced by these people results in a deep sense of inferiority, shame and even changes in their routine, some victims feel compelled to leave their cities due to the emotional distress caused by the constant exposures to which they are subjected. In addition, these circumstances often trigger mental health problems, such as depression, and in extreme cases, suicide.

In this sense, the crime of defamation is one of the most common, as it involves the imputation of dishonorable facts to a person, such as the dissemination of videos and photos without consent, with the aim of causing embarrassment in relation to partners, family and friends.

For Dantas and Santiago (2019), offenders often resort to illegal acts on the internet, believing that this means facilitates impunity, as they assume that there are no regulations that protect the rights of users of these platforms. In addition, the nature of crimes against honor is considered to have less offensive potential, resulting in lenient penalties, which opens space for recidivism. Consequently, punishments become ineffective, being seen as lenient.

A recent case that happened in 2023, three students from a private university in Bauru (SP) mocked the age of a classmate, 44 years old, having published a video that went viral on social networks, in which they mocked the fact that Patrícia Linares studies at the institution and is over 40 years old. For them, Patricia should "be retired and could no longer go to college". The recording in which the students of the class make fun of her has already had more than two million views on Twitter. The recording had more than 2 million views on Twitter. Even one of the university students said "Guys, 40 years old can't go to college anymore. I have that opinion."

Another case that gained great repercussion was that of actress and presenter Antonia Fontenelle, who was convicted of slander, slander and defamation against Felipe Neto, a very famous youtuber. The actress posted a video released on YouTube on July 24, 2020, in which she committed, three times, the crime of defamation against Felipe Neto by

claiming, without evidence, that she was coerced by the youtuber in a meeting, that he tried to scam her and that he has already ruined the lives of many people.

In the same video, Antonia called Felipe Neto a "sociopath", characterizing the crime of injury. The actress also released in a video on YouTube that Felipe Neto stated that he "does not use drugs on duty", implying that he was a drug user outside the service, characterizing the crime of slander.

Another notable situation was that of model Yasmin Brunet, who was falsely accused of engaging in human trafficking in a post that spread quickly on social media. On October 26, 2022, the model filed a police report with the São Paulo Cybercrime Police Station. The allegations said that she was involved in the disappearance of two young Brazilian women in the United States, attended by coach Katiuscia Torres Soares. The case was investigated by the Civil Police of Minas Gerais, the Foreign Ministry and the USA. This is a serious charge in an environment of almost unlimited reach, and the potential damage to her and her career is incalculable.

It is concluded that the speed and breadth of the dissemination of information through the internet aggravate the damage caused to victims, who generally find great difficulties in seeking reparation. Consequently, it is necessary that the entire Brazilian legal system be updated and strengthened to deal with these new types of crime, so that adequate assistance can be provided to victims and offenders are required to respond fully.

ANALYSIS OF THE LEGISLATION APPLICABLE TO VIRTUAL CRIMES

In Brazil, the rules that deal with cybercrimes have been a response to the demands arising from technological advancement and new forms of digital interaction, given that the penal code that typifies crimes against honor is from 1940, in addition to not specifically dealing with these crimes in the virtual space.

According to Filgueira (2022): "The delay of criminal laws in Brazil to combat virtual crimes is clear, the Brazilian Penal Code dates back to the forties - Decree Law No. 2,848 of December 7, 1940. How can a law typify and protect a legal asset created at a time when the internet had not even emerged in Brazil? For this reason, there is a need for special laws to combat the advance of technological crimes."

That said, several legislations have emerged as a complement to the Penal Code, establishing new parameters for the investigation and prevention of these crimes, among them are:

Law No. 12,737/2012 (Carolina Dieckmann Law)

Law 12.737/2012, better known as the Carolina Dieckmann Law, enacted on November 30, 2012, represents a milestone for being the first to specifically discuss the issue in Brazil. Which, in turn, establishes crimes involving the invasion of computing devices, as well as the acquisition, disclosure or commercialization of data without authorization.

It should be noted that the law bears this name in honor of the actress Carolina Dieckmann, who was the victim of invasion of her personal computer and disclosure of her intimate photographs.

In view of all the repercussions caused by this situation, the aforementioned law has become an important punishment tool for crimes committed in cyberspace.

However, it is important to emphasize that the Carolina Dieckmann Law does not directly address crimes against honor per se — that is, slander, defamation, and injury — which are still regulated by traditional articles of the Penal Code. However, it has indirect applicability when there is an invasion of devices with the aim of accessing and disclosing confidential information with the intention of damaging the reputation of third parties.

The most significant change with the Carolina Dieckmann Law was the incorporation of article 154-A into the Penal Code, which typifies the invasion of electronic devices, without the right to do so, as a crime. This provision may relate to crimes against honor in certain cases, for example:

Illegal access to confidential information, that is, when an attacker enters the cell phone, computer or social network account to obtain private content, and can use it to slander, defame or insult the victim, such practice can lead to a maximum sentence of 6 months;

The improper dissemination of illegal content, for example, when the attacker steals images, messages or personal information and makes the content available with the intention of harming the victim's honor, the infraction may be related to both the Carolina Dieckmann Law and criminal provisions that punish crimes against honor.

In addition, Article 154-B increases the penalty in the event that the invasion causes economic damage to the victim or is carried out against public authority. On the other hand, the law does not establish specific punishment for moral and reputational damages, which constitutes a gap in the protection of honor.

Although it has represented an advance in the repression of cybercrime, the Carolina Dieckmann Law has its limitations for the purpose of prosecuting crimes against honor, since it is directed to the invasion of the device, since the device itself is punished for having been invaded, that is, there is no oral attack, the law only punishes entry into the

device, and it does not criminalize the dissemination of content that may offend. Thus, if there is slander, without there being invasion, the Carolina Dieckmann Law does not cover, it does not deal with the crime committed on social networks. The rules established by the rule do not control the spread of attacks on digital platforms, which is the main form of crimes against honor in the modern world.

Finally, another point to be highlighted is that, when it comes to crimes such as slander, defamation or injury, it is difficult to find evidence, as it is often not known who committed these crimes and, even if it is known, the anonymity of providers makes them not very cooperative. Thus, the Carolina Dieckmann Law lacks robust mechanisms to oblige digital platforms to identify offenders.

Law No. 12,965/2014 (Civil Rights Framework for the Internet)

In Brazil, Law No. 12,965/2014, called the Civil Rights Framework for the Internet, was sanctioned on April 23, 2014 and came into force after 2 (two) months, it is seen as the Constitution of the Internet, as it establishes rights, duties and principles for the use of the network in the country, it differs from the Carolina Dieckmann Law, which concerns certain types of cybercrime, because it establishes general parameters to ensure free expression, data protection and duties of providers.

Some very relevant provisions should be noted for the purposes of this analysis, such as article 9, which establishes net neutrality, that is, it prohibits providers from favoring some content or services to the detriment of others, ensuring that all information passes without discrimination, strengthening a democratic internet.

Article 7 itself, which guarantees the protection of privacy and personal data, requires the free and informed consent of the user or by court order to access personal data, even gave rise to the General Data Protection Law (LGPD - Law No. 13,709/2018).

In light of this, although it represents an advance, the Civil Rights Framework for the Internet brings with it some unintended consequences, such as the absence of specific instructions in relation to social networks, which makes it difficult to combat fake news and crimes against honor, the need for a court order for the immediate exclusion of illegal content, a barrier in urgent circumstances, and the impossibility of applying this law to foreign companies in Brazilian territory without having a headquarters in the country.

3.5.3 Law No. 13,709/2018 (Personal Data Protection Law - LGPD)

The General Data Protection Law (LGPD – Law No. 13,709/2018), aims to provide citizens with security and transparency in the use of the internet, as well as privacy. Of

course, its focus is mainly on the processing of personal data, but it still offers indirect protection of honor in terms of disclosure of private information, which is being done in bad faith, for slander, defamation or injury.

In this sense, some very relevant provisions should be noted for the purposes of this analysis, such as article 7, which defines the cases in which the processing of personal data is considered legitimate, that is, when it is allowed to carry out the processing without violating the legislation. This article specifies the legal bases for processing personal data, and its analysis is important to understand when and how an organization may lawfully collect, store, or process personal data.

In addition, article 18 guarantees the rights of the holders of personal data, which can be exercised at any time, upon express request of the holder or his legal representative, which must be met at no cost to the holder, within the deadlines and under the terms provided for in the regulation.

Finally, article 42 holds companies liable for failure to act against the misuse of personal data, that is, digital platforms can be punished with a penalty for not sufficiently protecting user data.

In summary, the LGPD has limitations with regard to the punishment of crimes against honor, since it does not directly typify slander, defamation, or injury, relying instead on provisions of the Penal Code to cover these cases, there are no effective mechanisms to identify anonymous offenders, which complicates the accountability of the offender, and the LGPD was also implemented in 2018, when all participants in the digital environment, including victims, were already digitized. And while offensive content can be removed, it requires a court order, so victims can expect a slower path.

Taking into account the previously described and analyzed standards that regulate this type of crime, it is clear that the objective of these laws was to review and update the legislation that prevented cybercrimes from being fragmented. But these legal provisions are not enough, they need to be implemented to seek the effective reduction and repression of crimes against honor in cyberspace without omissions and challenges.

RESULTS

Legal Challenges for the Effective Repression of Crimes Against Honor in the Digital Sphere:

Through the analysis of the laws applicable to crimes against honor in the legal system, it is perceived that they face several challenges that hinder the accountability of offenders and the effectiveness of the rules in force.

According to Greco (2022), Brazilian criminal legislation has not yet been fully adapted to the dynamics of the internet, which generates legal gaps that compromise the effectiveness of punishments.

In this sense, Bomfati and Júnior (2020) argue that in reality, we are faced with a global problem, which places people between freedom and security on the internet, about which, for now, it can be said that it is a new world, and, unfortunately, still a lawless land.

In addition, they understand that technological development demands constant legislative updating to keep up with the transformations and challenges that arise in the digital environment.

Therefore, this section deals with the main challenges faced by the Brazilian legal system in the effective punishment of these crimes.

What are these challenges?

According to Souza (2022), **online anonymity** is one of the biggest problems in the effectiveness of law enforcement. Given that the internet offers a space where it is possible to hide the identity behind fake profiles or pseudonyms, making it difficult to pursue criminals, as well as the consequent punishments.

On the other hand, Araújo and Alves (2023) highlight **the speed of information propagation**, considering that the spread and global reach of cybercrimes make it difficult to manage and repair the damage caused. Unlike traditional media, where the dissemination of news and information occurs more slowly, in the virtual environment content can reach a large number of people in a matter of minutes.

Furthermore, Companhiola (2018) highlights the issue of **international cooperation**, considering the multinationality of the internet, it is essential to improve international cooperation between the judicial and investigative bodies of several countries, which is currently a bureaucracy**.**

Likewise, Brazil should have promising agreements that include the fight against virtual crimes, since November 23, 2001 it signed the Convention on Cybercrimes, no less known than the Budapest Convention, which today is the most important international agreement on cybercrimes, a procedure that aims to define in a harmonious way between countries which crimes are committed through the Internet and what measures should be taken to process them.

It is therefore understandable that it is of paramount importance to conclude international agreements that facilitate the cooperation of the authorities, the sharing of information and the extradition of criminals.

In this way, it is understood that the lack of uniformity in laws and regulations between countries makes it difficult to harmonize efforts to combat crimes against honor online. (ARAÚJO; ALVES; 2023).

In addition, **the difficulty in collecting and preserving electronic evidence** is also an obstacle to the investigation and punishment of cybercrimes.

According to Silva (2021), the lack of specific legislation governing the collection and storage of electronic evidence can compromise the validity and admissibility of such evidence in legal proceedings.

In addition, another obstacle to an effective fight against these illicit acts stands out, which lies in the **lack of training of law enforcement authorities and resources** to deal with the complexities of crimes in the digital universe. It is a virtual world with a practically analog investigative system. For Chaves and Silva (2023), many professionals in the area of public security are not prepared to deal with the technologies and techniques used by cybercriminals, making it difficult to detect and prevent these crimes.

In this perspective, Bomfati and Júnior (2020) share the position on the need to update laws to keep up with technological transformations, as the development of new forms of communication and digital interaction requires a constant review of existing standards, in order to address the new challenges that arise in the virtual environment. The lack of clarity and specificity in the current rules can make it difficult to apply the law to cases of crimes against honor in cyberspace.

In this vein, Silva (2022) adds that authorities responsible for law enforcement and public policymaking must keep up to date on technological trends and be willing to implement effective measures to deal with the changes and challenges arising from these advances. This is necessary to prevent, identify and prosecute the perpetrators of violence and reinforce public awareness and digital education.

In view of the above, it can be seen that the aforementioned authors agree that current legislation alone, as much as justice has managed to walk, even if with timid steps, in the face of the exponential growth of the internet, are not enough to effectively combat crimes against honor committed online. They highlight the need for an adequate and accurate typification of these conducts for an effective confrontation of the listed obstacles.

Therefore, the objective of this research is to analyze the current Brazilian legal framework in relation to crimes against honor committed in the virtual space, identifying the challenges in the effective application of the rules, as well as highlighting the need to update and improve existing laws, combined with the progress of criminal prosecution systems.

PROPOSALS FOR LEGISLATIVE IMPROVEMENT

Given the current lack of legal requirements for many of the measures outlined, there is a need for Brazil to modify its legal system and ensure the effectiveness of the crackdown on online crimes against honor. Some initiatives can be:

- **Specific Classification:** Legislation should distinguish between crimes committed on social networks and online platforms, and provide for different penalties for cases where the content is widely disseminated, resulting in harm to others (Sanches, 2021).
- **Strengthening ISP Accountability:** Requiring ISPs to remove illicit content on the internet at source, in situations where there is sufficient evidence suggesting the commission of honor offenses, could help protect victims and also prevent the spread of harmful materials (Campanhola, 2018).
- **Implementing Effective Methods:** Implementing effective methods to track down those responsible is also vital. Policies that require identity validation before a person can open an account on a social media platform would help stem the tide of online crime and hold criminals accountable (Souza, 2022).

SUPPLEMENTARY PROPOSALS: DIGITAL EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

In addition to legislative reform, education and awareness are the fundamental means of preventing crimes against honor in the digital world. According to Chaves and Silva (2023), campaigns that educate people on how to use the internet without infringing on the rights of others are very effective in reducing offenses. They reinforce a climate of respect.

Making it mandatory for schools to have digital education as a subject is also effective in informing young people about the dangers and social implications of committing online crimes (Bomfati; Júnior, 2020). In addition, cooperation between government agencies and web service providers could see initiatives being initiated, which would exert control over the spread of offensive language through the new mediums (Silva, 2022).

CONCLUSION

Technological evolution and the digitalization of social interactions have brought significant challenges to the application of Criminal Law, especially with regard to crimes against honor in the digital environment. The analysis carried out throughout this study showed that the Brazilian legislation, although it contains provisions to punish conducts

such as slander, defamation and injury, still has gaps that hinder the accountability of offenders and the effectiveness of sanctions.

In this context, it is necessary to revise the legislative framework for this sphere of jurisdiction: offenses against honor committed over the internet need a different definition, with harsher penalties associated with the regulation of application providers to make them more accountable; and finally, traditional but now outdated methods used by investigative agencies to identify offenders should be replaced by smarter methods that rely on up-to-date technology.

In addition, public awareness of the ethical use of social media and digital education deserve greater emphasis. To effectively prevent this type of infringement and forge a safer and more responsible internet.

In this sense, to effectively combat these crimes in the online environment implies more than simply imposing heavy penalties. It requires the creation of a variety of solutions, including legislative updates and, eventually, advances in criminal investigation technology. Only in this way can freedom of expression be balanced with the protection of the honor and dignity enjoyed by individuals.

Therefore, it is concluded that the research problem was duly answered and the proposed objectives were achieved, evidencing the need for a legislative improvement that frames the criminal legislation to technological changes.

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