

PROFILE, OCCURRENCE AND TEMPORAL TREND OF PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, IN PORTO NACIONAL-TO, 2013 TO 2022



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ABSTRACT

Introduction: This study investigates physical and sexual violence against women in the municipality of Porto Nacional-TO between 2013 and 2022, addressing epidemiological aspects and social determinants involved. Violence against women, especially in domestic contexts and intimate relationships, is a human rights violation and a public health issue, the consequences of which widely affect society. The analysis of this violence in the region aims to provide relevant data for public policies that seek to reduce such occurrences. **Methodology:** This is an ecological epidemiological study, using data from the Notifiable Diseases Information System (SINAN) and obtained from DATASUS for all occurrences reported in Porto Nacional-TO. Cases of physical and sexual violence against females were included, and records with incomplete information were excluded. The analysis of incidence rates and trends was performed using the Stata®18 software, applying the Prais-Winsten method to estimate the annual percentage change and temporal trends of violence rates. **Results:** The analysis revealed a higher prevalence of physical violence in women aged 20 to 39 years and sexual violence in adolescents aged 10 to 19 years. Women who identified themselves as brown were the most affected in all forms of violence. Violence occurred predominantly in the domestic environment, and there was a significant increase in cases during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, with a peak incidence of physical violence in 2020. The study also indicated that alcohol use was associated with a considerable portion of physical aggression. **Discussion:** The results confirm a growing trend of physical violence among young and adult women, highlighting the residence as the

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main place for these acts. Comparisons with other studies suggest that the characteristics observed in Porto Nacional are consistent with dynamics of violence found in other Brazilian regions, especially regarding the vulnerability of women in disadvantaged socioeconomic contexts. Conclusion: The high rates of physical and sexual violence, especially among young people and women of brown race, point to the need for public policies focused on prevention and care, especially in times of social crisis. It is essential to strengthen actions to monitor and combat gender violence to ensure greater safety and protection for women.

Keywords: Gender Violence. COVID-19. Sexual violence. Physical Aggression.

INTRODUCTION

By analyzing the origin of the word "violence" etymologically, we observe that, in its original meaning, it did not necessarily have a harmful meaning. It goes back to the Latin "violentia", which denotes the idea of strength, brave character. Over time, the term evolved to clearly express the concept of desecration, denoting the transgression of something or someone (Paneque; Guimarães, 2022).

A typology of violence categorizes the general definition into broad types, taking into account the relationship established between the victim and the perpetrator. Self-directed violence involves situations in which the aggressor and the victim are the same person, ranging from self-harm to suicide. Collective violence refers to armed conflicts, being used by members of a group against another group or community, and may have social, political, or economic motivations. Finally, interpersonal violence occurs between individuals in family and community contexts. Family violence, usually occurring in the home, includes child abuse, intimate partner violence, and elder abuse. Community violence, on the other hand, occurs between individuals who may or may not know each other, but who do not have family ties (WHO; Krug, 2002).

The deep-rooted culture of subordination of women to men, considering them as an inalienable and eternal property, corresponds to a factor for the perpetuation of violence against women. The ease with which defendants are able to escape through the intricacies of judicial procedures, added to the little importance that State institutions attribute to the denunciation and prosecution of crimes against women and girls, also figures as a crucial element in this persistence (Blay, 2003).

Among the types of violence that have affected women in the last 20 years, discrimination and physical, psychological, economic and sexual violence stand out. Likewise, the sex trafficking of girls and women is one of the most persistent violations of women's rights and dignity. Certain women also suffer from specific violence, resulting from the interaction of the gender condition with other variables, such as indigenous, black, migrant, poor, or resident of a remote rural community (Engel, 2020).

The National Policy to Combat Violence against Women seeks a broad and articulated focus on combating gender violence, encompassing collaboration between sectors such as health, public security, justice, education, and social assistance. This confrontation proposes actions aimed at deconstructing gender inequalities and discrimination, in addition to combating the sexist and sexist patterns that persist in

Brazilian society. The policy also aims to promote female empowerment and ensure humanized and qualified care for women in situations of violence, thus addressing the complexity of the problem in its multiple dimensions (De Matos Lessa; Da Silva, 2018).

The present study aims to identify aspects of physical and sexual violence against women, in the municipality of Porto Nacional - TO, and in the time limits from 2013 to 2022, in order to contribute to the construction of scientific foundations, through original research, for the promotion of public health, prevention and notification of diseases with efficiency and basis, especially with regard to women's health in the study region.

METHODOLOGY

This is an ecological epidemiological study, whose survey was carried out using the TABNET application (tabulator) of the Department of Informatics of the Unified Health System (DATASUS). In ecological studies, the relationship between the occurrence of a disease/health condition and the exposure of interest in population groups, such as countries, regions, or municipalities, is analyzed. This approach allows the identification of collective associations, considering that the expression of the phenomenon can vary in the collectivity in relation to the individual parts (Lima-Costa; Barreto, 2003).

The research was conducted in the municipality of Porto Nacional-TO, located in the central region of the state of Tocantins, Brazil. The micro-region of Porto Nacional has a total area of 21,197.989 km², composed of the municipalities of Aparecida do Rio Negro, Bom Jesus do Tocantins, Ipueiras, Lajeado, Monte do Carmo, Palmas, Pedro Afonso, Porto Nacional, Santa Maria do Tocantins, Silvanópolis and Tocantínia. According to the last census of 2022 by the IBGE, the population was 64,418 inhabitants and the demographic density was 14.53 inhabitants per square kilometer (IBGE, 2022).

The population of this study includes all reported cases of physical and sexual violence against women, reported in the municipality of Porto Nacional-TO, in the period from 2013 to 2022, available in DATASUS. Notified cases with incomplete data/variables were excluded, with more than 50% of unknown/blank cases. For analysis, the following sociodemographic variables were used in this study: year of occurrence, age group, race/color, education, place of occurrence, self-harm, suspicion of alcohol use, use of firearms, types of violence (physical violence and sexual violence) and other characteristics of violence (repeated violence and evolution of the case).

Data on physical and sexual violence among residents of Porto Nacional – TO, were obtained from the Epidemiological Surveillance System for Violence and Accidents (VIVA), registered in the Notifiable Diseases Information System (SINAN). The data on the reported cases were extracted from the Personal Notification/Investigation Form of Domestic/Intrafamily, Sexual, Self-Inflicted and/or Other Interpersonal Violence, serving as an official document for the registration of information related to cases of violence.

The Excel software was used to calculate the absolute and relative frequencies of the variables and to calculate the incidence rates of physical and sexual violence against the female sex. The rates were calculated per year, considering the absolute number of cases in the numerator and the population in the denominator, with a multiplication factor per 100,000 inhabitants. The general population of the municipality of Porto Nacional, as well as the population by sex and age group, was obtained from the IBGE website (population projection from 2000 to 2060). The frequencies referring to "unknown", "blank" and/or "not applicable" data were not included to be evaluated by the numerator.

To analyze the temporal trend of the incidence rates of the cases of physical and sexual violence in question, the Stata®18 software was used, and the rates were first transformed into logarithms (log10), seeking to stabilize the variance over time (ANTUNES; CARDOSO, 2015). The Prais-Winsten autoregression method was used to classify the temporal trend of the incidence of interpersonal/self-inflicted violence as increasing, decreasing or stationary, and the percentage of average annual change (APC – Annual Percent Change) was calculated. The respective 95% confidence intervals (95% CI) and the p-value (≤ 0.05) were considered (ANTUNES; CARDOSO, 2015).

RESULTS

According to Table 1, with regard to age group, the highest frequency of sexual violence was among girls and women aged 10 to 19 years, with 288 cases (56.36%) of sexual violence and 34 cases (43.58%) of physical and sexual violence combined. The age group from 20 to 39 years old was the most affected by physical violence, with 403 cases (48.2%). Women who identified themselves as brown were the most affected by all types of violence. They accounted for 85.26% of the cases of physical violence, 79.07% of the cases of sexual violence, and 83.33% of the cases of physical and sexual violence combined.

Table 1 – Absolute and relative frequencies of reported cases of physical, sexual and both violence in females, in Porto Nacional – Tocantins, from 2013 to 2022.

Characteristics	Physical violence n (%)	Sexual violence n (%)	Physical and sexual violence n (%)
Anus			
2013	57 (6,83)	14 (2,81)	4 (5,12)
2014	68 (8,15)	35 (7,04)	7 (8,97)
2015	70 (8,39)	47 (9,45)	9 (11,53)
2016	80 (9,59)	50 (10,06)	4 (5,12)
2017	97 (11,63)	64 (12,87)	14 (17,94)
2018	79 (9,47)	59 (11,87)	11 (14,1)
2019	89 (10,67)	68 (13,68)	8 (10,25)
2020	111 (13,3)	66 (13,27)	6 (7,69)
2021	88 (10,55)	41 (8,24)	11 (14,1)
2022	95 (11,39)	53 (10,66)	4 (5,12)
Age group			
Less than 1	11 (1,31)	10 (1,95)	2 (2,56)
1 to 4 years	17 (2,03)	58 (11,35)	7 (8,97)
5 to 9 years	28 (3,34)	99 (19,37)	18 (23,07)
10 to 19 years old	241 (28,82)	288 (56,36)	34 (43,58)
20 to 39 years old	403 (48,2)	45 (8,8)	14 (17,94)
40 to 59 years old	121 (14,47)	9 (1,76)	2 (2,56)
More than 60	15 (1,79)	2 (0,39)	1 (1,28)
Race/color			
Ign/branco	20 (2,39)	14 (2,81)	1 (1,28)
White	45 (5,38)	38 (7,64)	6 (7,69)
Black	50 (5,98)	42 (8,45)	4 (5,12)
Yellow	7 (0,83)	7 (1,4)	2 (2,56)
Brown	712 (85,26)	393 (79,07)	65 (83,33)
Indigenous	1 (0,11)	3 (0,6)	0 (0)
Schooling			
Ign/branco	351 (42,13)	74 (14,88)	11 (14,1)
Illiterate	7 (0,84)	2 (0,4)	0 (0)
1st to 4th grade incomplete EF	47 (5,64)	49 (9,85)	7 (8,97)
4th complete grade of EF	11 (1,32)	18 (3,62)	3 (3,84)
5th to 8th grade incomplete EF	119 (14,28)	147 (29,57)	18 (23,07)
Full EF	23 (2,76)	29 (5,83)	2 (2,56)
Incomplete MS	92 (11,04)	39 (7,84)	11 (14,1)
IN full	96 (11,52)	14 (2,81)	2 (2,56)
It is incomplete	23 (2,76)	15 (3,01)	6 (7,69)
It is complete	22 (2,64)	10 (2,01)	3 (3,84)
Not applicable	42 (5,04)	100 (20,12)	15 (19,23)
Place of occurrence:			
Ign/Branco	117 (13,96)	35 (6,83)	2 (2,56)
Residence	553 (65,99)	384 (75)	52 (66,66)
Collective Housing	5 (0,59)	2 (0,39)	0 (0)
School	12 (1,43)	13 (2,53)	4 (5,12)
Sports practice place	1 (0,11)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Bar or Similar	42 (5,01)	5 (0,97)	0 (0)
Public roads	77 (9,18)	29 (5,66)	10 (12,82)
Commerce/Services	2 (0,23)	3 (0,58)	0 (0)
Industries/Construction	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Other	29 (3,46)	41 (8)	10 (12,82)

Repeated violence			
Ign/Branco	198 (23,74)	355 (20,93)	355 (20,93)
Yes	259 (31,05)	681 (40,15)	681 (40,15)
No	377 (45,2)	660 (38,91)	660 (38,91)
Suspected use of alcohol			
Yes	274 (32,85)	82 (16,49)	22 (28,2)
Use of a fogo weapon			
Ign/Branco	14 (1,67)	22 (4,42)	3 (3,84)
Yes	33 (3,95)	6 (1,2)	1 (1,28)
No	787 (94,36)	469 (94,36)	74 (94,87)
Self-Harm			
Ignored/blank	51 (6,08)	-	-
Yes	176 (21)	-	-
No	611 (72,91)	-	-

n – Number of cases. % - relative frequency in percentage./Source: The authors(2024).

Most victims reported incomplete schooling, with 29.57% of the cases of sexual violence among victims with incomplete elementary school, and 11.04% of the cases of physical violence among victims with incomplete high school. In addition, 42.13% of the victims of physical violence and 14.88% of sexual violence did not have a specified level of education or were classified as "unknown". The home was the main place of violence, corresponding to 65.99% of the cases of physical violence, 75% of the cases of sexual violence and 66.66% of the cases of physical and sexual violence. There was also relevant notification on public roads, which added up to 9.18% of the cases of physical violence.

There was repetition of violence in 31.05% of the cases of physical violence and in 40.15% of the cases of sexual violence, which may indicate persistence of abuse over time. The year with the highest number of reported cases of physical violence was 2020 (111 cases, 13.31%). For sexual violence, 2019 represented the peak, with 67 cases (13.68%). Suspected alcohol use was more frequent in cases of physical violence, in 32.85% of the cases, compared to other types of violence. Regarding the use of firearms, no associations were identified in more than 94% of the cases, for all types of violence. There was no self-harm in 72.91% of the cases of physical violence.

Table 2 shows the highest incidence of physical violence against females, in relation to sexual and physical and sexual violence, in the period of the last 10 years, with the highest incidence in 2020 (41.31%), with the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic period. Regarding sexual violence, the year 2019 had the highest incidence (25.09%) in the last 10 years. The year 2017 recorded the highest incidence (5.31%) of physical and sexual violence among the study period.

Table 2 – Incidence rates of physical, sexual and both violence in females, in Porto Nacional – Tocantins, from 2013 to 2022.

Year	Physical violence (n)	Sexual violence (n)	Physical and sexual violence (n)	Female population	Incidence of physical violence*	Incidence of sexual violence*	Incidence of physical and sexual violence*
2013	57	14	4	25666	22,21	5,45	1,56
2014	68	35	7	25839	26,32	13,55	2,71
2015	70	47	9	26018	26,90	18,06	3,46
2016	80	50	4	26191	30,54	19,09	1,53
2017	97	64	14	26357	36,80	24,28	5,31
2018	78	59	11	26528	29,40	22,24	4,15
2019	89	67	8	26699	33,33	25,09	3,00
2020	111	66	6	26869	41,31	24,56	2,23
2021	88	41	11	27039	32,55	15,16	4,07
2022	95	53	4	32460	29,27	16,33	1,23
Total	833	496	78	-	M: 30,86	M: 18,38	M: 2,92

n – Number of cases. * Incidence per 10,000 inhabitants. M – average./Source: The authors(2024).

Table 3 highlights that, with regard to physical violence, the highest rates were observed in the age group of 10 to 19 years, especially in 2017 (68.45%) and 2020 (65.88%), evidencing the greater vulnerability of this group. Regarding sexual violence, the age group from 10 to 19 years old also stood out, with the highest rate recorded in 2019 (104.68%), followed by 2020 (88.60%). Combined physical and sexual violence had its highest incidences in 2021, in the 10-19 age group (9.19%).

Table 3 – Incidence rates of physical, sexual and both violence in females, by age groups, in Porto Nacional – Tocantins, from 2013 to 2022.

Anus	0 to 4 years	5 to 9 years	10 to 19 years old	20 to 39 years old	40 to 59 years old	60 years and over
Physical violence						
2013	4,80	0,00	28,17	34,95	15,86	12,12
2014	0,00	9,09	47,02	38,02	13,49	7,83
2015	4,87	4,62	43,70	41,08	14,96	7,58
2016	19,75	28,25	37,91	49,61	10,91	3,67
2017	15,00	28,61	68,45	46,12	22,95	3,55
2018	20,00	24,15	39,26	43,82	17,13	3,44
2019	10,04	0,00	64,59	47,00	23,29	3,33
2020	35,37	9,78	65,88	54,66	33,96	6,43
2021	25,23	9,91	68,93	38,43	25,14	0,00
2022	3,96	11,37	52,02	43,68	21,66	5,10
Sexual violence						
2013	9,60	17,98	16,10	0,00	0,00	0,00
2014	4,85	40,89	36,79	7,83	0,00	0,00
2015	24,33	46,19	60,34	3,33	0,00	0,00
2016	24,69	18,83	75,82	5,51	0,00	0,00
2017	35,00	85,84	49,20	12,08	5,30	7,11
2018	55,00	57,97	61,07	8,76	0,00	0,00
2019	40,16	24,39	104,68	3,28	6,65	0,00

2020	40,42	78,20	88,60	3,28	0,00	0,00
2021	40,36	19,81	59,74	2,20	1,57	0,00
2022	43,53	37,91	58,02	2,85	0,00	0,00
Physical and sexual violence						
2013	4,80	0,00	6,04	0,00	0,00	0,00
2014	0,00	4,54	4,09	4,47	0,00	0,00
2015	4,87	4,62	10,40	2,22	0,00	0,00
2016	0,00	4,71	6,32	0,00	0,00	0,00
2017	0,00	19,07	12,83	3,29	0,00	3,55
2018	10,00	24,15	2,18	3,29	0,00	0,00
2019	0,00	0,00	11,14	1,09	3,33	0,00
2020	5,05	9,78	6,82	0,00	0,00	0,00
2021	20,18	9,91	9,19	1,10	0,00	0,00
2022	0,00	7,58	4,00	0,00	0,00	0,00

Source: The authors(2024).

Table 4 shows a significant increase in physical violence in the age groups of 10 to 19 years (APC of 7.09%) and 40 to 59 years (APC of 9.03%). In terms of sexual violence, there was a significant increase in the 0-4 age group (APC of 21.6%). Combined physical and sexual violence, however, did not show significant variations during the period.

Table 4: Trend analysis for the incidence rates of physical, sexual and both violence, in females, and by age groups, Porto Nacional - Tocantins 2013-2022.

Rate Type	APC	95% confidence interval	Trend Interpretation	p-value
Rate of physical violence	1136,23	-16,77 a 18269,95	Stationary	0,06
Age range up to 4 years old	22.75	-8.63 a 64.9	Stationary	0.148
Age group 5-9 years	12.16	-22.81 a 63	Stationary	0.499
Age group 10-19 years	7.09	3.88 a 10.39	crescent	0.001*
Age group 20-39 years	2.04	-1.39 a 5.59	Stationary	0.210
Age group 40-59 years	9.03	3.5 a 14.86	crescent	0.005*
Age range 60 years or +	-17.86	-23.9 a -11.35	Descending	0.000*
Rate of sexual violence	10,14	-4,37 a 26,86	Stationary	0,154
Age range up to 4 years old	21.6	5.29 a 40.43	crescent	0.014*
Age group 5-9 years	1.66	-8.3 a 12.71	Stationary	0.722
Age group 10-19 years	12.5	-1.65 a 28.68	Stationary	0.078
Age group 20-39 years	3.24	-19.2 a 31.91	Stationary	0.772
Age group 40-59 years	10.84	-5.52 a 30.05	Stationary	0.176
Age range 60 years or +	-1.71	-19.95 a 20.7	Stationary	0.851
Rate of sexual and physical violence	0,77	-8,23 a 10,66	Stationary	0,854
Age range up to 4 years old	14.67	-8.15 a 43.16	Stationary	0.193
Age group 5-9 years	16.19	-12.65 a 54.56	Stationary	0.260
Age group 10-19 years	1.17	-6.25 a 9.195	Stationary	0.733
Age group 20-39 years	-9.76	-25.1 a 8.71	Stationary	0.239
Age group 40-59 years	3.84	-9.65 a 19.37	Stationary	0.549
Age range 60 years or +	-1.26	-15.16 a 14.9	Stationary	0.851

* statistically significant./Source: The authors(2024).

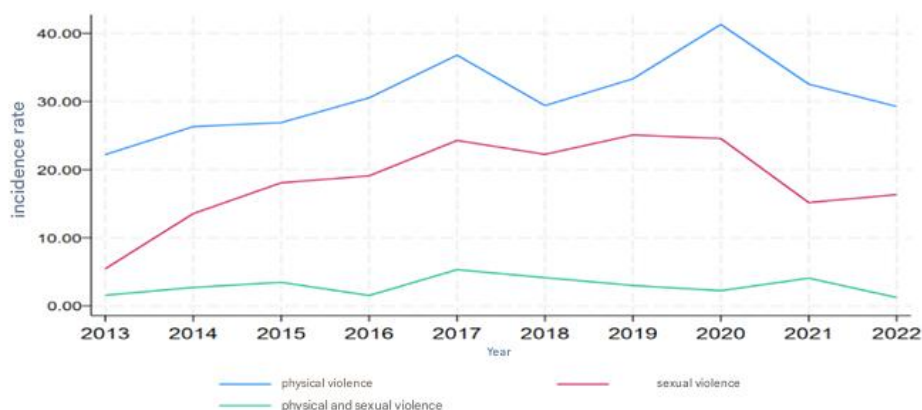
Table 5 reveals that physical violence had the greatest increase in the age group from 0 to 4 years, with an APC of 50.45%, and in the 10 to 19 age group, with an APC of 8.54%. Sexual violence also showed a significant increase in the 0-4 age group (APC of 33.44%), while combined physical and sexual violence did not show significant variations over the period.

Table 5: Trend analysis for the incidence rates of physical and sexual violence and both, in females, and by age groups, Porto Nacional - Tocantins, 2013-2020.

Rate Type	APC	95% confidence interval	Trend Interpretation	p-value
Rate of physical violence	7,08	3,64 a 10,64	crescent	0,002
Age range up to 4 years old	50,45	9 a 107,7	crescent	0,021
Age group 5-9 years	13,04	-40,72 a 115,58	Stationary	0,659
Age group 10-19 years	8,54	4,01 a 13,26	crescent	0,003
Age group 20-39 years	5,47	2,06 a 9	crescent	0,007
Age group 40-59 years	11,6	3,61 a 20,21	crescent	0,012
Age range 60 years or +	-11,27	-26,3 a 6,8	Stationary	0,165
Rate of sexual violence	19,5	4,85 a 36,26	crescent	0,016
Age range up to 4 years old	33,44	13,07 a 57,5	crescent	0,005
Age group 5-9 years	9,35	-5,18 a 26,12	Stationary	0,176
Age group 10-19 years	22,45	6,18 a 41,22	crescent	0,013
Age group 20-39 years	14,82	-18,56 a 61,9	Stationary	0,363
Age group 40-59 years	31,7	12,67 a 53,95	crescent	0,006
Age range 60 years or +	3,61	-26,06 a 45,21	Stationary	0,805
Rate of sexual and physical violence	6,02	-7,36 a 21,35	Stationary	0,330
Age range up to 4 years old	3,97	-19,54 a 34,38	Stationary	0,723
Age group 5-9 years	17,44	-28,41 a 92,7	Stationary	0,457
Age group 10-19 years	2,45	-9,82 to 16,41	Stationary	0,659
Age group 20-39 years	-5,44	-30,88 to 29,33	Stationary	0,677
Age group 40-59 years	16,76	1,09 to 34,88	crescent	0,039
Age range 60 years or +	2,65	-20 to 31,73	Stationary	0,805

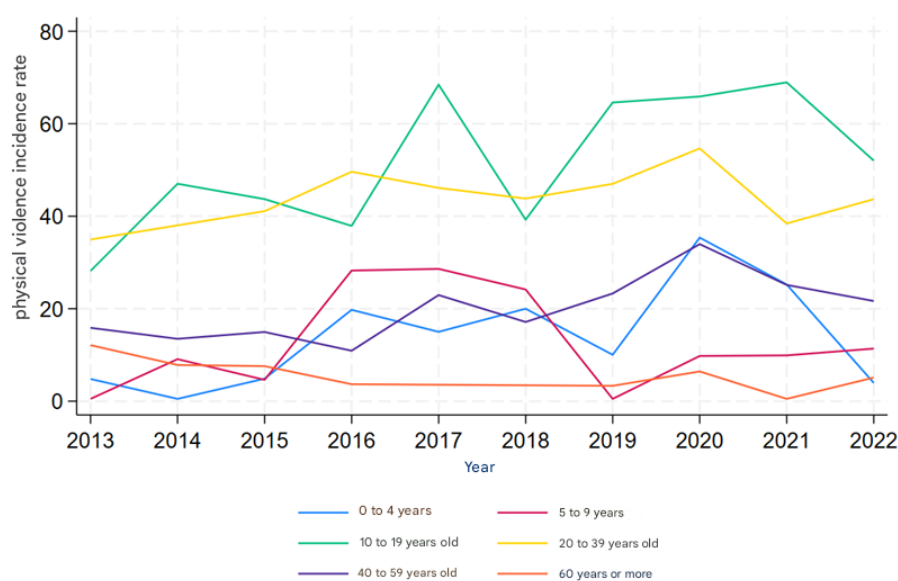
* statistically significant./Source: The authors(2024).

Figure 1 – Trend in the incidence rates of physical violence, sexual violence and physical/sexual violence and, women, Porto Nacional – TO, 2013-2022.



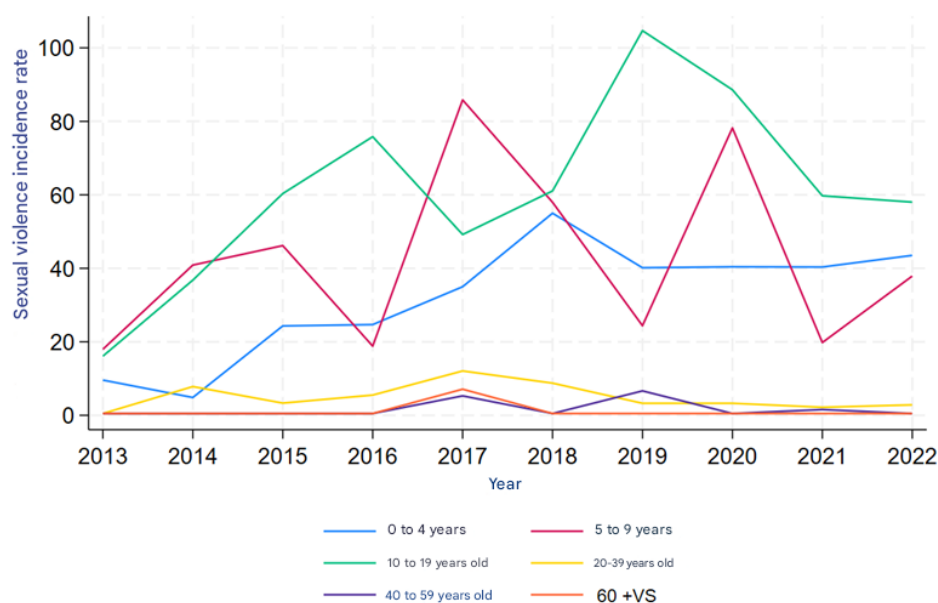
Source: The authors(2024).

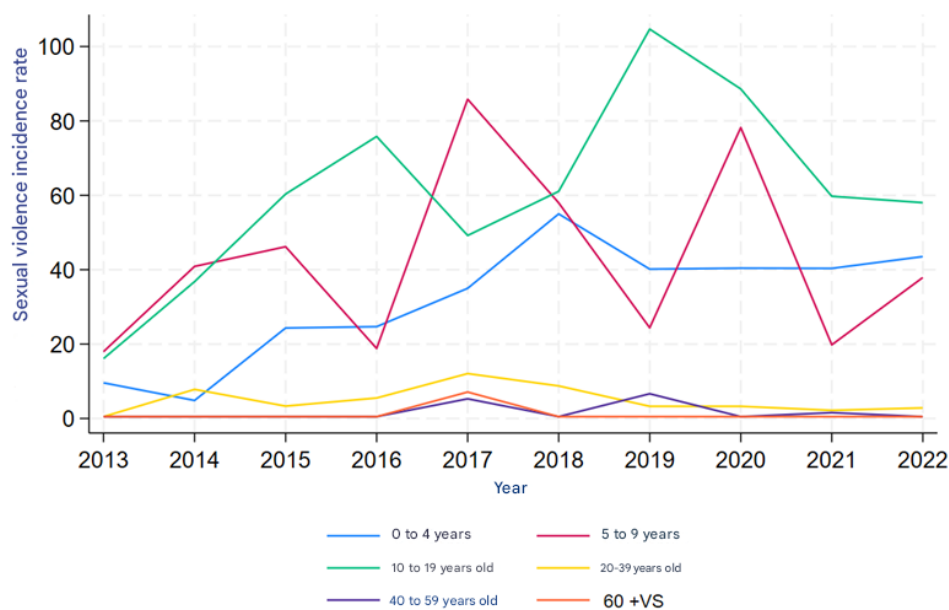
Figure 2 – Trend in the incidence rates of physical violence in women, by age groups, Porto Nacional – TO, 2013-2022.



Source: The authors(2024).

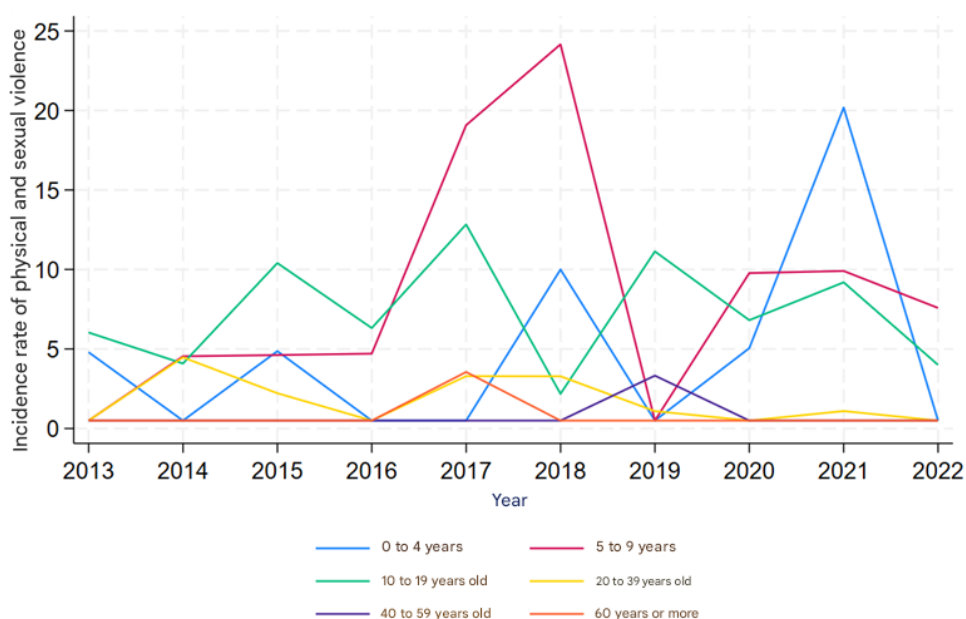
Figure 3 – Trend in the incidence rates of sexual violence in women, by age groups, Porto Nacional – TO, 2013-2022.





Source: The authors(2024).

Figure 4 – Trend in the incidence rates of physical and sexual violence in women, by age groups, Porto Nacional – TO, 2013-2022.



Source: The authors(2024).

Analyzing only the period from 2013 to 2020 (pre-pandemic), an increasing trend in the incidence rates of physical, sexual, physical, and sexual violence was observed, with physical violence being the most significant in quantitative terms.

DISCUSSION

Analysis of the data revealed that violence predominantly affects girls and young women, especially those aged 10 to 19, with physical violence concentrated among women aged 20 to 39. Women who identified themselves as brown were the most affected in all types of violence. The residence was identified as the main place of occurrence, followed by public roads. Cases of violence intensified in 2020, coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic. Sexual violence peaked in 2019, while physical violence showed a significant upward trend, particularly in younger age groups, such as 0-4 years, and adolescents. These findings highlight the vulnerability of certain age groups and the persistence of the problem in different contexts, suggesting the need for specific public policies for coping and prevention.

In a cross-sectional study, women of reproductive age who had already been married and reported having suffered sexual violence were included, and 33% lower chances of women between 25 and 35 years of age suffering sexual violence were identified, compared to women between 15 and 24 years of age. Similarly, the present study allowed us to identify an increasing trend in the incidences of sexual violence in young women, up to 4 years old and between 10 and 19 years old, being stationary in the 20 to 39 year age group (Mekuria Negussie, Yohannes et al., 2024).

In this study, it was found that physical violence (VF) was the most prevalent type, corresponding to 41.31% of cases in 2020, coinciding with the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Similarly, Belloli et al. (2024) also identified the predominance of physical violence (20.56%) in Pato Branco, Paraná, delimiting a predominance of the type of physical violence in both studies. This article evidenced a worrying trend of increase in physical violence committed by intimate partners, representing a significant percentage of the cases, demonstrating that the spouse was responsible for 33.47% of the aggressions. This fact is also reproduced in the incidence of violence against women in Porto Nacional, between 2013-2022, with the residence being the main place of occurrence, in 65% of cases, with intimate people being the main responsible for the aggressions.

The similarities between the regional contexts show that, although geographically different, the dynamics of physical violence against women follow similar patterns, reinforcing the need for specific interventions to combat this type of violence in domestic environments.

According to the present study, physical violence (VF) against women in Porto Nacional-TO accounted for 48% of notifications, with an increasing trend in recent years, especially in the 20-39 age group, which had an incidence rate of 4,131% in 2020. A similar pattern was identified by Costa Leite et al. (2023), who analyzed violence in Espírito Santo and found that 54.1% of the cases reported between 2011 and 2018 were of physical violence, predominating in the group aged 20 to 59 years, with 79.6% of the notifications. These findings reinforce the prevalence of FV among women of reproductive age, suggesting that vulnerability in this age group is related to the socioeconomic context and the relationship with intimate partners, as evidenced in both Porto Nacional and Espírito Santo.

According to the results of Sartori (2023), there is a growing trend in violence in the North region, especially physical violence. The results of the present study indicate a significant increase in cases of violence against children, including sexual violence and neglect. This growth follows a national trend that demonstrates that the North also has high rates of domestic and family violence, especially among the female population, especially among black women. The region is vulnerable to these types of violence, and this scenario may be related to socioeconomic factors and social inequality that impact local communities. These findings reinforce the need for more effective public policies to deal with violence in the region, especially physical violence against vulnerable groups.

As analyzed by Aragão (2022), there was a growing trend in notifications of self-harm, especially in females, between 2011 and 2018. The data indicate that the notification rates of these injuries among adolescents in the school environment increased significantly, with an annual percentage change (APC) of 66.0% for females. The present study confirms this upward trend, corroborating the authors' findings that adolescents are more vulnerable to this type of violence. In addition, the increase in notifications from 2016 onwards may be related to the inclusion of self-inflicted violence as a notifiable disease in Brazil, which improved the detection and quality of notifications.

Although López (2022) emphasized a growing trend of all types of violence in all age groups, the data from this study reveal a distinct reality in the local region analyzed. There is a predominantly stationary trend towards physical and sexual violence in various age groups over the period assessed. For example, the rate of physical violence in the 20-39 age group showed a stationary trend (APC 2.04, 95% CI -1.39 to 5.59, $p=0.210$), while the age group 60 years and older showed a significant downward trend (APC -17.86, 95% CI -

23.9 to -11.35, $p < 0.001$). These findings suggest that, contrary to what has been observed in other contexts, physical and sexual violence in our locality does not follow the generalized upward trend described by Salazar Lopes.

Although the study revealed some stationary trends for violence in certain age groups, this scenario is still a cause for concern, as it reflects structural problems. According to a study by García-Moreno et al. (2013), violence against women is a globally widespread phenomenon that is closely linked to cultural norms and gender inequalities. This study highlights that the implementation of prevention policies and the training of support systems are crucial for the effective reduction of these rates. Therefore, even if the data from the present study do not indicate significant growth trends in all categories, the maintenance of steady-state rates should be interpreted as a sign that more effective and comprehensive interventions are urgently needed to combat this violence in a sustained manner.

The study revealed a significant increase in cases of physical violence against women during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, the year in which the pandemic began, the highest incidence of physical violence was recorded, corresponding to 41.31% of the total cases reported in the analyzed period. These findings corroborate the research by Aolymat (2021), who investigated the impact of the pandemic on domestic violence against women in Jordan and found a significant increase in cases (20.5%).

This growth may be associated with factors such as stress and emotional overload resulting from the health crisis, which may have intensified conflicts and tensions within the family. This picture also confirms the findings of the study in Porto Nacional-TO, which showed the predominance of the residence as the place where violence occurred. Such a scenario reinforces the need for effective public policies to prevent and address violence against women, especially in times of social and economic crisis, when cases tend to rise.

CONCLUSION

The data presented in the study reveal a significant prevalence of physical and sexual violence against women in the municipality of Porto Nacional-TO between 2013 and 2022, with emphasis on the increase in cases during the COVID-19 pandemic. The age group most vulnerable to physical violence was 20 to 39 years old, while sexual violence was more prevalent among young people aged 10 to 19 years. Women who identified themselves as brown were also the most affected by all types of violence.

Although the rates of physical violence have shown an upward trend, especially among the younger age groups, sexual violence has remained stationary in some age groups, which is alarming, since ideally such rates should show a decreasing trend. These findings reinforce the importance of more effective public policies to prevent and combat violence against women, especially in domestic environments, which proved to be the main place of occurrence of cases.

The study contributes to the construction of scientific bases that can support the formulation of public health strategies aimed at protecting women and preventing gender-based violence, highlighting the urgent need to reinforce notifications and interventions in periods of crisis, such as the pandemic. The permanence or increase in the rates of physical and sexual violence reinforces the urgency of more effective actions, focusing on the most vulnerable populations, such as young people, browns and those with low education.

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