









Brazilian Government Strategies to Protect Women

Maria Gabriela Cardoso Lira¹  · Maria Cecília Bonfim dos Santos¹  ·
Marli Braga Cruz¹  · Elias Cosme de Lacerda Filho¹  ·
Carlos Alberto Costa de Souza¹  · Felipe José Lima Paiva¹  ·
João Aristides Tomaz de Almeida² 

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Abstract

In 2018, 22,000,000 Brazilian women experienced some type of violence (either physical or psychological), and 42% of these episodes occurred in the domestic environment. Therefore, government strategies have been developed to solve this problem. This study aimed to (a) carry out a survey of Brazilian government strategies for the protection of women after the creation of the Maria da Penha Law (Law No. 11.340, 2006) and (b) discuss these strategies from the concept of cultural design. Sixteen laws, five decrees, and two ordinances were found and analyzed. In a general way, the analysis suggests that they are not effective cultural plans because most do not show long-term results, and some of the laws that typify crimes and those that relate to the aggressor's behavior do not specify the target behaviors, so there is no explicit contingency. Despite this, such strategies are relevant, as they end up providing the protective context for women from a social, legal, and political point of view. Finally, it is expected that the discussions raised in the present work can help prepare interventions that favor socially beneficial cultural practices.

Keywords Government strategies · Protection of women · Behavior analysis · Cultural design

Violence against women is defined as any gender-based action or omission that causes death, injury, or physical, sexual, or psychological suffering and moral or patrimonial damage to the victim. It can occur in domestic and public environments and within any emotional relationship (Law No. 11.340, 2006). In 2019, the National Survey on Domestic and Family Violence Against Women conducted by the Instituto de Pesquisa DataSenado indicated that 27% of Brazilian women suffered some type of violence, and, in that year,

✉ Maria Gabriela Cardoso Lira
m.gabriela.lira@gmail.com

¹ Curso de Psicologia, Universidade Federal do Ceará, Fortaleza, Brazil

² Programa de Pós-Graduação em Teoria e Pesquisa do Comportamento, Universidade Federal do Pará, Belém, Brazil

according to the monitoring panel of the National Judicial Policy to Combat Violence Against Women (2019), 563,700 new cases of domestic violence were recorded.

Regarding the presented data, investigations on variables related to the phenomenon of violence against women become relevant. Saffioti (2004) stated that gender violence, especially in the domestic sphere, does not occur randomly, but rather derives from a social organization that privileges males—the so-called patriarchy. Delphy (2009) argued that patriarchy designates a social formation in which men are the holders of power in society, the concept being a synonym for male domination and oppression of women. Saffioti (2001) stated that the patriarchal order of gender is the basis of not only gender violence but also several other inequalities between men and women. This argument is endorsed by Alemany (2009) when she pointed out that violent practices are considered an expression of the relationship between male power and sexuality, constituting one of the symbols of male virility and being, therefore, socially legitimized, even though women are potential victims of this violence.

To understand social phenomena such as patriarchy and violence against women, the behavior analysis of culture proposes the study of cultural phenomena (Fernandes et al., 2017). Fernandes et al. (2017) described cultural practices as the behavioral patterns of subjects behaving in groups that are modeled and maintained by the defining social contingencies of a given culture. Therefore, the study of social phenomena such as violence against women focuses on the discussion of how these cultural practices are maintained within society.

When analyzing patriarchal culture and unequal relationships between genders, Nicolodi and Arantes (2019) discussed the disparity in access to reinforcers between men and women. According to these authors, the differential reinforcement of responses between men and women should be seen as a determinant in the maintenance of cultural practices of gender. Behaviors that are learned and maintained in different ways, depending on the gender of individuals, lead to different repertoires, stimulus control, and reinforcement. Nicolodi (2020) added that the consequence of this imbalance is the development of restricted behavioral repertoires on the part of women, which gives them fewer choices and, consequently, leaves them more vulnerable to male domination. Thereafter, Nicolodi and Arantes named the social contingencies that maintain gender inequality as patriarchal contingencies, which are organized to guarantee the perpetuation of cultural practices and behavior patterns that consolidate male supremacy and female oppression and exploration. Based on the definition of patriarchy as a group of social contingencies, it is possible, therefore, to also include rules, behaviors, and cultural practices that are part of these contingencies and favor the maintenance of the depicted problem.

To combat violence against women, specific legislation has been developed. In Brazil, Law No. 11.340 (2006), popularly known as the Maria da Penha Law, has become a landmark in the struggle for rights and the punishment of domestic violence in Brazil. The law was named in honor of a biochemist in the city of Fortaleza who reported Brazil to the Organization of American States due to the absence of legislation that would effectively punish her aggressor. Until the early 2000s, there was no specific protection in Brazilian legislation for women who are victims of domestic violence. Before the Maria da Penha Law, cases of domestic violence were tried by Law No. 9.099 (1995), which resulted in up to 1-year prison sentences, which could also be converted into community service and donation of basic food items to poor families (Calazans & Cortes, 2011; Meneghel et al., 2013). Calazans and Cortes (2011) pointed to this legislation gap as the product of the small

female representation in the National Congress and the executive branch's lack of interest in addressing the issue of violence against women as a priority.

It should be noted that the creation of specific legislation against gender-based violence was the result of mobilizations led by women, with the feminist movement influencing the drafting and approval of the Maria da Penha Law. This law is based on rules and directives legitimized in the Federal Constitution, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women, and the Inter-American Convention to Punish and Eradicate Violence Against Women (Meneghel et al., 2013). In this context, the law establishes mechanisms to combat violence against women by proposing links between the Judiciary, the Public Ministry, and the Public Defender's Office and the areas of public security, social assistance, health, education, work, and housing to prevent and protect victims, as well as to ensure punishment for aggressive behaviors.

Legislation is described in behavior analysis as the codification of government control procedures (Skinner, 1953) that work as mechanisms of social control, using reinforcement or punishment and aiming to promote social order (Cabral & Todorov, 2016). The behavior analysis of culture has been dedicated to the study of laws and public policies, such as laws on protection, civil law (Cabral & Todorov, 2016; Kill, 2016), and women's protection (Casalecchi et al., 2020). Analytical-behavioral investigations of legislation and public policies represent advances in the area, especially to encourage discussions about interventions for cultural change. Thereby, concerning the modification of cultural contingencies, Valderlon and Elias (2019) brought from Skinner (1953, 1961, 1971) the concept of cultural design, which is described as a planned change in the environment that provides context for the improvement or creation of cultural practices that are selected and maintained by operant or cultural consequences.

Such victim-protection laws are necessary to promote cultural changes that may strengthen certain practices and encourage the extinction or punishment of others. Priority is given to changes that may increase the quality of life of women. Here, quality of life is understood as the subject's access to a wide range of reinforcers, with little contact with aversive contingencies. This could expand women's access to new reinforcers and place them in a more socially secure and egalitarian context, given that restricted and unequal behavioral repertoires are related to this domination practice of patriarchy, as stated by Nicolodi and Arantes (2019).

Given the information presented thus far, it is relevant to understand how Brazilian legislation relates to changes in social contingencies involved in the phenomenon of violence against women. In addition, discussing possible contributions of the behavioral analysis of culture to understand and intervene in the face of such phenomena is equally important. Therefore, our work aims to (a) carry out a survey of Brazilian laws and public policies for the protection of women that were enacted after the creation of the Maria da Penha Law and (b) analyze such strategies regarding their contents based on the concept of cultural design (Valderlon & Elias, 2019).

Method

In this work, 16 laws, 2 ordinances, and 5 decrees, which are related to the issue of violence against women and were enacted after the Maria da Penha Law, were used as the object of study. The analyzed legislation and its respective objectives are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1 Brazilian government strategies to protect women

Law, decree, or ordinance	Goal
Law No. 12.015 of August 7, 2009	To typify and provide for crimes against sexual dignity
Law No. 12.845 of August 1, 2013	To provide for mandatory and comprehensive care for people in situations of sexual violence
Law No. 13.104 of March 9, 2015	To predict femicide as a qualifying circumstance for the crime of murder and include femicide in the list of heinous crimes
Law No. 13.505 of November 8, 2017	To provide for the right of women in situations of domestic and family violence to have uninterrupted, specialized police and expert care, preferably provided by a female employee
Law No. 13.641 of April 3, 2018	To typify the crime of noncompliance with emergency protective measures
Law No. 13.642 of April 3, 2018	To add attribution to the Federal Police regarding the investigation of crimes committed through the worldwide network of computers that disseminate misogynistic content, defined as that which spreads hatred or aversion to women
Law No. 13.718 of September 24, 2018	To typify the crimes of sexual harassment and disclosure of rape scene, to make public the nature crimes against sexual freedom and sexual crimes against the vulnerable, to establish the causes of an increased penalty for these crimes, and to define as causes of the increased penalty the collective rape and corrective rape
Law No. 13.772 of December 19, 2018	To recognize that the violation of the intimacy of women constitutes domestic and family violence and to criminalize the unauthorized recording of content with a nude scene or sexual or libidinous act of an intimate and private nature
Law No. 13.827 of May 13, 2019	To authorize, in the specified cases, the application of emergency protective measures, by the judicial or police authority, to women in situations of domestic and family violence, or to their dependents, and to register the emergency protective measure in a database maintained by the National Council of Justice
Law No. 13.836 of June 4, 2019	To make information about the condition as a person with disabilities of a woman who is the victim of domestic or family aggression mandatory
Law No. 13.871 of September 17, 2019	To hold the aggressor responsible for the costs related to health services provided by the Unified Health Service to victims of domestic violence and the safety measures used by them
Law No. 13.880 of October 3, 2019	To check whether the aggressor has a record of firearm possession and, in the case of possession, add this information to the record, as well as notify the institution responsible for granting the registration or issuance of the firearm of this issue, under Law No. 10.826, of December 22, 2003 (Statute of Disarmament)
Law No. 13.882 of October 8, 2019	To ensure that the dependents of women who are victims of domestic and family violence are enrolled in a basic education institution closer to home
Law No. 13.894 of October 29, 2019	To provide for legal aid, whenever appropriate, for filing actions for legal separation, divorce, annulment of marriage, or dissolution of a stable union before the relevant court
Law No. 13.931 of December 10, 2019	To compel health professionals to record evidence of violence in the patient's medical records and report it to the police within 24 hr
Law No. 13.984 of April 3, 2020	To require the aggressor's attendance at education/rehabilitation centers and psychosocial follow-up as an urgent protective measure

Table 1 (continued)

Law, decree, or ordinance	Goal
Decree No. 7.393 of December 15, 2010	To regulate the Women's Service Center – Call 180, responsible for helping women in situations of violence throughout the country, free of charge
Decree No. 7.958 of March 13, 2013	To establish guidelines for the care of victims of sexual violence by public security professionals in the service network of the Unified Health System
Decree No. 8.086 of August 30, 2013	To establish the Safe and Protected Woman Program
Decree No. 9.586 of November 27, 2018	To establish the National Policy System for Women and the National Program to Combat Domestic Violence
Decree No. 10.112 of November 12, 2019	To establish the Safe and Protected Women Program and to integrate and expand existing public services for women in situations of violence through the articulation of specialized care in the fields of health, justice, social assistance networks, and the promotion of financial autonomy
Ordinance No. 085 of August 10, 2010	To establish the Guidelines for Combating Violence Against Women of the Countryside and the Forest within the scope of the II National Policy Program for Women and the National Pact to Combat Violence Against Women, endorsed by the National Forum for Combating Violence Against Women in the Countryside and the Forest
Ordinance No. 485 of April 1, 2014	To redefine the role of the Service of Care for People in Situations of Sexual Violence within the scope of the Unified Health System

First, it is important to conceptualize laws, decrees, and ordinances. Laws are a set of legal norms created through the processes of the normative act and established by the competent authorities for that purpose. Decrees are orders issued by a superior authority or state agency that determine the fulfillment of a resolution. Ordinances are characterized as documents of the administrative act of any public authority that contain guidelines on the application of laws or regulations, recommendations of a general nature, rules for the execution of services, and so forth (Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, *n.d.*, Glossary).

The legislation herein discussed was accessed through Google using the keywords “legislation on violence against women in Brazil,” and the website www.compromissoeatitude.org.br was obtained as a reference. It is important to note that these terms were chosen following the Maria da Penha Law to make the search as accurate as possible. In addition, the website *Compromisso e Atitude* (Commitment and Attitude) was chosen because it is the result of a collaboration between the Federal Government, the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Federal Senate, the Chamber of Deputies, Public Defense, and the Judiciary. It is characterized as a citizenship action that seeks commitment concerning the Maria da Penha Law to change the behaviors that constitute violence against women and to hold aggressors responsible (Qualitá Comunicação, *n.d.*, “Legislation About Violence” section). For that, the legislation to protect Brazilian women was consulted, and laws, ordinances, and decrees to be analyzed were accessed in full through the website Planalto (<http://www.planalto.gov.br/>).

Analysis Categories

The governmental strategies contained in Table 1 were analyzed based on the concept of cultural design as proposed by Valderlon and Elias (2019). These

authors specified that cultural design should involve the selection of cultural practices for their short-term effects, ensuring the long-term survival of the culture, preferably upholding quality of life. Valderlon and Elias noted that the following topics should be included in cultural design: (a) prior environmental changes, (b) cultural practices to be selected, (c) consequences that maintain these cultural practices in the short term, and (d) long-term results from these cultural practices.

Results

We attempted to divide the legislation found according to the aforementioned stages Fig. 1

Prior Environmental Changes

Based on what was discussed in the concept of cultural design (Valderlon & Elias, 2019), it becomes clear that the laws herein describe which responses of the victim and aggressor will be reinforced or punished. The creation and implementation of these laws, therefore, consist of a modification of the previous contingencies as planned by the State in response to the demands of the society. Among the collected data, we found that the previous modifications promoted by the legislation are mainly due to the construction or expansion of specialized services directed at women in situations of violence (Decree No. 7.393, 2010; Decree No. 8.086, 2013; Decree No. 9.586, 2018; Decree No. 10.112, 2019; Ordinance No. 085, 2010) by way of guidelines established to support how these women are cared for in either the public or private sphere (Decree No. 7.958, 2013; Law No. 12.845, 2013; Law No. 13.505, 2017; Law No. 13.931, 2019; Ordinance No. 485, 2014) or by way of the amendments made to the Brazilian Penal Code to expand the list of behaviors considered inappropriate and, therefore, criminalized (Law No. 12.015, 2009; Law No. 13.104, 2015; Law No. 13.641, 2018; Law No. 13.642, 2018; Law No. 13.718, 2018; Law No. 13.772, 2018).

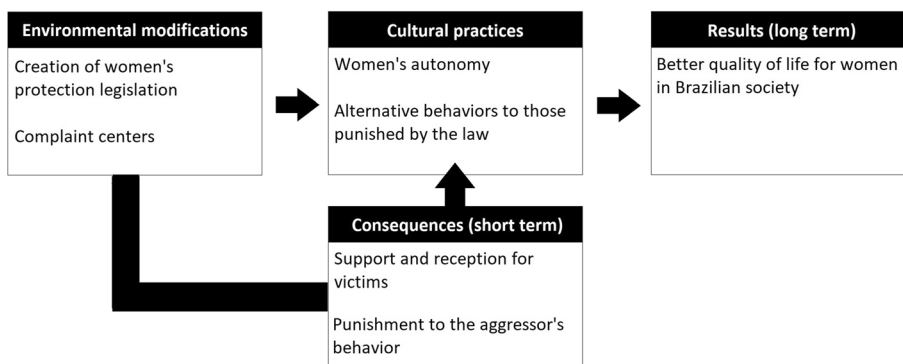


Fig. 1 Cultural design in Brazilian strategies to protect women. *Note.* Adapted from Valderlon and Elias (2019)

Cultural Practices to Be Selected

It is also necessary to emphasize the role of demarcating the cultural practices to be selected as a way of making them more viable and feasible. Valderlon and Elias (2019) derived from Mattaini (1993) that environmental changes must originate contingencies that reinforce the demarcated cultural practices to be selected and also act to punish or extinguish nontarget practices, manipulating their antecedents and consequences.

From this, it was found that a good portion of the legislation contains some behaviors here called “female autonomy responses” as the cultural practices to be selected. These behaviors concern countercontrol responses that remove or reduce women’s contact with aversive contingencies. In addition, such responses can also be taken as a context for expanding behavioral repertoires that were previously restricted due to the excessive control by others over the behavior of women (Nicolodi & Arantes, 2019).

In topographical terms, it is possible to break down the aforementioned category into behaviors such as seeking support services for women in situations of violence (in the private and public spheres) and denouncing the aggressor through specialized devices made available by the State. The first case is covered by Ordinance Nos. 085 (2010) and 485 (2014); Decree Nos. 7.393 (2010), 7.958 (2013), 8.086 (2013), 9.586 (2018), and 10.112 (2019); and Law Nos. 12.845 (2013) and 13.931 (2019). All this legislation has established or regulated services directed to women in situations of violence, such as the Women’s Service Center – Call 180 (Decree No. 7.393, 2010) and the Unified Health System service network in cases of sexual violence (Decree No. 7.958, 2013; Law No. 12.845, 2013; Ordinance No. 485, 2014). In addition, there are laws specifically aimed at expanding the guidelines for combating violence against women in different contexts, such as the countryside and forest areas (Ordinance No. 085, 2010), and also expanding the support network for those dependent on the victim (Law No. 13.827, 2019; Law No. 13.882, 2019).

Regarding the response to denounce the aggressor as a cultural practice to be selected, there are Law Nos. 12.015 (2009), 13.104 (2015), 13.505 (2017), 13.641 (2018), 13.642 (2018), 13.718 (2018), 13.772 (2018), 13.836 (2019), and 13.894 (2019). In this context, these laws promote changes in contingencies that involve both the behavior of the victim and the violent behavior of the aggressor based on changes in the Penal Code or on some specificities of the antecedent and consequent stimulus of the reporting response, which contributes to the increase in its probability of occurrence. As an example of changes in the Penal Code, it is possible to cite Law No. 13.104 (2015), which provides for femicide to be a qualifying circumstance for the crime of homicide and includes femicide in the list of heinous crimes, and Law No. 13.772, which recognizes the violation of women’s privacy as domestic and family violence. Concerning the changes in the antecedent and consequent stimulus response, examples are Law No. 13.836 (2019), which makes reporting the condition of a person with a disability mandatory, resulting, according to Amado (2019), in a possible increase in the penalty for the aggressor’s behaviors, and Law No.

13.894 (2019), which seeks to dissolve the ties, such as marriage, with the aggressor once a complaint is made.

Finally, some laws describe alternative behaviors to the violent behaviors described in the Maria da Penha Law (Law No. 13.871, 2019) and the attendance of the aggressor in health and rehabilitation centers, such as the requirement for psychosocial monitoring (Law No. 13.984, 2020), as the cultural practices to be selected. It is important to note that, whereas Law Nos. 13.871 (2019) and 13.880 (2019) only point out punishable behaviors, the recently enacted Law No. 13.984 (2020) provides a context for learning socially appropriate behaviors such as recovery and re-education programs and psychosocial monitoring that can help the aggressor build balanced relationships in which reinforcers are equally distributed between both parties (Nicolodi & Arantes, 2019).

Consequences That Maintain These Cultural Practices in the Short Term

It is essential to identify the operants that make up cultural practices, thus allowing the possible individual consequences that are responsible for the maintenance or extinction of these behaviors in individuals to be delimited, as recommended by Valderlon and Elias (2019). We observed some laws that focus on consequences that are related to the full and humanized reception by health and safety services of the victim, such as Decree No. 7.958 (2013), Ordinance No. 485 (2014), and Law Nos. 12.845 (2013), 13.505 (2017), and 13.931 (2019), where the first three concern victims of sexual violence and the last two concern domestic and family violence. Ordinance No. 085 (2010); Decree Nos. 7.393 (2010), 8.086 (2013), 9.586 (2018), and 10.112 (2019); and Law No. 13.642 (2018) have short-term consequences that aim to select and maintain women's autonomous behaviors, which are understood as, for example, behaviors that remove women from the aggressive environment and ensure their access to health and legal services, social assistance networks, and programs that promote financial independence through guidance and adequate social support. They also aim to increase specialized teams to investigate crimes that demand differentiated attention, such as the virtual dissemination of misogynistic content (Law No. 13.642, 2018).

Some laws address the offender's withdrawal from the victim's life as a short-term consequence, such as Law Nos. 12.015 (2009), 13.104 (2015), 13.641 (2018), 13.718 (2018), 13.772 (2018), 13.827 (2019), and 13.836 (2019). Part of these laws adds aversive consequences to the aggressor's behaviors depending on the length of imprisonment specified by each one. Additionally, some legislation adds other consequences to the aggressor's behaviors besides the restriction of freedom, such as Law Nos. 13.871 (2019) and 13.880 (2019). In the case of Law No. 13.871 (2019), the added aversive stimulus is a fine for the costs of health and safety services used by the victim, whereas Law No. 13.880 removes a reinforcing stimulus from the environment (i.e., the weapon in the possession of the aggressor; Law No. 13.880, 2019). Despite these laws, the recently enacted Law No. 13.984 (2020) provides reinforcing consequences for the aggressor's behaviors by specifying the reduction of contact with aversive stimuli that are present in his environment if he emits the behaviors deemed appropriate by law. Thus, the described aversive stimulus would be the duration of the judicial

sentence, and appropriate behaviors would be attendance at centers of rehabilitation and psychosocial care (Law No. 13.984, 2020).

Long-Term Results of Cultural Practices

Following the parameters for cultural design proposed by Valderlon and Elias (2019), in addition to the provision of short-term consequences for the selection of cultural practices, it is necessary to consider the possible results of these practices in the long term. In this context, it is expected that some effects will be obtained from the implementation of the legislation mentioned herein. We can see (a) the health care and public safety services to be a reference to specialized care for victims of violence (Decree No. 7.393, 2010; Decree No. 7.958, 2013; Decree No. 8.086, 2013; Decree No. 9.586, 2018; Decree No. 10.112, 2019; Law No. 12.845, 2013; Law No. 13.505, 2017); (b) a decrease in the number of cases of domestic violence and an increase in the number of complaints (Law No. 13.827, 2019; Law No. 13.882, 2019; Law No. 13.894, 2019; Law No. 13.931, 2019); (c) the judgment of more cases included in the list of crimes related to violence against women and a reduction in the number of such crimes (Law No. 12.015, 2009; Law No. 13.104, 2015; Law No. 13.641, 2018; Law No. 13.642, 2018; Law No. 13.718, 2018; Law No. 13.772, 2018; Law No. 13.871, 2019; Law No. 13.880, 2019); and (d) the reeducation and rehabilitation of aggressors who are in environments that facilitate the development of socially skilled behavioral repertoires, thus decreasing the probability of the recurrence of inappropriate behavior according to the law (Law No. 13.984, 2020).

After analyzing all the laws and policies proposed by the Brazilian State that are discussed herein, we note that it is interesting and important to discuss the possible effects that these strategies have had on Brazilian culture. After all, the effects that were once considered the expected results of the long term are now the reality of today's society.

Discussion

Given the laws descriptions made so far, it is possible to affirm that the aforementioned laws are not cultural plans strategies because most do not describe the expected results in the long term, as specified in Valderlon and Elias (2019). Also, it is important to note that regarding the laws that typify crimes and those that relate to the aggressor's behavior, there is no specification of the target behaviors, so there is no explicit contingency.

Aside from this, we can analyze the possible effects of this design based on statistics on violence against women in Brazil since the implementation of the Maria da Penha Law. The importance of contextualizing these cultural impacts in the Brazilian scenario is emphasized, considering the country has continental proportions and regional specificities concerning tackling violence against women and the way it is constituted (Pasinato, 2016). Data from Instituto Igarapé's (2018) Evidence on Violence and Alternatives for Women and Girls show that, in 2018, the state of Amapá, in the northern region of the country, had the highest number of cases of physical violence

against women (724 per 100,000 women), whereas Santa Maria, in the southern region of Brazil, was the city with the highest number of cases of violence against women (776.1 per 100,000 women). The survey obtained data from states and municipalities with a population greater than 250,000. In addition, an article published by the Gender and Number website (da Silva, 2017), with data obtained from DataSus, shows that the homicide rate of Black women grew by 14% in the last decade. It is also emphasized by Romio (2013) that Black women are the most affected across all types of violence against women in Brazil.

Additionally, data published by the Instituto de Pesquisa DataSenado (2019) show that between 2005 and 2019, the percentage of women who declared they had suffered violence increased from 17% to 27%. This percentage increased markedly between 2015 and 2017, from 18% to 29%, and subsequently decreased to 27% in 2019. In 2015, according to Barufaldi et al. (2017), violence against women constituted 67.1% of all claims of violence. From 2011 to 2015, there was a sudden increase in violence against this population, from 75,033 to 162,575 cases.

A crucial factor to understand these different contexts of violence in Brazil is the way by which data on violence against women are obtained and accounted for. According to the Instituto DataSenado (2019), the scarcity of information makes it difficult to overcome the problem and creates other challenges, such as the underreporting of cases of violence considered “less serious,” incomplete and nonstandardized records, and outdated data sources. In other words, these guidelines must be considered both when planning public policies and when executing them, mainly by the agents responsible for applying and developing legislation.

Thus, although the number of claims of violence has grown over the years, it is not possible to say whether these changes are an effect of the possible ineffectiveness of laws and public policies for the protection of women by the State. It is important to emphasize that some laws have been enacted recently (in 2018, 2019, and 2020). This fact needs to be considered to assess the possible impacts on Brazilian culture concerning violence against women. Casalecchi et al. (2020) also raised this discussion when they considered that the creation of the Maria da Penha Law and its definitions of what constitutes violence against women, especially in terms of the private scope present in domestic violence, may be the cause of the increase in claims. That is, in addition to the fact that there are no official records of cases of violence before the law, there was no clear definition of what violence against women was and no policies aimed at tackling this phenomenon.

Pasinato (2016) highlighted that Brazil has made progress in spreading information on types of violence. An example is the modification of the legislation regarding sentences that were meted out by judicial bodies that tolerated and were lenient with cases understood as passionate crimes, based on the “defending the honor” of the man (Corrêa, 1981/1983, as quoted in Pasinato, 2016, p. 15). It is also necessary to emphasize society’s increased awareness of these cases of violence and the increase in complaints made by women who have suffered such crimes (Pasinato, 2016).

Pasinato (2016) also stressed the importance of expanding policies that aim to protect women outside large urban centers, including those aimed at improving the analysis and organization of the data on damages arising from complaints and increasing actions aimed at curbing such crimes. In addition, Pasinato pointed out the need to

understand the perspective of gender within these acts and to modify the performance of the criminal legal system marked by gender stereotypes and discrimination against women. Such facts, according to this author, lead to the feeling of impunity and disbelief in justice.

The strategies addressed herein both rearrange contingencies to promote victims' rights and have possibly aversive consequences for aggressive behaviors. Thus, for example, some laws provide short-term consequences for women's autonomous behaviors, mainly through social, legal, psychosocial, and financial support for women who are victims of violence, a fact that facilitates their withdrawal from the aggressive environment while diminishing the aggressor's control over the victim. Decree No. 10.112 (2019) is an example of this, as it establishes the Safe and Protected Woman Program, which provides conditions, through concrete actions, to expand and integrate public services for the protection of women so that the victim has psychosocial, legal, and financial support. Furthermore, although all laws use coercion to a degree, especially those regarding consequences for an aggressor's behavior in terms of contingencies of punishment and negative reinforcement (Catania, 1999), the literature has pointed out that aversive control can also be used in certain contexts to provide individual changes that impact and result in cultural changes, as expressed in Guimarães et al. (2019). In a discussion about the ethical dimension of the use of coercion in terms of legislation, some authors (Critchfield, 2014; Sidman, 1989) have recognized the need to create these laws and comply with them to maintain civilized interactions among people with conflicting interests, and that health and safety regulations are necessary protections against those who would carelessly put others at risk.

However, although the need to use a certain degree of aversive control over behaviors of violence against women has been justified by the literature cited previously, it is also necessary to consider interventions that promote the learning and maintenance of alternative behaviors that are considered beneficial for the expansion of both the aggressor's socially adequate behavior and his environment. These may include, for example, modeling assertive repertoires and teaching mechanisms of emotional self-regulation through psycho-educational strategies. At this point, Law No. 13.984 (2020) stands out because it selects as a cultural practice the frequency of attendance at rehabilitation and psychosocial care centers, which are services where interventions are provided by trained professionals and involve practices whose effectiveness is empirically proven. Although we found laws that select the maintenance of nonviolent behavior through the possible withdrawal of aversive stimuli, we emphasize that only the Law No. 13.984 offers aggressors a structured learning context.

Furthermore, it is important to recognize the diversity of groups, values, and interests that can coexist in the same culture. This argument is defended by Fernandes (2015), who stated that

the prescription of survival of cultures in the wide angle proved to be fragile and difficult to instrumentalize, as it implies divergences and competition between different social and verbal environments, with contradictory and incompatible cultural structures and practices. The result of these conflicts is clear in daily life, as exemplified by prejudices and discrimination based on gender, race, class, sexual orientation, language and so on. (pp. 8–9)

The explicit and defended cultural design in the present work aims to create and maintain contingencies of protection for women. This goes against the patriarchal contingencies explained by Nicolodi and Arantes (2019), which consist of values and interests contrary to those sought herein. Skinner (1971) stated that the survival of culture concerns the survival of its members, which is only possible based on practices that induce individuals to work not for their own sake, but for the collective good. Thus, it appears that elements of a culture that promote the supremacy of one group through the oppression of another, restrict repertoires, and have aversive consequences that are contingent on the gender of an individual are not beneficial for the survival of its members and, therefore, the survival of the culture itself.

In this context, even though the presented laws describe contingencies aimed, at first, at individual changes, in the long run, they can contribute to the weakening of rules, behaviors, and cultural practices that constitute the patriarchal culture. This weakening is caused by both punishing offenders and offering policies for public support and assistance to women who are victims of violence. However, Guerin and Ortolan (2017) also pointed out the importance of cultural design that considers not only behaviors and practices regarded as violent but also those that fall into the category of sexist behaviors in general, mainly because these are emitted more discreetly in society, which makes these behaviors more difficult to discriminate.

Conclusion

This work aimed to carry out a survey of Brazilian governmental strategies for the protection of women (created after the Maria da Penha Law) and to analyze them using the concept of cultural design as described by Valderlon and Elias (2019). Such strategies are relevant as they end up providing the protective context for women, from a social, legal, and political point of view. As argued by Guerin and Ortolan (2017), it is necessary to adequately plan cultural contingencies to modify behaviors (e.g., sexist behaviors) on a large scale even though such strategies still require improvements (e.g., the implementation of campaigns to prevent violent behavior against women and the immediate execution of the actions provided for by law shortly after their issuance, in addition to strategies that involve aversive control, justified to promote the protection of victims in the short term). Casalecchi et al. (2020) also alluded to the limitations of Brazilian legislation to protect women when they stated that the legislation does not establish preventive measures (only in the long term) and is not clear about the role of the family and society in combating situations of violence.

The described strategies were mostly based on providing aversive consequences for the aggressor's behaviors, which justifies the need to discuss the use of aversive control to promote beneficial practices in the group (Critchfield, 2014; Guimarães et al., 2019), which is, in this case, understood as the female population. In this sense, the fight for rights must be constant in response to the demands of society.

It is worth mentioning that herein we carried out an analysis from a more general perspective when considering various strategies, unlike the study by Casalecchi et al. (2020), which specifically analyzed the Maria da Penha Law. We highlight that this work does not aim to exhaust the possibilities of discussions about the strategies that are implemented by Brazil. After all, violence against women is a highly complex

phenomenon (Alemany, 2009; Nicolodi, 2020; Nicolodi & Arantes, 2019; Saffioti, 2004), especially in a country with different social characteristics such as Brazil (Pasinato, 2016), as discussed by Maciel et al. (2019) when they addressed the increase in domestic violence in Brazil during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Therefore, it is necessary to recognize the limitations of the present method, as it does not describe, for example, how consequences are distributed across the different forms of violence presented in daily life. It is worth highlighting the importance of behavior analysis for the creation of public policies and effective legislation, as, from the delimitation of a process of cultural design, it is possible to formulate each stage according to the demands to be addressed. This includes establishing an antecedent modification, delimiting which cultural practice will be strengthened, providing short-term consequences, and structuring long-term results. Thus, one can analyze the effectiveness of this process and whether it enables the survival of a culture that promotes equality in gender relations and improves women's quality of life (Valderlon & Elias, 2019).

When talking about the risks of cultural interventions that are promoted by behavioral control agencies, Skinner (1953) stated that control agencies, by manipulating behavioral control variables, can use this for survival and self-benefit and not for the survival of culture. De Melo et al. (2015) pointed out that the function of the control agencies is to establish contingencies that provide short-term consequences for behaviors, which can bridge the gap between their issue and the long-term consequences. Finally, it is expected that the discussion in the present work can motivate behavior analysts for possible approximations in the design of culture. Thus, behavioral science could work with the government to assess and implement behavioral changes on a large scale. Concerning the issue of violence against women, adequate contingency planning that changes antecedent and consequent conditions can, in the long run, modify behaviors that are harmful to most members of a culture, such as cultural practices that endanger the lives of women.¹

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Declarations

We declare that this work is original and has not been submitted or considered for total or partial publication in any other source' must be remove according to guidelines of journal.

Conflict of interest On behalf of all authors, Maria Gabriela Cardoso Lira states that there is no conflict of interest.

¹ Although male researchers participated in its execution, this work discusses a problem in which the main victims are women. Therefore, the female protagonism is recognized in the expressions of both ideas and struggles. We also state that some perspectives are based on the differential contingencies to which we were and are exposed during our lifetimes, thus making us available for possible feedback. Therefore, we reiterate our continued interest in striving to build a society that increasingly promotes equality in gender relations.

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