SOCIAL VIOLENCE AND INTRAFAMILIAL VIOLENCE FROM A SYSTEMIC PERSPECTIVE: AN INTEGRATIVE REVIEW

A VIOLÊNCIA SOCIAL E A VIOLÊNCIA INTRAFAMILIAR SOB A PERSPECTIVA SISTÊMICA: UMA REVISÃO INTEGRATIVA

VIOLENCIA SOCIAL Y VIOLENCIA INTRAFAMILIAR DESDE LA PERSPECTIVA SISTÉMICA: UNA REVISIÓN INTEGRATIVA

Luciana FERREIRA[1]
e-mail: luciana@lfpsico.com.br

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ARTIGO SUBMETIDO AO SISTEMA DE SIMILARIDADE

[1] Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo (PUC-SP), São Paulo – São Paulo (SP) – Brazil. Master's degree and Ph.D. student in Clinical Psychology. Researcher on Domestic Violence – *Núcleo Vínculos na Contemporaneidade*.

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ABSTRACT: This integrative review analyzes the interconnection between social/structural and intrafamilial violence from symbolic and intersectional perspectives. The objective is to discuss whether violence migrates linearly from the macro (social) to the micro (family) level or if these instances feed back into each other circularly. Methodologically, it followed the PRISMA (2020) guidelines, with searches in the Scopus, SciELO, LILACS, and Redalyc databases, resulting in the qualitative analysis of 17 articles. The results indicate that, although the hegemonic literature points to social violence as a linear antecedent, the perspective of new paradigm systemic thinking reveals a dynamic of mutual causality and recursiveness between the forms of violence. The study generally highlights that intrafamilial violence is a complex symptom embedded in a network of racial, gender, and class inequalities. It concludes with the need for clinical and social approaches that transcend the linear causal view in favor of understanding the circularity between the public and private spheres.

KEYWORDS: Intrafamilial violence. Social violence. Systemic thinking.

***RESUMO**: Esta revisão integrativa analisa a interconexão entre as violências social/estrutural e intrafamiliar sob as óticas simbólica e interseccional. O objetivo é discutir se a violência migra linearmente do macro (social) para o micro (família) ou se estas instâncias se retroalimentam circularmente. Metodologicamente, seguiu as diretrizes PRISMA (2020), com buscas nas bases Scopus, SciELO, LILACS e Redalyc, resultando na análise qualitativa de 17 artigos. Os resultados indicam que, embora a literatura hegemônica aponte a violência social como antecedente linear, a perspectiva do pensamento sistêmico novo-paradigmático revela uma dinâmica de mútua causalidade e recursividade entre as violências. O estudo evidencia, de forma geral, que a violência intrafamiliar é um sintoma complexo inserido em uma rede de desigualdades raciais, de gênero e de classe. Conclui-se pela necessidade de abordagens clínicas e sociais que transcendam a visão causal linear em favor da compreensão da circularidade entre o público e o privado.*

***PALAVRAS-CHAVE**: Violência intrafamiliar. Violência social. Pensamento sistêmico.*

***RESUMEN**: Esta revisión integrativa analiza la interconexión entre las violencias social/estructural e intrafamiliar bajo las ópticas simbólica e interseccional. El objetivo es discutir si la violencia migra linealmente del nivel macro (social) al micro (familia) o si estas instancias se retroalimentan circularmente. Metodológicamente, siguió las directrices PRISMA (2020), con búsquedas en las bases Scopus, SciELO, LILACS y Redalyc, resultando en el análisis cualitativo de 17 artículos. Los resultados indican que, aunque la literatura hegemónica señale a la violencia social como un antecedente lineal, la perspectiva del pensamiento sistémico nuevo-paradigmático revela una dinámica de mutua causalidad y recursividad entre las violencias. El estudio evidencia de forma general que la violencia intrafamiliar es un síntoma complejo inserto en una red de desigualdades raciales, de género y de clase. Se concluye por la necesidad de enfoques clínicos y sociales que trasciendan la visión causal lineal a favor de la comprensión de la circularidad entre lo público y lo privado.*

***PALABRAS CLAVE**: Violencia intrafamiliar. Violencia social. Pensamiento sistémico.*

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INTRODUCTION

In view of the alarming data on violence in Brazil (FBSP, 2025), whether occurring within or outside the family setting, this literature review analyzes the interrelationship between social/structural violence and the intrafamilial and interpersonal sphere, from the perspectives of symbolic, structural, and intersectional violence. The study investigates the dynamics of violence that move between the public and private spheres. When questioning the genesis of the phenomenon of social violence (SV) versus intrafamilial violence (IV), within a new-paradigm systemic perspective (Vasconcellos, 2018), the feedback between these phenomena cannot be disregarded, considering the complexity, instability, and intersubjectivity of life.

Intrafamilial violence is not viewed as an isolated act, but as a complex and multicausal event resulting from the interrelationship of different factors, such as culture, society, history, economy, and institutions, which feed back into one another in the macro- and microsystems. Violence (micro and macro) is marked by a system structured by recurring cycles, in which isolated and linear intervention fails because it does not consider the latent relational structure (Ocampos, 2025).

Considering the paradigm of complexity in Morin's thought (2015), violence is regarded as the part that is inserted into the whole and the whole that remains in the part, which invites us to understand the interdependencies among the agents involved in contexts of violence, whether in the micro- or macrosystem.

In this author's understanding, the meaning of violence is broad and occurs whenever there is a rupture in the boundaries of respect for another person's physical and psychological integrity, identity, socially constructed gender, morals, dignity, and individuality. Physical violation leaves visible marks; psychological violence, neglect, and the wound imposed on a person's way of existing, whether by society or by the family, are not as clear and obvious as scars on the body, leaving invisible marks.

In line with Minayo's (2006) research, violence, understood as a public health problem, not only intertwines with "private" violence but also sickens minds and bodies. It kills, leaves historical marks, overcrowds institutions (hospitals, police stations, institutes), and generates profound social and psychological trauma.

In the contemporary Brazilian context, a statistical paradox can be observed. According to the 19th Brazilian Public Security Yearbook (FBSP, 2025), urban violence, understood here as social/structural violence, showed a downward trend in Intentional Violent Deaths (IVD), with a 5.4% reduction between 2023 and 2024 (from 46,441 to 44,127 cases). However, when

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the focus shifts to intrafamilial violence, the indicators reveal an opposite movement, characterized by increased lethality and aggression against vulnerable groups.

FBSP data (2025) show that, while violence in general declines, gender-based and domestic violence intensify: femicide increased by 0.7% (1,492 women murdered because of their gender); intentional bodily injury (domestic violence) rose by 0.4%, totaling 257,659 reports; and rape offenses, including rape of vulnerable persons, reached the highest number in the historical series, with 87,545 victims. At the same time, IVD against children and adolescents rose by 3.7% (2,356 victims), indicating that the 'weakest link' has become the preferred target in a context of 'society attacking the individual.'

Against this backdrop, a critical dialogue is established between structural and intrafamilial violence. It should be noted that 76.8% of victims of sexual violence are vulnerable persons, and most of these abuses occur in the victim's own home (about 66%) and are perpetrated by family members or acquaintances (FBSP, 2025).

To understand the complexity of this phenomenon, I break intrafamilial violence down into six main forms:

1) Physical violence, characterized by:

> the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, developmental impairment, or deprivation. (Krug et al., 2002, p. 5)

The 257,659 reports of bodily injury (FBSP, 2025) indicate that the home is not a safe refuge. From Minayo's (2006) perspective, such figures represent only the visible "tip of the iceberg" of a patriarchal culture that objectifies female and children's bodies (Lima et al., 2025).

2) Psychological violence: often a precursor to physical aggression, it was defined as a criminal offense by Art. 147-B of the Penal Code (Law No. 14.188/2021) (Brasil, 2021). Although this represents progress by criminalizing harm to subjectivity, the explosive increase in these reports (FBSP, 2025) suggests that the 'social sentence' of female submission still culturally prevails over criminal law, pointing to state failures in effective protection.

3) Rape of a vulnerable person: defined by Art. 217-A of the Penal Code (Brasil, 1940) as any sexual act with persons under 14 years of age or those unable to consent. The alarming

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2024 data reaffirm the patriarchal family as a locus of danger, where power asymmetry turns into sexual abuse.

4) Patrimonial violence: established in the Maria da Penha Law (Law No. 11.340/2006) (Brasil, 2006), it operates as a mechanism for maintaining the cycle of violence through economic dependence, retention of property, and destruction of work instruments (Lima et al., 2025).

5) Moral violence: comprising slander, defamation, and insult. Soares and Chiodelli (2023) warn that the requirement of a private criminal action for these offenses imposes a disproportionate burden on the victim, constituting social and legal violence that favors the aggressor's impunity.

6) Neglect and abandonment: according to Minayo (2006), neglect is characterized by the omission or refusal of those responsible to provide the basic physical, emotional, and social needs required for an individual's development. Abandonment, in turn, is understood as the most extreme form of neglect, characterized by the absolute absence of support and the complete rupture of the duty of care.

FBSP (2025) reports an 8.1% increase in notifications of child maltreatment, especially among children aged 5 to 9 (+9.2%), and a 25.4% jump in the abandonment of adolescents (14 to 17 years old). The latter figure suggests a process of 'expulsion,' in which family neglect pushes young people toward vulnerability to urban violence. Or did urban (social) violence shape every form of intrafamilial violence?

The analysis would not be complete without an intersectional perspective. The FBSP Yearbook (2025) reveals an 'explosion' of hate crimes, confirming intersectionality as an aggravated risk factor. Racism and racial insult increased by more than 50% combined, driven by Law No. 14.532/2023 (Brasil, 2023). Black women, therefore, face a double violence: gender-based violence (at home) and racial violence (in institutions), perpetuating a symbolic and economic 'private prison.'

Likewise, the LGBTQIAPN+ population faces an increase of more than 15% in physical violence (bodily injury), often beginning as identity 'correction' within the home itself before manifesting in the street. As for Indigenous peoples, territorial conquest violence is reflected on bodies: 80% of Indigenous victims of sexual violence are children, in addition to 211 murders of leaders (FBSP, 2025).

From academic research combined with clinical experience, marked by listening to the stories of people subjected to violence within their own families, the question that motivates

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this study emerged. By broadening the perspective to the social transgenerationality[2] of violence (Santos & Moré, 2011), it becomes inevitable to consider its structural dimension. From this observation arose the central question of this research: which violence begins first? Although this question is initially framed within a linear cause-and-effect reasoning, apparently discrepant from the systemic perspective, it is embraced here as a starting point for reaching a more complex, circular, and recursive understanding of micro- and macrosystemic violence.

Could the family, as the locus of education and identity construction of its members, be producing violent individuals who, when they leave home and gather socially, feed the maintenance of a greater violence? A violence of power, with overwhelming force, like a great river cascading over rocks to become a deep and dangerous pool? Or do intrafamilial and social/structural violence meet like two sources of great rivers that flow into the open sea?

By observing, listening, and researching, I reach the margins of circularity: violence intertwines and feeds back into itself. It is society's violent cascade that flows into the pool where families are concentrated, thus circularly, without finding the primary source of one or the other. In other words, we are violated in our individualities and characteristics—and here I include myself, as a woman and a researcher of forms of violence, including gender-based violence. We are affected because of our sexual orientation, class, career choices, geographic location, and unequal access to health and education. However, as a professional aligned with new-paradigm systemic thinking, I cannot fail to imprint on this work a perspective attentive to the recursiveness between macrosocial and microrelational violence.

This structural, social, and intersectional violence (always intersecting with symbolic violence) gains strength and spreads because it is endorsed by institutions. Their representatives hold resources, powers, information, and knowledge to carry out segregation. With this apparatus, they dominate the most vulnerable, isolated individuals, and all those who do not fit into the square box of the patriarchal values of the 'sacred family'—a heteronormative handbook of proper conduct, full of laws created to protect those who serve it and oppress those who dare to deviate from the so-called 'normal standard.'

This study is justified by the need to understand intrafamilial violence not as an isolated phenomenon, but as a symptom fed back by social forms of violence—whether symbolic (Bourdieu, 2020), structural (Galtung, 1969), systemic (Žižek, 2014), or institutional (Minayo,

[2] Transgenerationality of violence: a term coined by Santos and Moré (2011) to explain the pattern of violence recurring across successive generations within the family. Adapted by the author to refer to the social transgenerationality of violence.

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2006). The intention is to contribute to clinical psychology and to health professionals who engage with this topic. This qualitative research is structured as an integrative literature review and seeks to shed light on the initial question: does intrafamilial violence arise in the macro (social) sphere and contaminate the micro (family), or does the family act as the first laboratory for forms of violence that later erupt in society, providing support for a contextualized clinical practice, or, still, is there a circular integration of micro- and macro-level violence?

From the perspective of the studies, considering a linear view, the findings indicate that violence arises structurally and socially, encompassing systemic and symbolic violence, and flows into intrafamilial and individual violence. However, from the new-paradigm systemic perspective, forms of violence intertwine circularly, feed back into one another, and flow into both modalities, micro- and macrosystemic.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is characterized as an Integrative Literature Review conducted under the guidelines of the PRISMA 2020 method, Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (Page et al., 2021). This choice is justified because it is considered the gold standard for structured literature reviews, standing out for its transparency, structural rigor, and reproducibility. In addition, the application of its inclusion and exclusion criteria ensures the robustness of the study, allowing for a careful mapping of the literature.

The bibliographic search was carried out over a period of three weeks in the electronic databases Scopus, SciELO, LILACS, and Redalyc, in addition to the use of Google Scholar to track gray literature and supplement recent findings. To construct the search strings, the Boolean operators AND/OR were used in association with the following descriptors: (“Violência Doméstica” OR “Violência Intrafamiliar” OR “pensamento sistêmico”) AND (“Violência Social” OR Violência Estrutural” OR “Desigualdade Social”). For literature in English, the following was used: (“Domestic Violence” OR “Intrafamilial Violence, Systemic Thinking”) AND (“Social Violence” OR “Structural Violence” OR “Social Inequality”). Priority was given to peer-reviewed journals with Qualis-Capes rankings between A1 and B2.

The following criteria were established for sample selection: as inclusion criteria, we considered a) original theoretical or empirical articles that, to some extent, addressed the intersection between social/structural violence and intrafamilial violence; b) publications in Portuguese, Spanish, and English, with no geographic restriction. Exclusion criteria included

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editorials, letters, reviews, as well as dissertations and theses (except when they presented theoretical relevance indispensable to the topic) and studies that did not answer the guiding question.

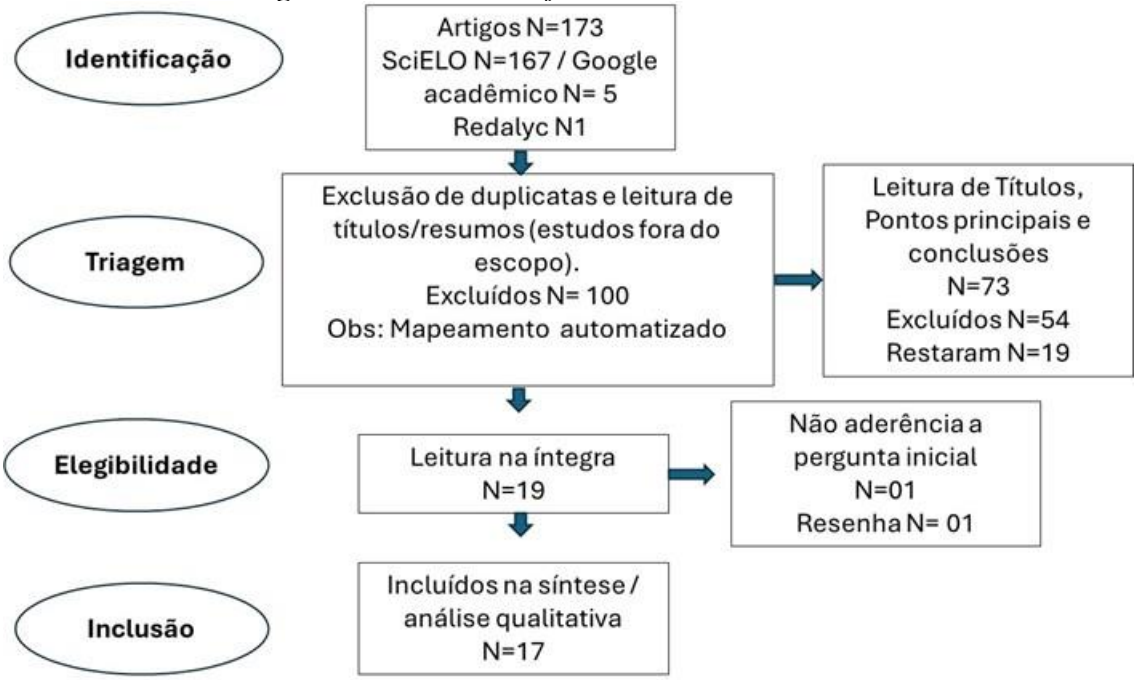
To optimize screening and data extraction, support from an Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool (Gemini Advanced model) was used. AI was employed strictly for spreadsheet structuring and preliminary synthesis of the texts. The spreadsheet prepared by the AI was organized by title, main points, results, and conclusions. It should be emphasized that all results underwent full human validation and were manually checked by the researcher to ensure fidelity, analytical accuracy, and compliance with ethical principles. The analysis focused on the studies' ability to articulate the two forms of violence (macro and micro).

The initial search identified a total of 173 records, distributed among the SciELO (N = 167), Google Scholar (N = 5), and Redalyc (N = 1) databases, the latter selected because of its importance in indexing specialized journals with a Qualis A3 ranking (Figure 1). After applying the inclusion criteria and reading titles and abstracts, the first screening was carried out through automated mapping, resulting in the preselection of 73 articles for analysis of titles, main points, and conclusions.

In the eligibility phase, 19 articles were read in full. At this stage, two studies were excluded: one because it did not sufficiently adhere to the guiding question, and another because it was a review, failing to provide the in-depth articulation between the forms of violence investigated that was required for this qualitative analysis. Thus, the final corpus of this review consisted of 17 articles (Table 1), which served as the basis for the synthesis of the main aspects of macrosocial and micro-level violence—that is, intrafamilial violence.

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Figure 1.
PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram – Studies identified in the databases



Note. Prepared by the author based on data extraction (2026).

Table 1.
Diagram of included studies

Article title	Authors / Year	Study objective	Main results / Contribution to the research question
1. A sentença social e os impactos da violência simbólica no interior das comunidades indígenas	Campos & Manfroi (2021)	Analyze symbolic violence and the 'social sentence' imposed by the State on the Guarani-Kaiowá.	The internal disruption of communities and violence in villages are direct reflections of the State's territorial and symbolic violence ('Social Sentence').
2. Aproximación teórica para entender la violencia desde un enfoque crítico	Nateras González (2021)	Discuss violence from a critical perspective, beyond an individualistic view.	Violence is not an isolated act, but a multidimensional phenomenon rooted in structures of power and social inequality.
3. O enfrentamento da violência de gênero a partir da Educação Básica	Peres & Silva (2022)	Investigate the role of schools in combating violence against women.	Education reproduces or deconstructs the patriarchal culture that naturalizes domestic violence; the school is a locus of intervention in the social sphere.
4. Perspectivas do conhecimento acerca da violência contra mulheres migrantes	Gehlen et al. (2020)	Map the literature on violence experienced by women in migration situations.	Intersectionality (gender + migration) creates a specific vulnerability in which the lack of social protection aggravates interpersonal violence.
5. Violência simbólica e desenvolvimento social comunitário reflexionado en la perspectiva de Pierre Bourdieu	Mc Kay Levy (2023)	Reflect on symbolic violence from Pierre Bourdieu's perspective in community development.	Male domination and symbolic violence are invisible structures that legitimize physical aggression, making it acceptable within the community.

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6. Consecuencias psicosociales en familiares víctimas de feminicidio en México	Bernáldez Jaimes & Rodríguez Aguilar (2023)	Identify psychosocial impacts on families of femicide victims.	Femicide (extreme gender-based violence) disrupts the entire family system, generating trauma that perpetuates cycles of suffering (transgenerationality).
7. LGBTI+fobia de Estado na tessitura das políticas de morte	Irineu et al. (2024)	Analyze social insecurity and state neglect as hate crimes.	By being omissive or negligent, the State validates violence against dissident bodies, acting as the 'first aggressor' even before physical violence.
8. O que os adolescentes do município do RJ têm feito para reduzir sua exposição à violência	Marques et al. (2024)	Understand adolescents' strategies in the face of armed community violence.	Urban violence (shootings, territorial control) invades young people's subjectivity, altering routines and mental health and intruding into the private sphere.
9. Racismo e eventos produtores de estresse: narrativas de pessoas idosas negras	Santos & Rabelo (2022)	Analyze stressful events throughout the lives of older Black people.	Structural racism acts as a chronic and cumulative stressor, determining the material and emotional conditions of family life from youth onward.
10. A Intersecção entre Violência Doméstica e Vulnerabilidade Socioeconômica	Coelho et al. (2025)	Analyze financial dependence as a factor in the perpetuation of violence.	Lack of economic autonomy (patrimonial/structural violence) prevents exit from the cycle of domestic violence; poverty traps the victim.
11. Desafios e Alternativas para a Segurança Pública no Brasil Contemporâneo	Schneider et al. (2025)	Discuss structural racism and failures in the public security system.	Racial profiling and police lethality are forms of institutional violence that disproportionately affect Black and peripheral families.
12. Violência doméstica contra a mulher: contexto sociocultural e saúde mental	Silva et al. (2020)	Relate the sociocultural context to victims' mental illness.	Machista cultural norms sustain violence; women's illness is a symptom of a sick society, not merely of a bad marriage.
13. Violência na Atenção Primária em Saúde no Brasil	Mendonça et al. (2020)	Review how Primary Health Care deals with violence.	The invisibility of violence in health services reveals institutional unpreparedness to deal with the phenomenon, revictimizing individuals.
14. Violência urbana em contextos de desigualdade socioeconômica	Gomes et al. (2021)	Characterize urban violence based on socio-spatial inequality.	Spatial segregation and economic inequality are the driving forces of urban violence, which in turn affects family dynamics in these territories.
15. Violencia híbrida en familias con adolescentes: estudio de caso desde la psicología clínica sistémica	Velásquez-León (2024)	Understand the complexity of bonds in situations of hybrid violence in families with adolescents from the perspective of cyberculture.	Cyberculture (macro) redefines family boundaries, with digital devices extending violence beyond the home. Violence emerges when rigid power rituals confront young people's technological autonomy, making family bonds contingent and fragile.
16. La democratización de los vínculos en pareja: una propuesta de investigación e intervención sistémica	Benavides Ocampo et al. (2021)	Propose the democratization of bonds as a systemic intervention and coevolution strategy for couples and families.	There is a direct connection between democratic social structure (macro) and the health of private bonds. Social models of horizontality and justice, when integrated into the family, make it

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			possible to overcome rituals of vertical violence and domination.
17. Pensamento sistêmico e transformação da resposta penal à violência doméstica contra a mulher	Ocampos (2025)	Analyze how systemic thinking can transform the State's criminal response (macro) to domestic violence.	The State's purely punitive response is insufficient because it is linear. The study demonstrates that the criminal justice system must understand domestic violence as a complex and relational phenomenon, integrating social public policies to interrupt the cycle of aggression in the microsystem.

Note. Prepared by the author based on data extraction (2026).

Although the authors address violence from different perspectives (structural, social, systemic, intersectional, and symbolic), the vast majority converge on the finding that its genesis lies in macrostructures. This macroviolence is endorsed by the State, by the absence of public policies, by culture, and by institutions (especially the legal, security, and health spheres). The diversity of themes explored in the articles in Table 1 includes gender-based violence and attacks against social minorities, such as the LGBTQIAPN+ population, Black people, adolescents/young people, and women. Most studies show how these macrosocial dynamics directly affect the microsphere, culminating in intrafamilial violence.

In this collection of articles, structured through an integrative literature review, violence can be seen to assume different forms as it moves from the macro to the micro level. At higher levels, it manifests as oppression, disguised through State actions or structural racism, and as domination and subjugation, anchored in patriarchal power relations. At the institutional level, it is revealed through inequity and hostility in health, security, and justice systems, constituting serious rights violations. Finally, this invisible and moral coercion inevitably flows into the intrafamilial context. It is in this private environment that structural failures are converted into abuse (physical, patrimonial, or emotional), coercion, intimidation, and harassment. The minority of authors—those aligned with systemic thinking—offer a view of complexity, multifactoriality, and interdependence between micro- and macro-level violence and reinforce the idea of recursiveness between social and intrafamilial violence.

DISCUSSION

Structural/social violence

In this section, we find a direct intersection with the theme of intersectional violence. This occurs because, in the view of most of the authors discussed here, structural violence

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generates intersectional violence, which triggers relational/intrafamilial violence and, in turn, culminates in transgenerational violence. Beyond the ordering described above, all forms of violence proceed according to complexity, instability, and intersubjectivity when viewed from a systemic perspective (Ferreira & Santos, 2025). I add that, as an academic researcher of intrafamilial violence, from the perspective of new-paradigm systemic thinking (Vasconcellos, 2018), there is a circularity (Ferreira & Kublikowiski, 2025) that brings about the perpetuation of structural, social, symbolic, intersectional, and intrafamilial violence.

Mendonça et al. (2020), Silva et al. (2020), Nateras González (2021), and Bernáldez Jaimes and Rodríguez Aguilar (2023) converge in their perspectives on violence, arguing that, in general, it cannot be viewed in a unified way focused only on the individual aggressor, but must be considered together with structures of power and exploitation, as they show that violence against women and/or individuals is not an isolated act, but the result of a sociohistorical and cultural construction of gender inequity, generated by patriarchy, which legitimizes aggression. The authors move together in affirming that power structures, represented by society and institutions, have their source in structural violence.

Velásquez-León (2024) investigated cyberculture as a macrosystemic power that contributes to intrafamilial violence insofar as it generates new dilemmas for families' mental health. The author discusses social violence, anchored in systemic thinking, and reflects on a complex view of the society of cyberculture, which provides the tools and destabilizing pace for the family. In the same direction, Benavides Ocampo et al. (2021) ground their discussion in the interrelationship between social violence through democracy, equity, and justice and intrafamilial dynamics. The authors argue that the democratization of marital and family bonds serves as a tool that enables coevolution in confronting violence. They connect the macrostructure with the family's internal dynamics, proposing that social models of horizontality should be integrated into the family system to overcome violent rituals of vertical power.

Mendonça et al. (2020) argue that it is necessary to break with hegemonic paradigms that precede individual forms of violence. On the other hand, Nateras González (2021) and Bernáldez Jaimes and Rodríguez Aguilar (2023) state that institutional power structures revictimize individuals who have already suffered violence in their personal context. Especially with regard to women, this violence is rooted in society and culture, which enable women to remain in a position of submission.

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The authors reinforce, each from their own perspective but with a focus on the social structure of power, that there is an invisible institutional violence that leaves the victim without support and, in doing so, maintains the cycle of intrafamilial violence.

Coelho et al. (2025) and Mendonça et al. (2020) agree in emphasizing that dependence (whether socioeconomic or emotional) imprisons the victim within a violent domestic/family system, which enables the consolidation of emotional and psychological control practiced by the perpetrator. The authors regard women's socioeconomic dependence as a form of social violence arising from institutional violence that feeds intrafamilial violence, calling this 'socioeconomic vulnerability,' which keeps women within the cycle of violence (Instituto Maria da Penha, 2023).

Schneider et al. (2025), Marques et al. (2024), and Santos and Rabelo (2022) address structural racism, gender inequality, and social exclusion—as well as the fact that social violence shapes the individual—and how these issues affect and modify public security practices, reproducing cycles of violence and social discrimination involving individuals belonging to minority groups. The authors move between structural/social violence and intersectional violence through a critical and interdisciplinary assessment, considering the fields of sociology, criminology, and human rights. They also discuss structural racism, as evidenced in racial profiling and lethal police action affecting the Black population, the inefficiency that sustains gender inequality, the prevention of femicide, domestic violence, and violence perpetrated against LGBTQIAPN+ people.

Nateras González (2021), Campos and Manfroi (2021), Mendonça et al. (2020), Coelho et al. (2025), Schneider et al. (2025), Silva et al. (2020), and Marques et al. (2024), in the ideas discussed in this section, converge on the understanding that structural/social violence (macro) precedes punctual, individual, and subjective violence (micro). Gender-, race-, individually originated, intrafamilial, and intersectional forms of violence have their genesis in a hegemonic structure that feeds back into violence from its practice in small groups, reaching power relations in subjective practice. To some extent, the authors address transgenerational violence from the macro level (culture, society, patriarchy) to the micro level (family, relationship, and individual), while also drawing attention to a systemic structure that conceives, generates, emanates, and transgenerationally maintains aggression in its various forms.

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Intersectional violence

Complementarily, Schneider et al. (2025), Peres and Silva (2022), Irineu et al. (2024), and Santos and Rabelo (2022) show that public security practices in Brazil are shaped by factors such as structural racism, gender inequities, social exclusion, and LGBTphobia. By pointing to the inefficiency of public policies in breaking these cycles of violence against minorities, the analyses allow us to understand that the State and society (macrosystems) operate as the very genesis of current intersectional violence, whose historical roots are embedded in the control of marginalized populations. In view of this, it is concluded that the public security system requires urgent reformulation based on an integrative perspective attentive to the intersectionalities of race, gender, and class. The State is a structural agent in the dissemination of social violence through absences and inefficiencies regarding the security of intersectional populations.

Gehlen et al. (2020) and Gomes et al. (2021) corroborate and reinforce the ideas of Schneider et al. (2025) and Peres and Silva (2022) by shedding light on the social violence that affects women intersectionally, marked by their origin, race, class, and gender, acting as fertile ground for intrafamilial violence, in addition to pointing out that social violence is the patron of physical violence. Ocampos (2025), in turn, explains that violence against women within the family results from the interrelationship of social, cultural, economic, and institutional factors, reflecting historical gender inequalities. The author argues that adopting a systemic view of intrafamilial violence, as in the case of domestic violence, is not only an ethical but also a legal necessity. Only through governance that privileges the transversality of actions and active accountability would it be possible to transform the foundation that sustains gender-based violence in Brazil.

Corroborating Nateras González (2021), Campos and Manfroi (2021) discuss that intersectional violence does not originate in one individual and then become directed toward another and later toward society; rather, it results from macro-level violence initiated by culture as a systematized form of oppression, whether through capitalism, patriarchy, or colonialism. Here, light is shed on violence as history, applied to the constituent members of that same history, with its perpetration taking the form of a bifurcated roundabout with avenues named after forms of violence directed at Black women, Indigenous people, and transgender people, without even an alleyway as an escape route.

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Symbolic violence

Mc Kay Levy (2023), Nateras González (2021), and Peres and Silva (2022) converge on the idea of symbolic violence (SV) as a form of coercion that becomes institutionalized and intrinsic until it is no longer perceived as such by the person subjected to it, culminating in the acceptance/normalization of social hierarchy and generating unquestioned inequalities. This violence, coined by Bourdieu (2020), consists of the imposition of a set of meanings and symbols, such as beliefs, practices, values, behaviors, and social expectations, upon the dominated, with the perception that everything is legitimate, even when this entire process runs counter to the interests of those subjected to domination. People dominated by this violence ultimately naturalize it, which culminates in societies limited in social and individual development and marginalized by microsociety.

Mc Kay Levy (2023) concludes that SV is a social-structural obstacle that prefigures and shapes the reality of social fabrics. To combat visible violence, it is necessary to invest in confronting invisible violence, which structures social relations and thereby affects the individual and the family.

A complementarity can be observed among social, structural, intersectional, and symbolic violence. At times, symbolic violence, as Bourdieu (2020) points out, prepares the ground in individuals' minds at the macrosocial level, feeding social, structural, and systemic violence; at other times, that same symbolic violence, traversed by family dynamics and influenced by structural issues, materializes as intrafamilial violence.

Without neglecting the dialogue established among the authors, who converge on the understanding that sociocultural violence produces prejudices such as machismo, racism, sexism, and homophobia, crossing the structural, social, systemic, and symbolic axes and preceding intrafamilial violence, I propose a critical reflection aimed at constructing new studies on the prevention of and response to these forms of violence. This perspective considers the feedback among these axes and their impacts on macro- and microsystems.

Scholars who debate socio-structural and cultural violence are anchored in authors such as Galtung (1969), who maps these practices, and Minayo (2006), who demonstrates the harm through illness and its impact on public health. Žižek (2014), in turn, highlights the invisibility of forms of violence, while Bourdieu (2020) closes the discussion by demonstrating the acceptance of the implicated individual, whether as perpetrator or as the person subjected to violence.

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FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Although the majority of the literature tends to point to social (macrosystemic) violence as an antecedent of intrafamilial (microsystemic) violence from a linear cause-and-effect perspective, this article invites critical analysis and the deconstruction of this causal correlation. From this questioning, grounded in the systemic paradigm, the initial reflection is transformed into a circular perspective. It can be observed, both in the theoretical framework focused on systemic thinking and in clinical practice, that micro- and macro-level forms of violence occur simultaneously.

Still from the perspective of the systemic paradigm, it becomes evident that, on many occasions, those who suffer violence outside the family sphere have already suffered violence within it; and those who perpetrate violence in the domestic environment are not only susceptible to suffering external violence but also to reproducing it in society. Thus, this is not a matter of primary or secondary order, but of forms of violence that coexist with a combined resonance, operating circularly rather than linearly or vertically.

Thus, this study seeks to challenge the paradigms of positivist science, expressed by the hegemony of the studies discussed here, offering an in-depth reflection on the causality of the forms of violence discussed and their resonance in the family structure.

This proposition makes it possible to transcend linear reasoning by understanding micro- and macrosystemic forms of violence as recursive and complementary processes. For clinical practice, this perspective qualifies interventions with the individual, the family, and the social environment, recognizing the mutual feedback among these spheres while remaining up to date with the practical tools of the systemic psychology paradigm.

Finally, the scarcity of studies addressing this topic from the perspective of systemic thinking is evident, underscoring the clear need for new research that deepens this discussion and invites a break with causal paradigms.

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