

## Violence and youth in a territory of the Metropolitan Area of Brasília, Brazil: a socio-spatial approach

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**Abstract** *Young people are impacted by the relations established in the context of multidimensional violence distributed in private and public spaces of urban areas. This article presents stories of violence suffered and committed by young individuals who live in Itapoã, part of the Metropolitan Area of Brasilia. This is a transversal and descriptive study, using a quantitative approach and a convenience sample of 190 young men and women aged 15 to 24 years. Forty-four questions previously validated were used as the data collection instrument. As for the experiences of violence, 51% reported having experienced some sort throughout life, and 24% in the last 12 months. Young people who have experienced some episode of violence throughout life also declared that the area or neighborhood where they live does not promote urban well-being for its residents ( $p < 0.023$ ); they expressed feelings compatible with depression ( $p = 001$ ); and self-reported their health condition as bad ( $p = 000$ ). The experiences of violence and youth vulnerabilities processes were discussed in the context of social injustice and limitations of human capabilities.*

**Key words** *Young adult, Urban, Violence, Social change, Social determinants of health*

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## Introduction

Brazil is composed of heterogeneous territories marked by inequalities and disparities regarding the living conditions of young people and their projects for achieving self-fulfillment and autonomy. In 2010, the country had the highest number of young people aged between 15 and 24 in its population history, totaling 34.5 million, or 18% of the whole population. The highest mortality rate due to external causes is observed in this population group and homicide is the main reason, with a 54.8 rate per 100 thousand<sup>1</sup>. In the international scenario this is the second cause of death among young people<sup>2</sup>. This high child mortality rate expresses violence in its most severe level. Experiences of violence affect one's life course and their families, change the community dynamics, the socio-spatial occupation in the territories and the dynamics of cities, and represent a violation of fundamental rights of different social groups. They can reduce the opportunities of young people to experience and achieve their independence and the utopias of their life projects affecting with different intensity residents from the urban fringes of metropolitan areas of the country. Its multidimensionality should consider the social determinants present in the course of human life and in the relationship with the territories.

The guarantee of fundamental rights or the denial of the expansion of substantive freedoms<sup>3</sup> of youth could be explained by the asymmetries in socio-spatial occupation in the territories, the different levels of local and regional development in the country and the scope of public policies and social protection systems. The territory is a living organism characterized by multiple dimensions that may have their dynamics understood within an interpretive sense, which considers the social division of space and the capital-city relationship<sup>4</sup>. Itapoã, the territorial locus of this study, not only presents a geospatial dynamics, but also a social relationship that is embodied in the precariousness of opportunity and urban equipment structures.

This research aims to articulate some themes that are interconnected by complexity, diversity and polysemy i.e. violence and youth by adopting a socio-spatial approach to analyze the territory. Violence experiences in youth represent a priority for the urban development agenda and a major public health problem<sup>5</sup>. Some evidence has shown that unfavorable social contexts are associated with increased health risks and violence occurrences in the territorial dynamics of populations<sup>3,6</sup>.

According to opinion polls, Brazil's largest problem is violence<sup>7</sup>. Some studies describe multiple forms of abuse experiences suffered by men and women who are part of the young population living in times marked by uncertainty and fear<sup>8</sup>, a predatory development model<sup>4</sup>, unfavorable social determinants<sup>5,6</sup>, a culture of permissiveness<sup>9</sup>, precarious urbanization<sup>10</sup> and for the high concentration of murder cases committed, suffered or witnessed by young people<sup>11</sup>, especially among the poor and blacks males<sup>9,11,12</sup>.

This study describes the experiences of a group of young people who have been through situations of violence observed in the interactions that are established in an urban territory located in the Brasilia Metropolitan Area (BMA).

This is a population in socio-spatial exclusion and social injustice. The territory investigated is divided by socio-spatial inequalities originated during the planning of Brasilia, a metropolis that was designed for the public administration of the country, reflecting a spatial segregation planned according to the social rank of the individuals who occupied the Brazilian capital<sup>13</sup>. In the processes of urban construction and expansion of Brasilia the popular layers of the population were expelled to more distant geographic territories in a fast and exclusionary way. This is a logic that promotes exclusion and that centralizes income in the center and promotes the construction of impoverished neighborhoods according to interests of landowners and real estate developers.

Itapoã is one of the territories located in the metropolitan fringe of the bucolic city of Brasilia. The social inequalities present in its inhabitants are related to the rapid territorial expansion of BMA. These inequalities are established by a lack of infrastructure that leads to the production and reproduction of spatially distributed risks, which reflect the social position of the persons occupying the administrative regions of the periphery of the metropolis. The population is characterized by the unequal distribution of public facilities for collective use and the need for commuting by its residents who need to move from their housing location to have access to basic and higher education, vocational courses and jobs. Slightly more than half of the residents (56%) migrated from other states. Of these, 67.4% were from the Northeast area of Brazil. Those who said they had brown or black skin color represent more than three quarters of the population (78%).

Less than 5% reported having completed higher education. With regard to monthly household income, 85% reported receiving less

than five minimum wages (MW), 35% reported earning less than two MW and only 7% reported receiving an income above ten MW<sup>14</sup>. However, in the metropolitan center known as “Plano Piloto”, there was a different socio-economic situation: 53.3% of participants reported having completed higher education or post-graduation; 66% of households reported a monthly household income greater than ten MW, 13% earned less than five MW and only 3% received less than two MW<sup>15</sup>.

Studies addressing the interfaces between violence and youth showed different prevalence of several violent acts in specific contexts: in a relationship, in which adolescents and young people are assaulted and attacked<sup>16</sup>; sexual violence by acquaintances and strangers<sup>17</sup>; violence in schools<sup>18,19</sup>; between intimate partners<sup>20-22</sup> and in urban and rural family experiences<sup>11,19</sup>. The relationship between social determinants and processes of social determination of violence and health has been demonstrated<sup>6</sup>. In addition, factors related to the violence suffered by specific population groups have been linked to social and territorial inequalities<sup>23,24</sup>.

Therefore, this research aims to describe the experiences of violence suffered and committed by young men and women aged 15 to 24 years, living in Itapoã, a territory marked by social inequity located in the Federal District, Brasilia Metropolitan Area.

## Methods

The methodological design of this cross-sectional study includes both a quantitative approach and specific characteristics of social research due to investigate issues involving violence and health, which can be understood as multi-causal and complex. The violence phenomenon requests the understanding of the demographic characteristics of the study participants and also the social meanings that fertilize the interaction youth-territory-urban space.

Violence was analyzed according to the theoretical perspective of territorial inequalities and inequities of the development model that produces social disparity and it is an integral part of the social determinants of the territory. A violent action objectifies people and dehumanizes interpersonal relationships and the spaces where it happens, whether physical or symbolic. In this sense, the study sought to describe violence considering an analysis of concrete situations local-

ized in time and in a territorial geopolitic<sup>23,24</sup>.

The Federal District, central core of BMA, has an administrative structure based on administrative regions (AR). Currently, there are 31 ARs and Itapoã is located next to one of the highest per capita income centers in Brazil, but it is a low-income region. The target population consisted of young people aged 15 to 24 years from both sexes, living in Itapoã for at least one month before the start date of the survey. Two hundred (200) youths were interviewed according to the non-probabilistic criterion for convenience, and one hundred ninety (190) valid questionnaires were used for analysis. To select the participant population, we visited a large number of residents throughout the town at different times and on both weekdays and weekends. All were approached on the street or in their homes and were invited to participate.

The data collection instrument used was built with sociodemographic questions related to the territory, health and violence experiences. The questions have been validated previously<sup>20-22</sup>, totaling 44 questions of the closed system of response. The descriptive and bivariate analyses were done using the SPSS software version 15.0. First, we carried out a descriptive analysis of the sociodemographic profile of the young population of Itapoã according to IBGE25 data of the demographic profile of respondents and violence experiences. Then the dependent variable *the occurrence of at least one episode of violence experience throughout life* in the interactions of young people with intimate partners, family members, acquaintances of the community and with strangers was analyzed in relation to the variables related to the perception of young people about the territory and issues in terms of the respondent's health.

The study was approved by the Ethics Committee on Human Research of the Health Sciences Faculty of the University of Brasilia. All those who agreed to participate signed a consent form as requested by the National Council for Research Ethics.

## Results

Table 1 shows the sociodemographic profile of the participants according to the Itapoã 2010 Census data<sup>25</sup>, providing some sociodemographic characteristics of the universe of the sample population selected for the study. It was observed that 58% were brown, 38% did not complete ele-

mentary school and 40% have household income per capita of less than the minimum wage.

Table 2 describes the profile of the young people interviewed. The average age of the women participating in the survey was 19 years (SD 2.7), and men 18 (SD 2.9). 47% of men and 60% of women were not attending school. Only 5% of respondents attend or have attended private school. Regarding education, it was found that 41% of men and 34% of women did not complete elementary school, making a total equal to the universe of the population of 38% in the

same low education condition. The difference in study between men and women increases when looking at the percentage of those who completed high school (21% of women and only 11% of men). Regarding access to higher education, only 1% of men and 2% of women have completed it. As to the marital status, while 33% of women are married, only 4% of men in this age group declared themselves as such. In addition, 42% of women already have at least one child. When asked about how long they were living in Itapoá, 49% reside in the town for less than five years.

It is worth mentioning that 49.5% of respondents were from other Brazilian states. Of the total migrants, 27% were from the Northeast. As to the origin per state, Bahia and Goiás were the most representative ones (12% each). In terms of employment status, 68% of those who declared themselves busy were working in the informal sector. The majority of those unemployed did not complete elementary school represented.

As for the feeling of insecurity, when the unit of analysis was the household, 58% of women and 37% men declared that they felt safe at home. This proportion increased even more when the unit of analysis was the territory where 90% of women and 84% of men reported feeling unsafe.

In Brazil, where the purchase of alcoholic beverages is allowed only to people over 18, it was found that 79% of respondents had tried alcohol and 42% usually consume it. It is important to note that 41% experienced alcohol before age 15. With regard to smoking, 71% reported having never used tobacco, but 22% of men and 7% of women were current smokers. As to the prevalence of drug use, it was found that 74% of men and 94% of women reported having never consumed drugs. The habitual use was reported by 6% of men.

When asked if they have had sexual experience, 78% of men and 80% of women said yes. Of these, the first experience occurred before the age of 18 for 81% of men and 48% of women and, after 18 years, for 5% of men and 20% of women. When asked if their first sexual intercourse was consensual, 9% of women and 5% of men said they had been forced.

Table 3 presents a mosaic of different types of practiced and suffered violence episodes. For males it appears that 46% of young people have already had involvement with physical aggression against another man, 11% reported having assaulted women, 17% suffered family physical aggression after 15 years of age, 13% reported having been bullied by classmates, 5% suffered

**Table 1.** Socio-demographic characteristics of the youth residents of the Metropolitan Area of Brasília. Itapoá, 2010. (N = 8979).

| Variable   | Rate |      |
|--|------|------|
|  | N    | %    |
| Sex  |      |      |
| Female   | 4548 | 51.7 |
| Male   | 4431 | 49.3 |
| Age  |      |      |
| 15 – 17  | 2836 | 31.5 |
| 18 – 21  | 3704 | 41.3 |
| 22 – 24  | 2439 | 27.2 |
| Skin color/Ethnicity   |      |      |
| Brown  | 5244 | 58.4 |
| White  | 2645 | 29.5 |
| Black  | 877  | 9.8  |
| Yellow   | 144  | 1.6  |
| Indigenous   | 69   | 0.8  |
| Education  |      |      |
| Uneducated and<br>Incomplete primary education               | 3559 | 39.6 |
| Complete fundamental education<br>and incomplete high school | 2999 | 33.4 |
| Complete high school and<br>incomplete higher education      | 2044 | 22.8 |
| Complete Higher Education                                    | 189  | 2.1  |
| Not determined   | 188  | 2.1  |
| Household income ( <i>per capita</i> /July<br>2010)          |      |      |
| 0 to 199 reais   | 1553 | 17.3 |
| 200 to 399 reais   | 2852 | 31.7 |
| 400 to 699 reais   | 2730 | 30.4 |
| 700 to 1699 reais  | 1339 | 15.0 |
| 1,700 reais or +   | 78   | 1.0  |
| Not informed   | 427  | 4.6  |
| Working (Productive insertion)                               |      |      |
| Yes  | 4555 | 50.7 |
| No   | 4424 | 49.3 |

Source: Census 2010.

**Table 2.** Socio-demographic characteristics of the interviewed youths aged 15 to 24 years, according to sex. Itapoã, 2011.

| Variable                       | Men |    | Women |    | Total |    |
|--------------------------------|-----|----|-------|----|-------|----|
|                                | N   | %  | N     | %  | N     | %  |
| Age                            | 83  |    | 107   |    | 190   |    |
| 15 to 17                       | 41  | 50 | 35    | 33 | 76    | 40 |
| 18 to 21                       | 25  | 30 | 47    | 44 | 72    | 28 |
| 22 to 24                       | 17  | 20 | 25    | 23 | 42    | 32 |
| Residence time                 |     |    |       |    |       |    |
| Less than 5 years              | 36  | 43 | 57    | 53 | 93    | 49 |
| 5 to 9 years                   | 37  | 45 | 46    | 43 | 83    | 44 |
| 10 or +                        | 10  | 12 | 4     | 4  | 14    | 7  |
| Education                      |     |    |       |    |       |    |
| than 8 years                   | 36  | 43 | 36    | 34 | 72    | 38 |
| 8 to 10                        | 38  | 46 | 49    | 46 | 87    | 46 |
| 11 or +                        | 9   | 11 | 22    | 21 | 31    |    |
| Skin color/Ethnicity           |     |    |       |    |       |    |
| Brown                          | 37  | 45 | 65    | 61 | 102   | 54 |
| Black                          | 25  | 30 | 20    | 19 | 45    | 24 |
| White                          | 20  | 24 | 13    | 12 | 33    | 17 |
| Yellow/Indigenous              | 1   | 1  | 9     | 8  | 10    | 5  |
| Marital Status                 |     |    |       |    |       |    |
| Married, with intimate partner | 18  | 22 | 62    | 58 | 80    | 42 |
| Single                         | 62  | 75 | 43    | 41 | 105   | 56 |
| Other                          | 3   | 4  | 1     | 1  | 4     | 2  |
| Children                       |     |    |       |    |       |    |
| Yes                            | 9   | 11 | 45    | 42 | 54    | 29 |
| No                             | 74  | 89 | 61    | 58 | 135   | 71 |
| Religion                       |     |    |       |    |       |    |
| Evangelical                    | 29  | 35 | 40    | 38 | 69    | 37 |
| Other                          | 21  | 25 | 41    | 39 | 62    | 33 |
| None                           | 7   | 8  | 6     | 6  | 13    | 7  |
| None                           | 26  | 31 | 19    | 18 | 45    | 24 |
| Activity                       |     |    |       |    |       |    |
| Only studies                   | 27  | 33 | 29    | 27 | 56    | 30 |
| Only works                     | 28  | 34 | 22    | 21 | 50    | 26 |
| Works and studies              |     | 19 | 12    | 11 | 28    | 15 |
| Does not work or studies       | 12  | 14 | 43    | 41 | 55    | 29 |

“vulnerable rape crime”, and 41% suffered thefts on the city streets.

On the issue of abortion, 13% of respondents who reported being sexually active have already gone through the experience. It was observed that among women who admitted having undergone abortion they also reported some kind of violence throughout life ( $p < 0.006$ ).

Only 21% of men and 46% of women sought some help after the episodes of violence. This means that approximately 80% of men and 50% of women dealt with violence without seeking help from the health and safety public services

network. However, when asked to assess their own health status in the last two weeks before the interview, 12% of the young people reported a “really bad” health condition and 30% considered it “regular”. There was a statistically significant association between having suffered violence and self-reported health status ( $p = 0.00$ ), meaning that 82% of those who said that their health was very poor were young people who have experienced episodes of violence throughout their lives.

Regarding the perception of the territory in which they live, only 13% of respondents consid-

**Table 3.** Experiences of violence of the youth aged 15 to 24 by sex. Itapoã, 2011.

| Variable   | Men |    | Women |    | Total |    |
|--|-----|----|-------|----|-------|----|
|  | N   | %  | N     | %  | N     | %  |
| Involvement in fight with men  |     |    |       |    |       |    |
| Yes  | 37  | 46 | 19    | 18 | 56    | 30 |
| No   | 44  | 54 | 88    | 82 | 132   | 70 |
| Involvement in fight with women                                      |     |    |       |    |       |    |
| Yes  | 9   | 11 | 29    | 27 | 38    | 20 |
| No   | 72  | 89 | 78    | 73 | 150   | 80 |
| Physical aggression after 15 years of age                            |     |    |       |    |       |    |
| Yes  | 14  | 17 | 26    | 25 | 40    | 21 |
| No   | 67  | 83 | 80    | 74 | 147   | 79 |
| Bullied in the last 30 days  |     |    |       |    |       |    |
| Yes  | 10  | 13 | 21    | 21 | 31    | 17 |
| No   | 69  | 87 | 79    | 79 | 148   | 83 |
| First sexual intercourse forced                                      |     |    |       |    |       |    |
| Yes  | 3   | 5  | 8     | 9  | 11    | 7  |
| No   | 60  | 95 | 77    | 91 | 137   | 93 |
| Theft victim on the public streets of the city in the past 12 months |     |    |       |    |       |    |
| Yes  | 33  | 41 | 44    | 42 | 77    | 41 |
| No   | 48  | 59 | 62    | 58 | 110   | 59 |

ered Itapoã a city that promotes urban well-being i.e. access to collective services and adequate urban infrastructure. Therefore, 71% reported feelings of extreme or higher concern about their own physical integrity and 87% felt unsafe and exposed to violence in the city. As for sense of cohesion in the territory, 50% said that the neighbors do not know each other and 58% assume that the neighbors would not take any action if a physical assault happened in the street. With regard to home environment, 51% of the young people reported not feeling safe at home (Table 4).

In Table 4 we used the variable *violence throughout life*, which includes cases where young people have experienced a physical assault in the street, were victims of assaults on public roads or suffered physical violence after the age of 15. The experience of violence in any of the grouped situations, showed a statistically significant association with some variables related to territory and perceptions about health. Thus, young people who have suffered some violent episode throughout life also declared that the territory does not promote urban well-being for residents ( $p < 0.023$ ); they expressed feelings compatible with depression ( $p = 001$ ) and self-reported their health condition as bad ( $p = 000$ ).

## Discussion

Studies on the topic *youth and violence* cover a variety of circumstances and contexts involving young people and their life experiences in the territories, their different levels of education and integration in the labor market, which depend on the status and socio-spatial occupation of the household and family arrangements and the political and cultural aspects of the society as a whole.

The feeling of vulnerability caused by social injustice acquire relational and dynamic characteristics according to the multidimensional elements of exposure of internal and external nature, coping strategies to overcome constraints in urban areas and in the structuring of protection networks and public services.

On an individual level, the performance of most of the participants in the present study was poor regarding education and employment status. But the research also portrayed the situation of young people living in a territory marked by social inequality, structural poverty and lack of access to resources and public services. In the perspective of health, social determinants and violence processes are complex social phenomena and represent a source of high burden of morbidity and mortality<sup>6,8</sup>.

**Table 4.** Perceptions of the youth who reported having suffered some violent episode throughout life regarding conditions in the territory and health. Itapoã, 2011.

| Variable   | Young respondents<br>(n = 190) | %  | Youths who have suffered violence in life (n = 97) | %  | Sig. (p-value)       |
|--|--------------------------------|----|--|----|----------------------|
| Perception in terms of the urban well-being of Itapoã                            |                                |    |  |    | <b>p &lt; 0.023*</b> |
| None or very little welfare  | 75                             | 41 | 47   | 49 |                      |
| Reasonable welfare   | 80                             | 44 | 39   | 40 |                      |
| Enough welfare   | 17                             | 13 | 11   | 11 |                      |
| Did not answer   | 4                              | 2  |  |    |                      |
| Perception in terms of insecurity and exposure to violence in the city of Itapoã |                                |    |  |    | <b>p &lt; 0.107</b>  |
| Feelings of insecurity while living in the city                                  | 5                              | 87 | 81   | 84 |                      |
| Feelings of security while living in the city                                    | 24                             | 13 |  |    |                      |
| Did not answer   | 1                              |    |  |    |                      |
| Perception in terms of insecurity in the household                               |                                |    |  |    | <b>p &lt; 0.580</b>  |
| Feelings of insecurity in the household  | 92                             | 48 | 48   | 49 |                      |
| Feelings of security in the household  | 96                             | 51 | 49   | 51 |                      |
| Did not answer   | 2                              | 1  |  |    |                      |
| Concern for personal security  |                                |    |  |    | <b>p &lt; 0.571</b>  |
| Very little worried  | 11                             | 6  | 5  | 5  |                      |
| Somewhat worried   | 41                             | 22 | 19   | 20 |                      |
| Quite or extremely worried   | 136                            | 72 | 73   | 75 |                      |
| Did not answer   | 2                              | 1  |  |    |                      |
| Perception in terms of action of neighbors                                       |                                |    |  |    | <b>p &lt; 0.856</b>  |
| Would not do anything to stop an assault on the street                           | 109                            | 57 | 57   | 59 |                      |
| Would take some action   | 75                             | 40 | 38   | 40 |                      |
| Did not answer   | 5                              | 3  | 2  | 1  |                      |
| Feelings of hopelessness, anxiety and depression                                 |                                |    |  |    | <b>p = 0.001*</b>    |
| Never or sometimes   | 140                            | 74 | 59   | 61 |                      |
| Often  | 23                             | 12 | 17   | 18 |                      |
| Very often or almost always  | 25                             | 14 | 20   | 21 |                      |
| Did not answer   | 2                              | 1  |  |    |                      |
| Self-reported health   |                                |    |  |    | <b>p = 0.000*</b>    |
| Bad  | 23                             | 12 | 19   | 20 |                      |
| Reasonable   | 56                             | 29 | 34   | 35 |                      |
| Good   | 86                             | 45 | 32   | 33 |                      |
| Very good  | 23                             | 12 | 11   | 12 |                      |
| Did not answer   | 2                              | 1  | 1  |    |                      |

The level of exposure of the young people interviewed to situations of multidimensional violence reflects a dynamic interweaving of structural aspects. These aspects are related to socio-economic inequalities and territorial processes that create an exclusion gradient and asymmetric access to opportunities to flourish as a citizen. This scenario is partly produced by the effects of a hegemonic globalization<sup>23</sup> and the uneven development of urban spaces<sup>15</sup>.

The present findings highlight that the young people interviewed, both male and female, are not integrated into society as citizens with rights. Overall, they were also not actively included in the education system that would allow them to complete a technical and higher education course in order to achieve a level of professionalism demanded by the neo-capitalist market. The entry into the labor market is highly associated with the educational level; therefore, the inclu-

sion of the less educated population in formal jobs is harder<sup>6</sup>. The young people of Itapoã represent an iconic image of what happens to the total population residing in a territory, marked by low education and poor job opportunities<sup>14</sup>.

The National Education Plan (PNE) for the period 2011 to 2020 recommends as an educational goal at least 12 years of education and the inclusion of 33% in higher education<sup>26</sup> for young people aged between 18 and 24 years. However, Itapoã, with approximately 9,000 people in college age, does not have any public school that offers high school education so far, and, additionally, there is no higher education institution. Young people need to move around the territory to start high school and the other levels. The socio-spatial segregation of the territory forces urban commuting and poses a threat to the development of social capital of youth. It is possible that this commuting in addition to the risks of violence during the journey from home to school or from work to school, offers elements for a better understanding of the low school attendance found in the territory. Certainly the group that does not study and does not participate in the labor market - condition called "neither-nor" in population studies - requires more complex models of analysis to capture the dynamics of life trajectories. In the survey, the proportion of young people who neither study nor work represented approximately a third of respondents, one in three.

The results also show inequalities in terms of the access to education for men and women. The high proportion of youths who did not complete elementary school highlights the possibility of intergenerational transmission of a lagged educational capital. If on one hand the women interviewed had a slightly higher education than men, on the other, the survey revealed that they showed less productive insertion. The gender-based segregation in occupations of lower income is a subject widely discussed in previous studies<sup>6,7,27</sup>. Although women are inserted in the educational processes of formation in high school in greater proportion, they are more excluded from the income production. It is observed in Itapoã the effect of the mechanisms of gender discrimination by sexual division of labor, which are perpetuated in societies organized according to the logic of patriarchy<sup>27</sup>.

In Europe, a recent report on social determinants of health shows that people with higher education have better health and live longer than those who did not have access to education<sup>6</sup>. If

higher education can serve as a proxy for reaching better positions in the occupation of jobs and social status, so we can infer that the disruption of the structural poverty cycle through social repositioning is compromised for the young people living in the analyzed territory. Education and decent jobs represent, albeit in a cloudy scenario of multidimensional inequalities, possibilities to change the course of life paths marked by experiences of violence and build new narratives of well living life and youth.

Young women who were already mothers and have not completed elementary school (corresponding to half of the respondents who reported having children) are in danger of perpetuating a lack of intergenerational social mobility through education. Capturing the dynamics of this process of structural and structuring violence due to a socio-spatial segregation and the impact on the trajectory of a young population is a subject for future studies with prospective design in the territory.

The violence experienced by young people does not only affect their lives, but also reach their families, build a neighborhood effect, alter the sociability in the territory and urban space and enhance intergenerational effects. In this sense, the situations experienced by these people are in the interposition between the economic processes under the neoliberal logic, inequalities in relations of material, cultural and symbolic power, as well as the inequalities of access to a repositioning that would alter the social determinants of quality of life and social organization of the territory<sup>3,4,6,23,28,29</sup>. It was observed that the group of young people who experienced violence in public and private spaces of everyday life presented, as characteristics, perceptions of insecurity in terms of the territory where they live, such as fear for personal safety, sense of insecurity inside and outside the home, feelings of great and extreme anxiety and distress, negative view of urban welfare in the city where they live and self-reference of the health condition as bad.

Another face of the same coin of social inequality is the presence of young people in the territory at the expense of migration. It is likely that they were children of parents or family members who have moved to the Federal District. The key motivating factor for the migration of northeastern people to the Federal District is related to job search<sup>14</sup>. However, Itapoã has an incipient productive economic activity, since there are only 25 job offers per 100 employees working<sup>14</sup>. In the study it was observed that only half of the youth



was born in the BMA and almost 50% reside in Itapoã for less than five years. They are recent residents and are in the process of establishing social integration ties and bonds of belonging, but reside in a place marked by an unjust process of spatial segregation and low social mobility. The social gradient<sup>6</sup> between the administrative regions of the Federal District reveals the spreading process of a city that favored urban expansion into peripheral areas rather than population density of consolidated areas. This detachment has a cost for the people who must cross these distances to keep their survival<sup>13</sup>. The impact of intra-metropolitan mobility for the various social groups is uneven, and disproportionately affects the relations of individuals, families, territories and territoriality in social, economic, political, cultural and generational dimensions.

The violence involving the young population of these territories should not be detached from an interpretation that considers the perverse interface between models of urban planning and social management. These are urban expansion models that do not value the presence of poor people in the city and their right to enjoy it. In this sense, to explain the violence in the youth requires an analysis based on geopolitics of each area that considers the social determinants of urban and human well-being, as well as a systemic and coordinated mapping of educational service networks, public and environmental security and safety, health, food, housing, culture, sport, leisure and other rights attached to the common good. It involves reflecting on the process of "ceasing to be citizens"<sup>10</sup> and realizing that violence is inserted in a dialectically concrete and subjective dimension as a resonance, a distorted image of bankruptcy of the social protection systems. It consolidates the maintenance of generating mechanisms of social injustice.

Evidence shows that the social assets of the youth vary widely depending on the economic situation and the common good accessibility to services, in which health is only one of the links of social protection networks and services<sup>5,6,9</sup>. The multidimensionality of violence reveals the perversion of the social exclusion and denial of

fundamental human rights guaranteed in the legal apparatus that provides for the deepening of democracy.

Since the inauguration of the federal capital, low-income population groups have historically been relocated, in an active or passive manner, to areas marked by precariousness of urban infra-structure and limited access to safety and protection of resources made available by the State<sup>13</sup>. Understanding how to process the experiences of youth violence in a territory marked by social injustice and inequality of socio-spatial occupation as Itapoã involves scrutinizing the capability and vulnerability processes and the relative freedom that the territory provides or restricts.

The research is limited for not involving a greater number of young people interviewed and for not including a random sample in its design. However, the demographic profile of the universe of the population surveyed by the IBGE and the sample of this study showed similarities in composition and distribution. Another limitation is related to the failure to include all the municipalities that make up the BMA, urban fringe of the federal capital, for further asymmetry analysis of gender, color and socio-spatial occupation in accessing the right to the city and the collective experiences and interactions which are part of the quality of life for youths in these territories.

Despite being one of the seven largest world economies, Brazil remains in 79th position in the ranking of the human development index and still has a long way to go. Addressing the processes that contribute to vulnerability to violence situations involves the construction of a development agenda based in a southern epistemology, in a globalized counterhegemonic economy<sup>23</sup> and the reorganization of the social structure for transformations in the territory. The BMA, especially Itapoã, works as a metaphor of the contradictions of the Brazilian development. It is so close to the bucolic town represented by the master urban plan, but so far from breaking with the reproductive social mechanisms that produced the socio-spatial segregation amid one of the most unequal cities in Latin America and in the world.

### **Collaborations**

LBA Moura worked in the data collection, theoretical conception and design of the article; participated in the literature review for the discussion of the results; contributed substantially in the preparation of the article and the critical review of the content and participated in the approval of the final version of the manuscript. AMN Vasconcelos contributed substantially to

the analysis of information; in the preparation of the article and the critical review of the content and participated in the approval of the final version of the manuscript. C Oliveira participated in the literature review for the discussion of the results; contributed significantly in the preparation of the article and the critical review of the content and participated in the approval of the final version of the manuscript.

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