DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN FAMILIES OF INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER: A SCOPING REVIEW

VIOLÊNCIA DOMÉSTICA EM FAMÍLIAS DE PESSOAS COM TRANSTORNO DO ESPECTRO AUTISTA: UMA REVISÃO DE ESCOPO

VIOLENCIA DOMÉSTICA EN FAMILIAS DE PERSONAS CON TRASTORNO DEL ESPECTRO AUTISTA: UNA REVISIÓN DE ALCANCE

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ARTIGO SUBMETIDO AO SISTEMA DE SIMILARIDADE

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ABSTRACT: Violence constitutes a complex social phenomenon that impacts psychological, social, and intergenerational experiences. In the domestic context, it is related to marital conflicts and divorces, potentially leading to dysfunctions in child development and negative repercussions in the family and individual life cycle. This study sought to map international scientific production and identify gaps in the Brazilian literature on domestic violence in families of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Through a scope review, six international studies of high methodological rigor were identified and analyzed. It was concluded that the articulation between psychological approaches and statistical data allows for the integration of contemporary concepts such as stressful events, vulnerability, and the family life cycle into the field of study concerning families of people with disabilities. Due to the absence of national productions that met the inclusion criteria, it is suggested that future research utilize varied methods and theoretical frameworks to investigate the Brazilian reality, with the intent of filling this scientific gap.

KEYWORDS: Domestic violence. Autism Spectrum Disorder. Life cycle. Families of people with disabilities.

RESUMO: *A violência constitui um fenômeno social complexo que impacta as vivências psicológicas, sociais e intergeracionais. No contexto doméstico, relaciona-se a conflitos conjugais e divórcios, podendo gerar disfunções no desenvolvimento infantil e repercussões negativas no ciclo vital familiar e individual. Este estudo objetivou mapear a produção científica internacional e identificar lacunas na literatura brasileira sobre a violência doméstica em famílias de pessoas com Transtorno do Espectro Autista. Por meio de uma revisão de escopo, foram identificados e analisados seis estudos internacionais de elevado rigor metodológico. Concluiu-se que a articulação entre abordagens psicológicas e dados estatísticos permite integrar conceitos contemporâneos, como eventos estressantes, vulnerabilidade e ciclo vital da família, no campo de estudo das famílias de pessoas com deficiência. Devido à ausência de produções nacionais que atendessem aos critérios de inclusão, sugere-se que pesquisas futuras utilizem métodos e fundamentações teóricas variadas para investigar a realidade brasileira, com a intenção de preencher essa lacuna científica.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Violência doméstica. Transtorno do Espectro Autista. Ciclo vital. Famílias de pessoas com deficiência.*

RESUMEN: *La violencia constituye un fenómeno social complejo que impacta las vivencias psicológicas, sociales e intergeneracionales. En el contexto doméstico, se relaciona con conflictos conyugales y divorcios, pudiendo generar disfunciones en el desarrollo infantil y repercusiones negativas en el ciclo vital familiar e individual. Este estudio tuvo como objetivo mapear la producción científica internacional e identificar vacíos en la literatura brasileña sobre la violencia doméstica en familias de personas con Trastorno del Espectro Autista. A través de una revisión de alcance, se identificaron y analizaron seis estudios internacionales de alto rigor metodológico. Se concluyó que la articulación entre enfoques psicológicos y datos estadísticos permite integrar conceptos contemporáneos, tales como eventos estresantes, vulnerabilidad y ciclo vital de la familia, en el campo de estudio de las familias de personas con discapacidad. Debido a la ausencia de producciones nacionales que cumplieran con los criterios de inclusión, se sugiere que futuras investigaciones utilicen métodos y fundamentaciones teóricas variadas para investigar la realidad brasileña, con la intención de llenar este vacío científico.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Violencia doméstica. Trastorno del Espectro Autista. Ciclo vital. Familias de personas con discapacidad.*

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INTRODUCTION

Violence is a complex social phenomenon with multiple nuances that permeate psychological, social, and intergenerational experiences. The World Health Organization (WHO) conceptualizes it as the intentional use of authority or physical force, manifested through acts or threats against oneself, another person, or social groups, which results in the risk or actual occurrence of harm to physical and psychological integrity, fatalities, or various forms of deprivation (WHO, 2002).

These factors constitute a political and ecological manifestation (Barquero et al., 2025), classified into three broad axes: 1) self-directed violence: suicide and self-harm behaviors; 2) interpersonal violence: family/domestic violence, intimate partner violence, and community violence; 3) collective violence: social, political, and economic violence.

In the domestic and family context, violence may precede and follow situations of divorce and marital conflict, causing possible dysfunctions in children's development, with major negative repercussions on the life cycle of the family and the individual (Southern & Sullivan, 2021). The types of violence are varied and include physical, psychological, property-related aggression, and *sexual offenses*[2], with high prevalence in the Brazilian population.

The Brazilian Public Security Yearbook, published by the Brazilian Public Security Forum (FBSP, 2025), reveals a critical panorama of public safety and physical and psychological integrity in Brazil in 2024. With regard to gender-based violence, the country recorded 1,492 femicides, representing a 0.7% increase over the previous period, while attempted femicides rose sharply by 19.0%, totaling 3,870 victims. The epidemiological profile of femicide victims indicates that 63.6% are Black women and 70.5% are between 18 and 44 years old, while 97% of aggressors are men and 8 out of 10 deaths were perpetrated by current or former partners, predominantly in the domestic environment, where 64.3% of cases occurred.

At the same time, other forms of interpersonal violence showed different variations: psychological violence reached 51,866 reports (an increase of 6.3%) and the crime of stalking totaled 95,026 occurrences (an increase of 18.2%), whereas threats, although numerous at 747,683 reports, showed a slight decrease of 0.8% (FBSP, 2025). In the field of legal safeguards, Emergency Protective Measures granted increased by 6.6%, reaching 555,001; however, violations of these measures by aggressors also increased by 10.8%, affecting 101,656

[2] Werner (2020) proposes that, in the context of violence against children and adolescents, the term *sexual offense* should replace *sexual abuse* in order to avoid suggesting implicit consent. This choice prioritizes a more rigorous description of the phenomenon, emphasizing the nature of the transgression and the negative impact generated, without the interpretive pitfalls of the word 'abuse'.

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cases. At the same time, Brazil reached the highest number of rapes and rapes of vulnerable persons in its history, with 87,545 victims in 2024, establishing a rate of 41.2 cases per 100,000 inhabitants (FBSP, 2025).

Demographic analysis reveals that 87.7% of victims are female, 55.6% are Black, and 76.8% were legally classified as vulnerable. The home remains the principal location of aggression in 65.7% of occurrences, with perpetrators being mostly family members (45.5%) or intimate partners and former partners (20.3%). Children and adolescents are the primary targets of this violence, with the highest prevalence among those aged 10 to 13 years (32.9%), followed by the 5-to-9 age group (18.2%), 14 to 17 years (16.3%), and 0 to 4 years (10.3%) (FBSP, 2025).

To understand the term *vulnerability* cited by FBSP (2025), it is important to consider the theoretical foundation established by Ayres (2022), in which the concept of vulnerability is structured around three interdependent dimensions that enable a comprehensive understanding of the risks to which individuals are exposed. The first of these spheres, individual vulnerability, refers to the repertoire of information held by the individual, as well as behavioral patterns and specific biological conditions. In parallel, social vulnerability analyzes the individual's insertion into the collective environment, observing access to goods, services, culture, and education, in addition to investigating structures of social relations and prevailing power dynamics. The programmatic dimension evaluates the effectiveness of institutions and public policies, measuring the degree of government commitment to articulating mechanisms that ensure the protection and integrity of individuals in the face of social adversity.

In family and school contexts, children and adolescents may also experience bullying. As proposed by Avilés Martínez (2013), bullying is understood as the systematic perpetration of negative actions that, grounded in a disproportionate power relationship, seek to establish and demonstrate a dynamic of domination and submission among those involved. This practice manifests through several forms of maltreatment. Physically, it is characterized by direct aggression against the body; verbally, it materializes through oral or written insults. In addition, the author identifies social bullying, which operates within interpersonal and group relationships with the purpose of compromising the victim's social status, frequently resulting in processes of isolation and rejection. In parallel, gestural bullying is described as being manifested through facial expressions, looks, and hostile gestures that, in many cases, accompany other forms of aggression. Within the spectrum of coercion, bullying as intimidation is also highlighted, grounded in practices of threats and blackmail, as well as

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cyberbullying, a modality that uses technological resources to enable and expand maltreatment in the digital environment.

Based on the understanding of the concepts, types, and statistics, it is essential to highlight the structural relationship between domestic violence and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). According to the DSM-5-TR (APA, 2023), ASD is a neurodevelopmental disorder defined by persistent impairments in communication and social interaction across different contexts. These alterations include limitations in socioemotional reciprocity, in the use of nonverbal behaviors essential to interaction, and in the ability to develop, maintain, and understand interpersonal relationships.

In addition to impairments in social communication, confirmation of the diagnosis necessarily requires the manifestation of restricted and repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities. Thus, considering the phenotypic characteristics of individuals with ASD and the complexity of the forms in which violence is perpetrated, it is possible to infer increased susceptibility among these individuals, since deficits inherent to social cognition and communication limit the recognition of abusive intentions. Consequently, these impairments act as substantial barriers to articulating reports, accessing protection networks, and seeking specialized support in response to episodes of violence.

Parents of individuals with ASD face marital challenges influenced by the extensive routine of caring for their children, in association with other difficulties experienced by couples. Kanat et al. (2026), in a comparative longitudinal study of Australian mothers of children with ASD (n = 333) and without ASD (n = 8,145), concluded that mothers of children diagnosed with ASD were significantly more likely to report high levels of interpersonal violence compared with mothers of children without ASD, specifically when the children were 4, 6, 8, and 10 years old.

This conflictual dynamic manifests through a higher frequency of verbal altercations (episodes of arguments, insults, shouting, or threats), as well as the occurrence of physical confrontations, ranging from pushing to direct bodily aggression such as punching. From this, it is understood that the current challenges experienced by parents of individuals with ASD constitute crises in the family life cycle due to events such as the outbreak of episodes of domestic violence during critical transitions, considering the definitions of Carter and McGoldrick (2011).

In light of the factors presented, the research problem of this scoping review concerns the search for recent data and studies on domestic violence in families of individuals with ASD.

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Its purpose includes the objectives of mapping international scientific production and identifying gaps in the Brazilian literature on the topic. If these objectives are met, it will be possible to define a general panorama of the phenomenon of domestic violence in families of individuals with ASD, including variables from Brazilian and foreign families.

METHOD

This is a scoping review, a research method characterized by mapping publications on emerging topics, which defines it as an exploratory method. In this research format, the intention is to develop a broad view of the evidence, encompassing quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method studies, without seeking in-depth methodological assessments of risks or biases (Peters et al., 2021).

The guidelines of the PRISMA Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR) protocol (Page et al., 2021; Tricco et al., 2018) were followed because of their reliability in organizing the review process. The study sought to answer the following question: what types of domestic violence occur in families of Brazilian and foreign individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder? Searches for articles on this topic were conducted in April 2026 in the following databases: Latin American and Caribbean Literature on Health Sciences (LILACS); Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO); PubMed; Scopus; and the CAPES Journal Portal. Different databases were selected in order to identify studies from Brazil and abroad. The following descriptors and search strategies[3] were used: (intrafamilial violence AND autism spectrum disorder OR autism); (intrafamilial violence AND autism); (domestic violence AND autism); (family violence AND autism).

To select relevant studies capable of answering the guiding question of this review, specific eligibility criteria were established. Original quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method articles conducted directly with families and published in scientific journals between 2015 and 2026 were included. Publications were required to be available in full through open access, written in Portuguese, English, or Spanish, and to present the search descriptors in the title, abstract, or keywords.

Regarding the target population, studies were required to include adult participants (over 18 years of age) responsible for caring for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), or individuals with ASD from different age groups, provided that they reported experiences related

[3] In accordance with the Health Sciences Descriptors/Medical Subject Headings (DeCS/MeSH).

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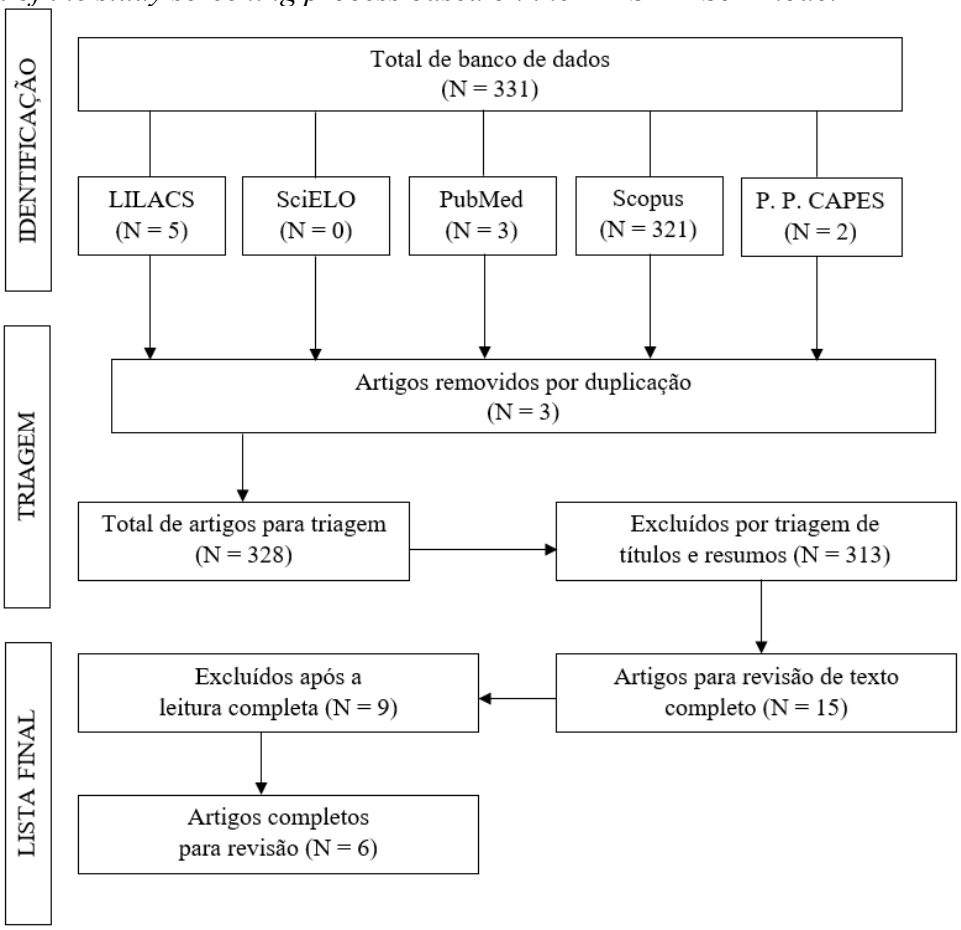
to domestic violence. In contrast, duplicate publications, materials written in languages other than those stipulated, and secondary or incomplete works were excluded, including literature reviews, editorials, commentaries, letters to the editor, and books.

The study selection process, based on the PRISMA-ScR model guidelines and illustrated in Figure 1, was organized with the aid of resources available in the databases themselves, such as favorites lists and record-saving tools. The initial identification stage retrieved 331 records from five different sources: Scopus (321 documents), LILACS (5), PubMed (3), and the CAPES Journal Portal (2), with no returns from SciELO. After removing three duplicate articles, the remaining 328 records underwent preliminary screening based on title and abstract reading.

At this stage, 313 publications that did not meet the inclusion criteria were excluded. The 15 studies considered relevant advanced to the eligibility stage and were read in full, a process that resulted in the exclusion of nine additional records for failing to meet the specific research requirements. Thus, a final sample of six scientific articles was consolidated for qualitative analysis. Finally, for the stage of data collection and synthesis of evidence extracted from this sample, a structured form was created in Google Sheets containing only the items previously stipulated and strictly necessary for the study.

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Figure 1.
Flowchart of the study screening process based on the PRISMA-ScR model



Note. Prepared by the author.

RESULTS

Table 1 summarizes the six articles included in the analysis, detailing information such as authorship, year of publication, country of origin of the sample, objectives, methodological design, main results, types of violence portrayed, and central topics of discussion. In general, quantitative research predominates—specifically cross-sectional or cohort studies—whose findings indicate that people with ASD are at greater risk of experiencing some type of aggression, whether in the domestic environment or in external settings. Among the typologies mapped in the literature, physical and sexual violence appear most frequently. In addition, the studies analyzed clearly highlight the prevalence of intrafamilial and domestic violence against this population, reflecting a vulnerability that is also strongly observed in the context of Brazilian families.

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Table 1.
Summary of the reviewed studies

Researchers / Country	Study objective(s)	Method / Design	Results	Violence portrayed	Central topic
Toseeb, U. et al., 2020 (United Kingdom)	Analyze concurrent associations between involvement in sibling bullying and the psychosocial functioning of this phenomenon in children with and without ASD	Cohort study	Individuals with ASD were more likely to report having been victims of bullying by both siblings and peers during childhood	Psychological and physical (not specified), in domestic and/or public settings	Prevalence and consequences of bullying experiences in children with and without ASD, with a focus on siblings as perpetrators
Hwang, Y. I. et al., 2020 (Australia)	Describe and compare the characteristics of domestic violence incidents involving autistic and non-autistic individuals in New South Wales, Australia	Mixed methods; documentary analysis (police incident records)	The relationship between autistic victims and aggressors was predominantly familial or caregiver-based	Physical	Domestic violence involving people with ASD, both as victims and as perpetrators
Gibbs, V. et al., 2021 (Australia)	Examine whether there is a relationship between intrinsic characteristics, specifically autistic traits and emotional regulation difficulties, and previous experiences of violence	Comparative cross-sectional study, with quantitative analysis of information from a longitudinal research database	A higher proportion of autistic adults reported having experienced sexual and physical violence during childhood. Autistic adults were more likely to report that they had never confided in anyone about their experiences	Sexual and physical	Sexual and physical violence among people with and without ASD, in childhood and adulthood
Carter Leno, V. et al., 2022 (Canada)	Verify whether there is a correlation between family exposure to stressful life events (family SLEs[4]) and childhood mental health problems, and whether cognitive flexibility moderates the pathway between exposure to family SLEs and childhood mental health problems	Cohort study	Analyses showed no significant correlations between internalizing or externalizing symptoms and stressful life events in the family context	Various (not specified)	Family exposure to stressful life events and childhood mental health problems; cognitive flexibility and moderation between exposure to family SLEs and childhood mental health problems

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Airikka, A. et al., 2023 (Finland)	Analyze in mothers and their children whether maternal exposure to abuse and/or neglect in their own childhood was associated with greater risks of mental and behavioral disorders in their children	Cohort study	Maternal exposure to childhood abuse, but not neglect, was associated with greater risks of mental and behavioral disorders in children	Physical, psychological, and sexual	Possible relationships between physical, sexual, and psychological offenses experienced by mothers and the mental health of their children
Dion, J. et al., 2024 (Canada)	Compare the profiles of autistic and non-autistic children in confirmed cases of maltreatment, seeking to identify how an autism diagnosis influences characteristics of neglect/abuse and the response of the protection system	Quantitative, descriptive, and cross-sectional	Autistic children who experienced maltreatment face specific challenges that require protective interventions adapted to their particular needs	Physical; sexual; psychological; neglect in general	Determine whether autistic children are more exposed to violence in childhood

Note. Prepared by the author.

Analysis Categories

The objectives of mapping international scientific production and identifying gaps in the Brazilian literature were achieved, revealing an absence of national studies that met the inclusion criteria of this research. For this reason, the presentation, analysis, and discussion of the types of violence and their triggering factors were based exclusively on investigations conducted with families abroad. From the full-text reading of these articles, six central thematic axes emerged to guide the discussion of the results: the authors' methodological preference for comparing groups with and without the disorder; the multifactorial genesis of violence; the different typologies of aggression; the intergenerational nature of violence and its relationship with the development of mental disorders in childhood; the role of people with ASD as victims and/or perpetrators; and, finally, the correlation between violence and stressful life events (SLEs).

Comparison between ASD and non-ASD groups

Exploring the first axis, which addresses the comparison between groups with and without ASD, this design is observed to be a very common procedure in studies of human behavioral sciences. This practice occurs because of the intention to establish the rigor of the

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experimental method, which is based on the need to isolate variables and identify specific markers that define a condition through inferential statistics (Andery, 2010; Cozby, 2003). The predominance of this analytical format in the studies included in the review makes it possible to infer that the investigation of social phenomena in the context of autism is still a recent field of study. This incipience is reinforced by the volume of publications found: over the last ten years, only six articles on violence involving this population met the rigorous criteria established for inclusion in this research.

Multifactorial genesis of violence

Both articles analyzed cite factors other than the ASD diagnosis that correlate with violence in families. This aspect is observed specifically in the works of Dion et al. (2024) and Toseeb et al. (2020), which, in order to understand domestic violence, focus on the individual characteristics of each child with ASD, the socioeconomic context, physical and/or mental health problems of caregivers, use of psychoactive substances, family composition, and parenting styles. It is important to understand that these factors show that the problem of violence is not caused by autism itself, but that there is a correlation between the characteristics of people with this condition and other social and health variables that permeate experiences of aggression. The gender variable can also be added to this scenario. In Brazil, there is an important emphasis on understanding domestic violence also as gender-based violence, given that, in addition to children and adolescents, most cases involve women as victims, frequently culminating in femicides associated with various forms of prior aggression (Cerqueira & Bueno, 2024).

Types of violence

Understanding how these forms of violence occur and manifest helps to perceive the seriousness of the facts. In the specific context of ASD, the studies by Toseeb et al. (2020) and Gibbs et al. (2021) report that individuals on the autism spectrum are at greater risk of suffering some type of violence because of characteristics of the disorder itself, such as difficulties in understanding social cues. Therefore, it is understood that detailed characterization of the type of offense reveals part of the aggressors' profile, which may mitigate victims' exposure through psychoeducational strategies. Such violence occurs in various forms, inside and outside the home, encompassing physical, sexual, psychological, moral, and property-related aggression,

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as well as maltreatment and neglect. These acts constitute social phenomena that directly affect individuals, families, intimate partners, and the entire community (Minayo et al., 2022). Given their reach across all layers of society, attention must be drawn to the fact that psychological phenomena are also intrinsically social, developing from a complex process of learning in the environment (Tourinho, 2009). Thus, situations of violence are understood to cause serious harm to victims' development and psychological well-being.

Intergenerationality, violence, and the development of mental disorders in childhood

Bridging discussions between the genesis and typologies of aggression, Airikka et al. (2023) highlight the intergenerational trajectories of violence, demonstrating the relationship between maternal exposure to abuse in childhood and the diagnosis of mental and behavioral disorders in their children, including ASD. This finding introduces an important issue concerning children's emotional health, which traverses knowledge about contingencies established by selection by consequences, involving phylogeny, ontogeny, and culture (Rocha et al., 2023). From this behavior-analytic perspective, emotional reactivity can be understood as related to a phylogenetic element; the learning history of interfering and violent behaviors constitutes ontogeny; and culture, in turn, is associated with the selection of social and verbal practices maintained by interlocking contingencies across generations.

People with ASD as victims and/or perpetrators of violence

This category presents a noteworthy finding concerning the individual with ASD in the role of perpetrator, as observed in Hwang et al. (2020), even though all statistics indicate that, in most cases, they are in the position of victims. It is possible to conceive that there are different social, family, and developmental configurations within the autism spectrum. The infantilized stereotype created by ableism regarding people with ASD and other disabilities (Gesser et al., 2020) may explain the surprise at recognizing that, even with limitations, a person with a disability may commit offenses (Allely, 2022). Personal capacities are not related only to benevolence and compassion, as proposed by the view of the person constructed by ableism. The opposite extreme may also occur, with anger and aggressiveness, especially in the reproduction of violent behaviors learned in the family environment through coercion-based learning (Sidman, 2009), given that violent behavior is not a symptom of autism, but rather a

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socially constituted and learned phenomenon, often concealed by the invisibility produced by ableism.

Stressful Life Events (SLEs)

Carlson (2014) conceptualizes stressful life events (SLEs) as objective and unplanned episodes that, because of their undesirable and uncontrollable nature, disrupt normative development. Such events, whose temporal boundaries are clear, are typically responsible for causing major life changes in the trajectory of those who experience them. In this context, domestic violence can be conceptualized as an SLE (Carter Leno et al., 2022), allowing important relationships to be established between this phenomenon and impaired emotional health conditions among people with ASD, which highlights the negative repercussions of violence on the psychological well-being of neurodivergent individuals.

DISCUSSION

This section discusses the relationships between the findings in the literature and the academic concepts known in the field of violence studies, addressed in the introduction. Throughout the development of this work, the configuration of the study was altered due to the lack of articles on domestic violence in Brazilian families of people with ASD that fit the inclusion criteria. This factor made it possible to develop a new objective related to analyzing and understanding domestic violence in families of people with ASD abroad, based on important and noteworthy findings presented in the Results and Analysis Categories sections.

It is important to highlight the consonance among all the studies analyzed and the traditional concept of violence proposed by the WHO (2002). When observing how the authors discuss violence, it can be seen that, whether or not they cite the WHO, there is theoretical and technical consistency in the definitions. The theoretical categories described in the traditional literature on the topic are perceived in all articles included in the review. Toseeb et al. (2020) describe types of violence only briefly and without much specification, but, considering that their topic concerns bullying, it is understood to involve physical and psychological violence, as conceptualized by Avilés Martínez (2013) and highlighted in Table 1.

General statistics on violence in the countries of the studies analyzed were cited as introductory elements in the texts, which, together with the authors' statistical production on violence involving people with ASD (Hwang et al., 2020; Toseeb et al., 2020), made it possible

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to emphasize the actual seriousness of this phenomenon. The Brazilian Public Security Yearbook (FBSP, 2025) reports serious sexual offenses against children and adolescents, but does not specify the percentage of violence experienced by people with disabilities. However, it can be understood that when the document cites violence among vulnerable populations, people with disabilities are included in these Brazilian statistics.

Violence data in Brazil are highly compatible with the findings of Hwang et al. (2020) in Australia, showing that incidents involving people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are more prevalent in the domestic environment, similarly to what occurs with various vulnerable populations in Brazil. This understanding of vulnerability is supported by the theoretical foundations of Ayres (2022) and necessarily requires the deconstruction of the romanticized view that the home is intrinsically always a safe and welcoming environment.

Consistent with the complexity of this scenario, the findings of Airikka et al. (2023) align with the contributions of Barquero et al. (2025). Although they use different methods, the authors converge in pointing to the multifactorial genesis of violence, understanding it from the interaction among its political, ecological, and intergenerational dimensions, whose consequences cause profound social and psychological harm. Such negative repercussions on the life cycle of the family and the individual, as addressed by Southern and Sullivan (2021), create space for analyzing violence as a Stressful Life Event. This concept, defined by Carlson (2014) and explored by Carter Leno et al. (2022), is fundamental for explaining how stressful events affect children's mental health, favoring the development of internalizing and externalizing symptoms.

From this perspective, the traditional concepts of the family life cycle proposed by Carter and McGoldrick (2011) are validated for contexts that extend beyond their initial definitions restricted to family therapy. It therefore becomes possible to apply the concept of crisis in the life cycle, in which the SLE acts as a triggering element or an integral part of this critical moment. A clear theoretical approximation among different conceptual perspectives can thus be observed in explaining the phenomenon.

When this dynamic is analyzed in light of the DSM-5-TR diagnostic criteria, it is understood that the characteristics of ASD themselves may accentuate susceptibility to these situations. Difficulties in social communication and restricted and repetitive patterns of behavior frequently impair the individual's cognitive flexibility. In certain contexts, this may escalate into aggression and offenses, increasing the likelihood that people with ASD become involved in episodes of violence, either as victims or as perpetrators (Hwang et al., 2020).

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Finally, it is important to emphasize the articulation constructed throughout this analysis, which integrates assumptions from Behavior Analysis—anchored in classic authors such as Cozby (2003), Andery (2010), Tourinho (2009), and Sidman (2009)—with scholars from other epistemological traditions. Far from constituting theoretical eclecticism, this analytical movement represents a deliberate effort to demonstrate that violence can be elucidated through multiple lenses that converge in viewing it as a negative and multifactorial reality. This approximation between the social issue and psychological science is grounded in coherent articulations that are essential to understanding and welcoming the complex experiences of families facing these regrettable situations.

The study limitations were encountered when searches were conducted in the databases and it became apparent that the objectives would probably not be achieved. Many studies with excellent methodological rigor were found, such as those included in the review. However, for those interested in the topic of violence in families of people with ASD, a new problem emerges, given that few recent open-access studies were found in international databases. In relation to Brazil, no study was found. These data may indicate that social issues related to ASD still face substantial invisibility. Many studies seek to investigate only biological factors, diagnosis, and therapeutic interventions.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This paper reports a scoping review whose objectives were to map international scientific production and identify gaps in the Brazilian literature on domestic violence in families of people with ASD. The gap in Brazilian production was evidenced by the absence of articles that met the inclusion criteria. Six studies of high methodological rigor were identified and analyzed on the basis of theoretical categories. Different understandings of the phenomenon of domestic violence could be developed through the articulation of varied theoretical approaches within psychological science and statistical data from Brazil and abroad. Contemporary concepts involving stressful life events, vulnerability, and the family life cycle could be analyzed and discussed, given the consonance among the themes and the effort to conceptualize violence as a social, psychological, political, and ecological phenomenon.

Future studies may use different research methods and theoretical foundations to investigate domestic violence in Brazilian families of people with ASD, with the purpose of filling this gap. In this way, realities that are little known to state authorities and the general

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population may be brought to light, encouraging initiatives and actions aimed at overcoming the complex phenomenon of domestic violence.

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