

## BETWEEN PAN-BANGING AND DRUMMING: NOTES ON THE RESISTANCE OF FEMALE STUDENTS VICTIMS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN THE VOCATIONAL SCHOOL OF IFRN

M. C. X. DA COSTA<sup>1</sup>, A. A. DE LIMA NETO<sup>2</sup>, J. THOMAS<sup>3</sup>

Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Rio Grande de Norte<sup>1,2</sup>, Université Jean Monnet<sup>3</sup>

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3863-6683><sup>1</sup>

[caroliinaxavier1@gmail.com](mailto:caroliinaxavier1@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>

Submitted 03/10/2025 - Accepted 09/12/2025

DOI: 10.15628/holos.2025.19106

### ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the resistance strategies developed by female students who are victims of gender-based violence in the Vocational High School Program at IFRN. The qualitative research used the solicited diary technique and Discursive Textual Analysis (DTA) to understand the subjectivation and resistance processes of a student, pseudonymously named Sabela. Following

incidents of harassment, she engaged in collective actions such as discussion circles, demonstrations, and silent protests. The study shows that even in violent contexts, passive and active resistance can be built through sorority and political engagement. The results highlight the importance of institutional support and peer solidarity in combating gender-based violence in schools.

**KEYWORDS:** resistance; gender-based violence; sorority; subjectivation; vocational education.

## ENTRE PANELOS E BATUQUES: NOTAS SOBRE AS RESISTÊNCIAS DAS ESTUDANTES VÍTIMAS DE VIOLÊNCIA DE GÊNERO NO ENSINO MÉDIO INTEGRADO DO IFRN

### RESUMO

O artigo analisa as resistências desenvolvidas por estudantes vítimas de violência de gênero no Ensino Médio Integrado do IFRN. A pesquisa, de abordagem qualitativa, utilizou a técnica do diário solicitado e a Análise Textual Discursiva (ATD) para compreender os processos de subjetivação e resistência de uma aluna ficticiamente chamada Sabela. A partir de episódios de assédio, a estudante engajou-se em ações coletivas,

como rodas de conversa, manifestações e protestos silenciosos. A pesquisa evidencia que, mesmo em contextos de violência, é possível construir práticas de resistência passiva e ativa por meio da sororidade e do engajamento político. Os resultados apontam a relevância do acolhimento institucional e do apoio entre pares na luta contra a violência de gênero no ambiente escolar.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** resistência; violência de gênero; sororidade; subjetivação; educação profissional.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

When observing the current scenario of violence in Brazil, it clearly has targets, or rather, specific bodies. Among them are black people, women, lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender people, transvestites, transsexuals, queer, intersex, asexuals, and more (LGBTQIA+) (Silva, 2020). Regarding violence against women, the technical note on this subject, published by *the Brazilian Forum on Public Security*<sup>1</sup>, shows that in 2021, on average, a woman was the victim of femicide every seven hours.

In the same year, every ten minutes, a girl or woman was raped. Between 2020 and 2021, there was a 3.7% increase in rape cases. Also in 2021, the state of Rio Grande do Norte recorded a 16.9% increase in reports of this type of crime compared to the previous year (FÓRUM BRASILEIRO DE SEGURANÇA PÚBLICA, 2022). We are talking here about the most visible and brutal forms of violence against women, the extreme pole of a "*continuum* of femicide" (Taraud, 2022) that includes much more banal and symbolic manifestations of violence, such as beauty or grammatical standards, which are authorized and organized collectively and even at state level.

Violence is a complex phenomenon, experienced in various social environments, such as the street, the home, the workplace, and the school. Various types of prejudice and discrimination occur in schools. However, the culture developed within schools fails to recognize them, as there is an impregnation of supposed equality in such spaces, adhering to the idea that everyone who passes through them is equal, as they are being treated in the same way (Moreira & Candau, 2003).

From this perspective, in the educational process, from early childhood education to postgraduate studies, the full citizenship of LGBTQIA+ individuals and women has been threatened, since (as demonstrated in previous studies) these individuals suffer constant violence such as moral and sexual harassment, insults, silencing, misogyny, sexism, and LGBTphobia in school and non-school environments. This has caused psychological suffering and physical harm. At the same time, young people engage in self-harm, consume alcohol and other drugs, suffer from eating disorders, and attempt suicide. Anxiety disorders also arise, in addition to coping with fear, academic demotivation, apprehension, and insecurity in educational settings (Primo, 2018; Lima Neto, Cavalcanti & Gleyse, 2018; Costa, 2022).

A person's cognitive, emotional, physical, and social life can be greatly transformed by the impacts of violence. When it takes hold in schools, it can turn an environment that should be safe into a place of oppression. This situation is perhaps even more worrying in vocational and technical education institutions (EPT in Portuguese), such as the Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Rio Grande do Norte (IFRN in Portuguese), given that their educational approach is based on comprehensive human development. This parameter requires schools and their educators

---

<sup>1</sup> The Brazilian Forum on Public Security (FBSP) is a non-governmental organization composed of researchers, social scientists, federal, civil, and military police officers, and public managers who work to promote transparency in information on violence and security policies (FÓRUM DE BRASILEIRO DE SEGURANÇA PÚBLICA, 2023).

to understand gender and sexual diversity issues from an inclusive, pluralistic, and democratic perspective (Lima Júnior, 2021), as well as to promote the fight against violence.

Students in the Federal Network of Professional, Scientific, and Technological Education (RFEPECT in Portuguese) have found ways to be heard after spending a long time in silence. Some students are pursuing education to earn qualifications and break free from misogynistic practices; other young women have organized themselves into feminist, black, or LGBTQIA+ collectives to find support and even produce documentaries, such as “Meu fuá tem poder” (My hair has power<sup>2</sup>) (Costa, Lima Neto & Thomas, 2022), and such student movements can be identified as strategies of resistance. Throughout this paper, we will present other ways to resist gender-based violence experienced at IFRN.

This work is an excerpt from a master's thesis completed in 2022 in the Graduate Program in Professional Education (PPGEP) at IFRN<sup>3</sup>. The investigation was developed as part of a larger research project funded by CNPq<sup>4</sup>, entitled *Body, gender, and sexuality in professional education: epistemological and subjective scenarios*, conducted at the Diversity Observatory (IFRN/CNPq).

The general objective of the master's research was to understand the articulations between pedagogical practices at IFRN and the processes of subjectivation of female students enrolled in Integrated Secondary Education (EMI) at IFRN who experience gender-based violence. This article aims to unveil the processes of subjectivation of these students, focusing on their forms of resistance, based on an in-depth analysis of a single empirical case, constructed through the solicited diary technique of a student identified by the pseudonym Sabela. The use of only one diary allows for a more in-depth analysis of the experiences of resistance that emerge as strategies to confront gender-based violence in the school environment.

This paper is subdivided into this introduction, followed by a section with theoretical debates. Subsequently, the methodology adopted is outlined, and the research results are analyzed. Finally, in the concluding remarks, some key aspects and possible developments are emphasized.

## 2 THEORETICAL REFERENCE

Violence is polysemic, which is why its definition is complex (Minayo, 2013). The meaning of violence is quite broad due to its physical, psychological, and symbolic dimensions (Chauí, 2019). For Minayo (2013), violence is the result and consequence of social relations. Its meaning comes from the word *vis*, which in Latin means “force”, referring to the use of physical superiority over others. It is a human and social fact that has unfolded throughout history. Some of its forms persist over time and extend across almost all societies, such as gender violence or “racial” discrimination (Cohen, 2022). These properties of violence, these dimensions, can clarify what we are studying.

<sup>2</sup> Available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C43b5NOa\\_oY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C43b5NOa_oY). Accessed on May 21, 2023.

<sup>3</sup> We would like to thank Ilane Ferreira Cavalcante and Rossana Rameh-de-Albuquerque for reading and contributing to this paper.

<sup>4</sup> MCTIC/CNPq Call No. 28/2018 - Universal/Band A.

Among the various forms of violence described by Minayo (2013), cultural violence (expressed through values, beliefs, and practices) is the focus of this study. According to the author, this manifestation of violence is subdivided into three specific types: gender, racial, and against people with disabilities<sup>5</sup>. She also classifies the nature of violence into five modes of expression, also called abuse or mistreatment: physical (causing bodily injury through force), psychological (verbal or gestural aggression, rejection, humiliation, restriction of freedom, forced social isolation), sexual (encouraging or inciting the victim to engage in erotic, pornographic, or sexual practices), involving neglect, abandonment, or deprivation of care (lack of support, attention, and care toward a dependent person), and finally, economic and financial abuse (improper or illegal exploitation of monetary and property resources).

In this paper, violence is approached from a gender perspective, specifically regarding violence against women, notably its psychological effects. To provide a theoretical basis for gender violence, we draw on the studies of Saffioti (2015), who argues that the phenomenon in question can affect women, children, and adolescents, both within and outside the home. In the same vein, we agree with Simonetti's (2021) definition, according to which gender-based violence can be manifested in verbal, physical, psychological, interpersonal, or institutional ways. According to Taraud (2022, p. 14), in contrast to the term "crime of passion" used to describe homicides committed by former spouses, which often confines gender-based violence to the intimate sphere and the individual, violence can (and should) be seen as occurring in all eras, in all spaces, and in many dimensions, forming a *continuum*; so that it can be seen as a "*total* crime perpetrated against women," based on the patriarchal system. Also according to Taraud (2022), gender-based violence is a manifestation of the power of men over women—which may be linked to other power relations (race, class, age or sexuality, in particular).

Even when subjected to violence and power used against them, female students at EMI at IFRN have sought means of resistance. Michel Foucault (1988, p. 91), in stating that "where there is power, there is resistance," argues that power relations are opportunities to open ways of countering subjection through the creation of other ways of being. This resistance is strategic and combative. He also uses the word in the plural, emphasizing the diversity of this movement of insubordination:

[Resistances] are unique cases: possible, necessary, improbable, spontaneous, wild, solitary, planned, protracted, violent, irreconcilable, ready for compromise, self-interested, or doomed to sacrifice; by definition, they cannot exist except in the strategic field of power relations (Foucault, 1988, p. 91).

There are different forms of resistance that we were able to study during our research: individual and collective resistance, passive and active resistance. In this regard, the concept of sorority also emerged from the analysis of the information collected throughout our study. We worked with it from the perspective of Penkala (2014, p. 225). The student interviewed found

---

<sup>5</sup> We could add violence linked to class, sexuality, age, regional or national origin, etc.

sorority at a difficult time, through collectivity, that is, with the unity and acceptance of other women. From sorority, the students built means of resistance. The unity and acceptance organized by them expresses the meaning of the concept, which is connected to a pact of sisterhood among women for a common purpose. As we noted earlier, this pact even went beyond the barriers of the IFRN *campus* we investigated, reaching other units of the institution and external communities where women in situations of social vulnerability were found.

Regarding this relationship, Penkala (2014, p. 225) adds that, from this shared goal, “practices emerge that propose, preserve, and encourage mutual protection, solidarity, and the defense of class rights (of the ‘female class’) based on experiences in the patriarchal context.” From this perspective of resistance, we will analyze the experience of a female student at IFRN. In the next section, we will outline the methodological aspects of the research and present Sabela's case.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

This research is based on the qualitative approach as explained by Sandín Esteban (2010), understood as a systematic activity aimed at understanding educational and social phenomena, with a view to transforming socio-educational practices and spaces.

As a data collection tool, we used the requested diary technique, commonly applied in sensitive, private, or difficult research. According to Paula Meth (2019), this technique can induce personal reflections and stimulate selective and partial ideas about the participant's life. The requested diary stands out from other techniques because it has special temporal qualities, since thoughts and interpretations are recorded in real time. To write the diaries, participants received a script with guidelines for daily writing. The support material is organized into three parts: the first brings up topics related to family; the second describes daily school life; and the third, finally, refers more directly to gender violence.

The technique can be applied with the aid of technological devices or handwritten notes. In the case of this research, the participant chose to use the *WhatsApp*<sup>6</sup> message app to write the diary. A group was created on WhatsApp with the participant and a researcher, in which there was a constant exchange of messages. In the daily dialogue process, audio messages, photos, videos, and written reports were sent. The participant was free to send her reports at the time she felt most comfortable, considering that the memories could be painful, which would take longer to talk about.

The participants in the study were female students of legal age enrolled in EMI courses at *campi* A and B of the IFRN<sup>7</sup>. We used two strategies to compose our sample: firstly, we turned to

<sup>6</sup> The *WhatsApp* application allows the creation of groups with a minimum of two people. In these groups, all members have access to the written content.

<sup>7</sup> Nomenclatures such as "A" and "B" are used to refer to *the campi* where the research was conducted. This approach was taken for ethical research reasons.

students who sought the Psychology Service<sup>8</sup> at *Campus A* in 2019-2020 and presented complaints identified by psychologists as violence. The psychologists consulted the students and mediated to find out which ones would be willing to participate in the investigation.

The group of participants was also formed through another strategy: a teacher from *Campus B* conversed with female students who were victims of gender-based violence. As this paper is an excerpt from a master's thesis, consisting of the collection of three requested diaries, we used only one of them to write the text. In order to guarantee anonymity and respect ethical procedures, we replaced the participant's name with the name of a character from a novel by Conceição Evaristo<sup>9</sup> entitled *Sabela*. We emphasize that we found *Sabela* through the second strategy, which involved mediation by the teacher from *Campus B*.

*Sabela* is a romance that can be read in the book "Histórias de leves enganos e parecenças" (2017). As in almost all the author's texts, the one we chose for dialogue with the fieldwork of the research explicitly presents female strength. This manifestation is showed through the lineage of the *Sabelas*, consisting of a grandmother, daughter, and granddaughters, all bearing the same name. In the romance, the lives of the *Sabelas* intertwine in an incredible dance, governed by nature. Their stories are intertwined with a flood, an event that destroys the city and kills many people.

During the story, a detail caught our attention and encouraged us to intercross the romance with the life of our participant. We will focus on the matriarch of the family, Grandma *Sabela*, beloved by many people because she fertilized the city when she gave birth to her daughter (known in the story as *Mamãe Sabela*, *Sabela-Menina*, or *Menina-Bruxa*) in a riverbed. The city suffered from infertility. However, after this happened, when women bathed in the river, they became pregnant. Childbirth began to take place on its banks, whose waters were fertilized by Grandma *Sabela's* blood.

*Sabela-Menina* had always been very wise, and her wisdom was seen as "witchcraft" (Evaristo, 2017, p. 63). The people of her town soon sentenced her to death by drowning. But the young woman was protected by the elders. And so the fury of her accusers fell upon Grandmother *Sabela*, who was no longer loved by everyone. As a result, she had to seek shelter on the outskirts, where the *Palaví* people lived. However, the town censors watched over Grandmother *Sabela*, preventing her from reaching her place of refuge.

Then Grandmother *Sabela* received help from the women who had found fertility by bathing in the riverbed. Each woman took one of her eyes, the one that saw best, and placed it on Grandmother *Sabela's* body. Thus, she became the woman with a thousand eyes and began to see everything and nothing, and even the essence of the invisible. On this aspect, Conceição Evaristo (2017, p. 67) points out: "her gaze, an incandescent flame, the collective strength of the other women, burned every enemy who threatened her along the way." The eyes that remained in her

<sup>8</sup> A department existing on all IFRN *campi*, responsible for monitoring demands more directly related to psychological aspects of learning and education in a broader sense. This department is in constant contact with Student Assistance and the Technical-Pedagogical Team (ETEP in Portuguese).

<sup>9</sup> Writer and researcher born in Belo Horizonte (MG), one of the leading figures in Afro-Brazilian literature.



feet brought lightness to her gait, and those in her mouth resonated with melodious sounds, which made the character flee, sing, and resist.

Our Sabela fertilized *Campus B* with her pain and tears. She was harassed in class and did not remain silent. She sought institutional support but was not well received. On the other hand, she found shelter among the students of the Support for Female Students (AME in Portuguese), which is a group formed by female staff and students at IFRN. It originated on *Campus B* and over the years has invested in its expansion across *campi* to become a network. Its goal is to foster debate, share experiences, and carry out activities on gender inequality and combating violence against women at IFRN.

The young women helped Sabela, and just like the women in the book, they "gave her their eyes" so that she could see, fight, walk, shout, and resist. Together, they promoted events to combat harassment on *Campus B*. Our participant managed to inspire other students, making them aware of the importance of fighting against harassment in the school environment. She revolutionized her environment when she echoed her voice and decided to report the harassing teacher.

Another characteristic shared between the book character and our participant is single motherhood. At our previous meeting, the young woman appeared with her daughter. We had the privilege of meeting Sabela Mother and Sabela Daughter. We highlight that the secret behind Sabela's name lies in matriarchy, a history led by the presence of women, in the collective of women, in the strength of single mothers. Sabela is a matriarchal name, repeated throughout generations. It is the name of the grandmother, the mother, and the young daughter. In addition, both the participant and the character are strong, courageous, and resilient.

The wordplay in Sabela also catches our attention. Conceição Evaristo's literature delights in playing with the names of her characters. We can think of the combination of the words *Sábia* (wise) and *Bela* (beautiful), characteristics that are strong in our participant. However, this same wordplay makes us play and reflect on our student's story: who sought to find out about Sabela? Who sought to know her? Who is concerned about knowing her? Or rather, who was concerned about knowing the young woman behind the controversial actions against harassment on *Campus B*? Through our research, we became concerned and sought to know her.

Sabela is a 22-year-old woman who became a single mother at 17. She hopes that her daughter will not go through the same suffering she experienced as a student at EMI. A former student of biomedical equipment at *Campus B*, she attended elementary school at a public school. During the writing of our research, she worked as a salesperson in a mall in Natal (RN). She lived with her boyfriend and together they had a family income between one and two minimum wages.

That said, we will now explain the methodology used to analyze the material produced with the requested diary: Discursive Textual Analysis (DTA), organized into several stages. The first stage focuses on breaking down the texts, commonly referred to as the unitarization process, in which the materials are examined in detail and fragmented to find constituent units that are related to the phenomena studied. Subsequently, relationships are established, called categorization, and at this point, relationships are constructed between the base units, combining and classifying them to

gather the unitary elements into categories. Finally, in the third stage, the metatext is constructed, the result of the previous steps (Moraes, 2003).

In the research, we used the following *a priori* categories (those derived from the theoretical framework adopted): Resistance and Violence/Suffering. From these two, emerged the following units of meaning: denounce, feminists, protest, courage, drumming, fight, shout, strength, harassment, pain, fear, cry, silenced, trauma, raped, aggressor, sexism, violence, shaken, kill, victim, anguished, sadness. In this paper, we articulate these units into the following emerging categories: Resistance and (re)invention of female students who are victims of gender violence in Integrated High School: the case of Sabela. The following section reveals the results of the DTA applied to Sabela's requested diary.

#### 4 RESISTANCE AND (RE)INVENTION OF FEMALE STUDENTS WHO ARE VICTIMS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN INTEGRATED SECONDARY EDUCATION: THE CASE OF SABELA

From a Foucauldian perspective, we see that resistance generates a shift in the dynamics of power. These dynamics undergo transformations as subjects invest in struggles that alter hierarchies, values, symbolic structures, and ways of conceiving and organizing reality. Female students are protagonists in power relations and construct forms of resistance, which manifest themselves in two ways: passive and active. It should be added that, initially, the events were experienced at the individual level, but soon took on a collective form of mobilization, as it will be shown.

In order to better understand the analysis carried out in the following section, we present Table 1:

**Table 1: Forms of resistance.**

| Passive resistance  | Active resistance   |
|---|---|
| Conversation circles;<br>Meetings to clarify administrative processes against harassment;<br>Awareness-raising activities (debates, film screenings, Instagram livestreams);<br>Research on institutional documents (IFRN Didactic Organization); | Initiation of administrative proceedings against harassers;<br>Written manifesto delivered to <i>campus</i> management;<br>Drumming protests; |

**Source:** Elaborated by the authors (2023).

In the following sections, we analyze the resistance raised in episodes of gender violence suffered by female students at IFRN.

##### 4.1 From passive resistance to active resistance

The story of the character Sabela, by Conceição Evaristo, and that of the research participant are intertwined in their aspects of resistance. Both sought ways to (re)invent themselves amid the



adversities of life. Our Sabela was a student who made history at *Campus B*, but it cost her a lot of tears and pain. In her accounts, the young woman says that she sought support on *campus* and was unsuccessful. After her unsuccessful search for support, she spoke about the situations that occurred with the harassing professor to a female professor who directed her to talk to the students of AME. With AME, she was able to vent and joined the group, starting a form of passive resistance, characterized by an experience of mutual support among students, later counting on the presence of female professors and administrative staff.

In the early days of AME, *Campus B* experienced recurring incidents of harassment. The group was founded due to the harassment experienced by a student who, unable to find support, was afraid to attend classes. She then decided to organize a meeting to discuss appropriate procedures to be taken in situations of harassment by staff members. Forty women attended the meeting, and the student in question suggested the name for the group.

At the beginning of the movement, meetings were held weekly. In the following months, AME's actions expanded to *campi X, Y, and Z*. Thus began an expansion of passive resistance: initially, mobilization increased in terms of the number of participants on *the campus* itself; later, it spread to other *campi*. The point of resistance, initially focused on one location, introduced "cleavages that shift, break units, and give rise to regroupings" (Foucault, 1988, p. 92), as we shall see.

Amidst the pandemic, in addition to mutual support, the group carried out awareness-raising actions. A shift in the resistance strategy then began: it took on the contours of active resistance, characterized by more direct confrontation with the harassers and/or institutional management. From then on, passive and active forms of resistance began to combine. In the Manifesto written by the collective<sup>10</sup>, we can see some of the activities carried out, including the filing of lawsuits against harassers and acts against harassment— that is, more direct forms of resistance— combined with inclusive debates, exchanges of experiences, and educational activities in group, that is, more indirect forms of resistance.

Under the auspices of AME, students from various *campi* carried out an interesting virtual action. They sent photos of protests against harassment. In the images, the students held signs with the phrase: *#For an IFRN without harassers*. The action involved students from seven *campi*. During the pandemic, the group promoted livestreams on women's health, a sanitary pad donation campaign for the Emmanuel Bezerra Occupation, and debates about films.

Clearly, the initial mobilization expanded beyond its origin — that is, the experiences of harassment on *campus*. Now, resistance strategies were directed at targets outside the *campus*, including expressing sisterhood (Penkala, 2014), as bonds of solidarity and care were formed among women exposed to shared vulnerabilities, both on and off *campus*, beyond the harassment that sparked the mobilization.

<sup>10</sup> Available at: <https://www.instagram.com/ame.ifcm/> . Accessed on June 3, 2023.

## 4.2 The articulation between passive and active forms of resistance

There were two forms of resistance put into practice by students, teachers, and administrative staff: initially, a passive resistance (mutual support and awareness campaign) and then active resistance (complaints and administrative proceedings against harassers, demonstrations on *campus*). From then on, the two forms of resistance have been linked.

Thus, after Sabela joined AME, the students intensified their active forms of resistance. In one of her conversations with the group, Sabela noted that she was bothered by the professor's attitude and believed that other students felt the same way. Based on this, they decided to confront the staff. To do so, they organized a drum circle. The noise expressed the pain felt at that moment. As a result of the event, AME grew significantly and many other stories of harassment on *the campus* emerged. In Figure 1, we can see the invitation to the drumming event which was on social media. The image was sent by Sabela:

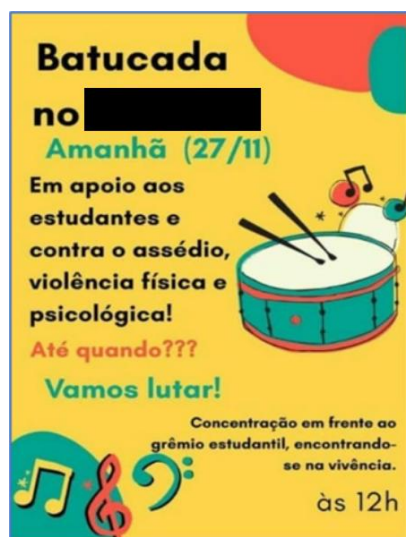


Figure 1: The drumming.

Source: Sabela's personal archive (2022).

There is a slogan on the poster. The strategy of using sound and music served as a form of intervention for the students. Sabela says that the students brought pots and pans and made posters with feminist slogans and other phrases uttered by Sabela's abusive teacher.

In Figure 2, we can see the phrase spoken at the moment of the participant's assault: "*Stay out of it, I'll deal with her.*" In the photo, there are other expressions that were inserted into the image to be posted on social media. Sabela typed: The phrase that made me NOT SHUT UP. Right after that, she added another text: The struggle has been hard, painful, and exhausting, and I am aware of that, but I WILL NEVER SHUT UP AND GIVE UP this fight, not only for myself, but for all those who have remained silent out of fear.

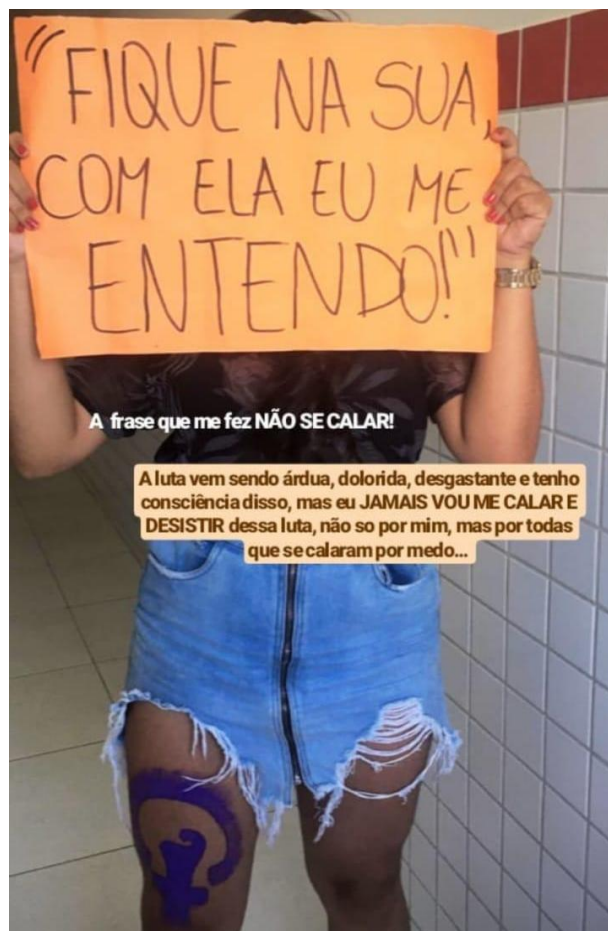


Figure 2: Resistance

Source: Sabela's personal archive (2022).

The capital letters highlight the phrase "Don't be silent". Sabela could have hidden herself, but her form of resistance developed gradually, shifting from the individual to the collective, until she was able to raise her voice and her whole body in protest, as shown in Figure 2. In the other sentence, the young woman recounts how difficult it has been but emphasizes in capital letters that she will never be silent or give up. She emphasizes that her fight is for all female students who are victims of harassment.

In the image, we see the symbol of feminist resistance drawn on the student's leg. The color of the ink is purple, which follows the lilac/purple color palette of feminism. The materiality of her own body emerges as an instrument of active resistance, which goes beyond her own life and connects her to so many other girls and women who are victims of harassment—as the symbol of feminism drawn on her leg seems to indicate.

Sabela talks about the day of the drumming:

We all left in a line across *the campus*, entering the corridors in some areas, such as the library and the cafeteria. We didn't tell anyone; it was something internal, just between students. Our intention

in not telling anyone was precisely to bother the staff, to make them feel uncomfortable, just as we felt uncomfortable (Sabela, 2022)<sup>11</sup>.

She also adds that, at first, there were only a few students, but then the moment took on greater proportions. The students, including the men, sitting on benches or playing ball, got up and joined the group. In her account, she says that the women went in the middle, clapping their hands. The drumming was also supported by staff members who walked alongside the students. However, along the way, there were also those who rejected the event. Some staff members covered their ears, left classrooms, cursed at the students, and recorded the event as evidence.

After the drumming, Sabela says that the *campus* director general came to look for her to find out why it had happened. The student reported the harassment she had suffered. However, she was informed that the drumming could no longer take place. At that point, the students sought another way to resist. They used silence. Sabela calls this other act “Tapa fita” (“Tape it up” in free translation). On AME's Instagram profile, they named it “Silêncio mata” (“Silence kills” in free translation). The students put tape over their mouths and staged a silent protest. The video of this moment is available on AME's page.

In the recording, the students and some staff members walk in procession through the classrooms and corridors of *the campus*. They carry posters in their hands and remain in deafening silence. Sabela says that the moment caused a lot of pain and crying: “The tears were falling, and we were in the corridors. Just as we had done before by banging, drumming, and shouting, we did the same that week in silence, crying, because that is how many girls are, silenced, crying and afraid to speak” (Sabela, 2022).

After the two protests, according to Sabela, she suffered repression on *campus*. The participant says that she was asked to end the protests. Even so, the students sought other strategies of resistance. They researched institutional documents and used them to create slogans:

---

<sup>11</sup> We respect the writing used by the research participant.

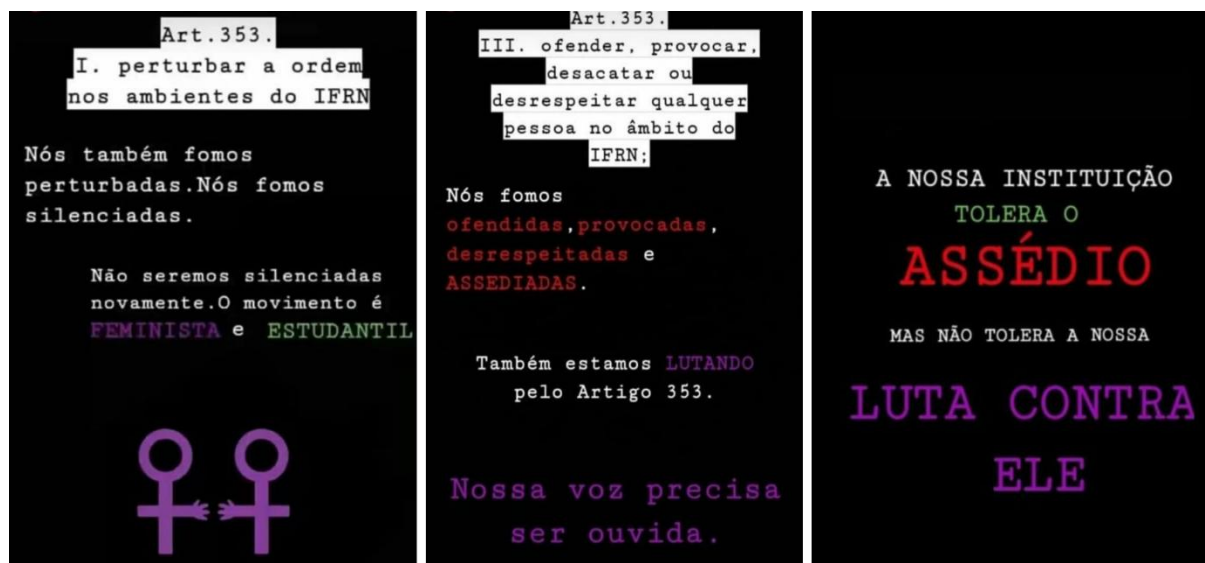


Figure 3 - Sequence 1: The resistance continues.

Source: Sabela's personal archive (2022).

The students used articles from the IFRN Didactic Organization (OD in Portuguese)<sup>12</sup> to defend themselves and resist. The articles are in section II of Chapter XVI and discuss disciplinary offenses. The students defend themselves using the articles that were possibly used to oppress them. The first offense states (Figure 3): "Disturbing order in IFRN environments" (IFRN, 2012, p. 77). Just below, they make their defense by typing: We were also disturbed. We were silenced. Once again, they refer to feminism using the symbol, the color purple, and the phrase: The movement is feminist and student-led.

In Figure 3, they use another excerpt from the article: "Offending, provoking, disrespecting, or disrespecting any person within the IFRN" (IFRN, 2012, p. 77). And then they defend themselves: "We were offended, provoked, disrespected, and HARASSED". The emphasis on the word "HARASSED" in capital letters draws attention to the serious problem experienced by the students. They use the article itself to build their defense argument, adding: We are also FIGHTING for Article 353. At the bottom of the image, a cry for help can be seen in purple letters, the same color used for the word "FIGHTING": Our voice needs to be heard.

In Figure 3, a provocation is made: "Our institution tolerates harassment, but it does not tolerate our fight against it". The phrase is a jab. The colors—green and red, the IFRN's palette—are present on uniforms, materials, walls, and institutional documents. In the sentence, the letters in these colors contribute to highlighting the institution's tolerance of harassment cases. At the end of the image, there is another part in purple that emphasizes: "Fight against it", which assumes that the Institute did not tolerate the fight against harassment and oppressed student struggles.

Sabela also says that conversation circles were held, which she called "venting circles". When she picked up the microphone and started talking, she always cried because she felt so much pain.

<sup>12</sup> Document that governs the structure of all pedagogical activities, notably those related to teaching, at IFRN. The OD can be accessed at [https://portal.ifrn.edu.br/documents/2438/OrganizacaoDidatica\\_2012\\_versaoFINAL\\_20mai2012.pdf](https://portal.ifrn.edu.br/documents/2438/OrganizacaoDidatica_2012_versaoFINAL_20mai2012.pdf).

In the beginning, the circle consisted of five students, and the number rose to 10, 20, 40. The moment was so grand that there were no classes on the days they were held. In addition, female staff members also took advantage of the circle to talk about the harassment they had suffered. The microphone was passed from hand to hand, and the girls and staff members spoke, cried, hugged, and supported each other. Men also participated, including sexist teachers who asked Sabela questions. She reports that the questions were along the lines of: "What had Sabela done to deserve that? Did Sabela remember saying or doing something that hurt the teacher so that he would act that way?" (Sabela, 2022)

Thus, our student found sisterhood at a difficult time through AME. From this sisterhood, the students built means of active resistance. Both the unity and welcoming embrace they organized fully express the meaning of the concept, which is connected to a pact "between women established politically and ethically, as a united body with a common purpose" (Penkala, 2014, p. 225). As we saw earlier, this pact even went beyond the barriers of *Campus B*, reaching other IFRN units and external communities where women in situations of social vulnerability were found.

Throughout Sabela's account, we noticed references to feminism as a form of acceptance. The events held on *campus* were feminist movements. Thus, we observed the emergence of feminism for these students as a hope for building a better school environment.

Let's return to the moment "Silence Kills", which took place on *Campus B*. Shrouded in tears and silence, with tape over their mouths, the students marched in procession through the corridors and rooms of the institution. Sabela says that something very beautiful happened during the protest. When the students arrived at the protest in silence, a teacher went up to one of them and ripped the tape from her mouth. At that moment, the girl broke into tears, but her tears seemed to be tears of freedom. Sabela says that the feeling was: "I am no longer silenced, I screamed". At that moment, the staff supporting the act, the cafeteria and cleaning staff, went to the students and ripped off all the tape. Our participant ends her account by talking again about the power of the cry: "We could scream, we could express ourselves, and it was the most beautiful thing in the world" (Sabela, 2022).

Listening to Sabela's voice, we can visualize all the scenes. We imagine the emotion of the moment when the tape was removed, we feel how significant this was for the students and how these acts are forms of resistance. The account provides elements of a cry for help made by the students, as they claim they are not being heard and have sought their own ways of breaking free.

## 5 FINAL THOUGHTS

With the guiding objective of unveiling the processes of subjectivation of students in situations of gender-based violence, focusing on their forms of resistance, based on the analysis of the case of Sabela, we found that violence is present in the everyday educational experiences of female students at IFRN. However, even in a hostile scenario, these students have creatively sought ways to resist. By adopting an empirical recourse and working with only one solicited diary among



the three collected within the scope of the master's research, we did not intend to offer generalized results regarding the object under investigation. Rather, the analytical effort undertaken in this article consisted of deepening the understanding of a single case, highlighting the dynamics of resistance embedded in the experiences lived by Sabela, understood from a passive and active, individual and collective perspective.

Figure 4 shows a photograph taken at the time of the act analyzed in the previous section<sup>13</sup>. The hands of the women removing the tape from the students' mouths are visible. And in the lower part, a young woman holds a sign that says: "The place for abusive public servants is on the street". The word "street" is highlighted in red:



**Figure 4: Removing the tape**

**Source:** AME Instagram, photo published on December 9, 2019.

The image illustrates the pendulum movement carried out by the articulation between passive and active resistance developed by Sabela together with the students, teachers, and technicians. Voices migrate from silence to cries of protest, but sometimes they fall silent again or are silenced. Resistance, according to Foucault (1988, p. 92), is "distributed unevenly," which means that it is scattered and requires different actions and behaviors, more or less intense, with setbacks or advances, depending on the focus against which it acts at the moment when resistance emerges.

In the analyzed case, we identified manifestations of resistance among female students at *Campus B*. In a modality that we call passive, we listed support groups, debates through films, and unity for the construction of a drumming intervention (percussion group), research in institutional documents; subsequently, we diagnosed the opening of proceedings against harassers and the mobilizations around the demonstration under the title "Silêncio mata" ("Silence kills" in Portuguese), with the consequent actions of constructing virtual posts.

All forms of resistance arose through the struggle and commitment of students who had been abused or were sensitive to situations of harassment experienced in the school environment. Unfortunately, the first events were not well received by the *campus* administration, but this did

<sup>13</sup> We blurred the faces to protect the students' image.

not deter the students from continuing their struggle. On the contrary, from then on, other forms of student resistance were forged, as a kind of response to the power relations that were then in conflict. It is also important to reiterate the presence of some IFRN staff members throughout Sabela's account. As mentioned earlier, a teacher recommended the AME as a place of support for the student, and when the demonstration was organized, female staff members and employees were present to show their support. Therefore, these moments also represent possibilities for resistance.

Another highlighted point is that the demonstration was supported by male students. The boys joined in to fight against harassment, which makes us think about the importance of making men allies and confronting sexism together, through transformative pedagogical practices— such as conversation circles— within the EPT environment, thus questioning the production of masculinities in their multiple spaces of structuring (Lima, Lima Neto, Maia & Sousa, 2021).

While higher-ranking officials tried to contain the students with the existing mechanisms of power, resistance was set in motion. The students proved to be mobile, creative, and productive, reconfiguring themselves over time and entering other strategic processes of struggle (Foucault, 1988).

We also identified, in the case in question, the expression of sorority (Penkala, 2014) built among the students in times of difficulty, based on the means of resistance. This concept is important in the female struggle for space and resistance, as it encourages protection, solidarity, and strength in the defense of women's rights.

As a result of the research, we believe it is important that student collectives, such as AME, receive greater institutional support to extend to other *campi*. This would contribute to raising awareness and combating gender violence. Furthermore, as we pointed out earlier, bringing men into the discussion about the violence to which women are subjected is valuable. This stance is essential, as it would greatly contribute to the comprehensive human development of these students by denaturalizing the production of gender hierarchy, highlighting the mechanisms that promote local forms of violent, sexist, homophobic, and racist masculinity, or that allow for more inclusive (Anderson, 2018), respectful, and even allied forms of gender expression. Strengthening feminist movements at IFRN and including gender issues in these spaces and in the lives of men can contribute to the beginning of a small crack in the walls of patriarchy. Perhaps this idea is somewhat idealistic, but in a way, we are already contributing to this crack through this text.

## 6 REFERENCES

- Anderson, E., & McCormack, M. (2018). Inclusive Masculinity Theory: Overview, reflection and refinement. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 27(5), 547-561. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2016.1245605>
- Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública. (2022). *Nota técnica sobre Violência contra mulheres em 2021*. São Paulo, SP: FBSP. <https://bit.ly.com/gSFSjyWY>.

- Chauí, M. (2019). *Sobre a violência*. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica Editora.
- Cohen, C. (2022). Et avant l’histoire ? Féminicides et violences dans la préhistoire. In C. Teraud (Org.). *Féminicides: une histoire mondiale* (pp. 35-45). Paris, France: La Découverte.
- Costa, M. C. X. da. (2022). *Nossas preciosas: violência de gênero, práticas pedagógicas e acolhimento de mulheres estudantes no Ensino Médio Integrado no IFRN*. [Dissertação de mestrado, Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Rio Grande do Norte].
- Costa, M. C. X. da, Lima Neto, A. A. de, & Thomas, J. (2022). Pesquisas sobre violência de gênero na educação profissional brasileira e francesa: um estado do conhecimento. *Revista Vértices*, 24(2), 634-658. <https://doi.org/10.19180/1809-2667.v24n22022p634-658>
- Evaristo, C. (2017). *Histórias de leves enganos e parecenças*. Rio de Janeiro: Malê.
- Foucault, M. (1988). *História da sexualidade I: A vontade de saber*. São Paulo: Edições Graal.
- Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Rio Grande do Norte. (2012). *Organização Didática do IFRN. Aprovada pela Resolução 38/2012-CONSUP/IFRN, de 21/03/2012*. Natal, RN: IFRN. <https://portal.ifrn.edu.br/ifrn/institucional/projeto-politico-pedagogico-1/lateral/menu-1/volume-3-organizacao-didatica>.
- Lima Júnior, I. A. de. (2021). *O Núcleo de Gênero e Diversidade e a população LGBTQIA+: rupturas, avanços e tensões no cotidiano de um Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia*. [Dissertação de mestrado, Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia de Pernambuco]
- Lima, C. F., Lima Neto, A. A., Maia, R. N., & Sousa, T. J. F. (2021). “Eu guardo tudo para mim”: reflexões sobre experiências de sofrimento de homens estudantes camponeses do Ensino Médio Integrado. In F. L. S. Nascimento (Org.), *Pesquisa e Inovação em foco: experiências em tempos pandêmicos*. Natal, RN: Caule de Papiro.
- Lima Neto, A. A. de., Cavalcanti, N. C. S. B., & Gleyse, J. (2018) (In)visibilidades epistemológicas: Corpo, gênero e sexualidade na produção do conhecimento em Educação Profissional. *Bagoas - Estudos gays: gêneros e sexualidades*, 12(19), 16-38. <https://periodicos.ufrn.br/bagoas/article/view/16350>.
- Meth, P. (2019). “Desabafando” – O método do diário solicitado. In V. Braun, V. Clarke, & D. Gray, *Coleta de dados qualitativos: um guia prático para técnicas textuais, midiáticas e virtuais* (pp. 124-146). Petrópolis, RJ: Vozes.
- Coelho, S., & Cavalcanti, N. C. S. B. (Diretoras). (2020). *Meu fuá tem poder* [Vídeo]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmMI7zz3h1A&t=43s>.
- Minayo, M. C. de S. (2013). Conceitos, teorias e tipologias de violência: a violência faz mal à saúde individual e coletiva. In K. Njaine, S. G. de Assis, & Simone Gonçalves de; P. Constantino (Orgs.), *Impactos da violência na saúde* (pp. 21-42). Rio de Janeiro, RJ: EAD/ENSP.

- Moraes, R. (2003). Uma tempestade de luz: a compreensão possibilitada pela análise textual discursiva. *Ciência & Educação*, 9(2), 191-211. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1516-73132003000200004>.
- Moreira, A. F., & Candau, V. M. (2003). Educação escolar e cultura(s): construindo caminhos. *Revista Brasileira de Educação*, 23, 156–168.
- Penkala, A. P. (2014). A mulher é o novo preto: pensando identidades a partir das representações arquetípicas de gênero na série Orange is the new black. *Paralelo* 31, 3, 212-229. <https://periodicos.ufpel.edu.br/ojs2/index.php/paralelo/article/view/10216>.
- Primo, I. C. de M. (2018). *Produção de sentidos sobre diversidade sexual por jovens rurais*. [Dissertação de mestrado, Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte]. <https://bityli.com/EkSXXjedZ>.
- Sandín Esteban, M. P. (2010). *Pesquisa qualitativa em educação: fundamentos e tradições*. AMGH.
- Saffioti, H. (2015). *Gênero patriarcado violência*. São Paulo: Expressão Popular.
- Silva, M. L. (2020). Necropolítica e violência racial no Brasil. In A. Braga, & I. de Sá (Orgs.), *Por uma microfísica das resistências: Michel Foucault e as lutas antiautoritárias da contemporaneidade*. Campinas, SP: Pontes Editores.
- Simonetti, I. (2021). Violence (et genre). In J. Rennes (Org.), *Encyclopédie critique du genre*. Paris, France: La Découverte.
- Taraud, C. (2022). *Féminicides: une histoire mondiale*. Paris : La Découverte.

#### COMO CITAR ESTE ARTIGO:

Costa, M. C. X. da, de Lima Neto, A. A., & Thomas, J. ENTRE PANELAÇOS E BATUQUES: NOTAS SOBRE AS RESISTÊNCIAS DAS ESTUDANTES VÍTIMAS DE VIOLÊNCIA DE GÊNERO NO ENSINO MÉDIO INTEGRADO DO IFRN. *HOLOS*, 4(41).

#### SOBRE OS AUTORES

##### M. C. X DA COSTA

Doutorando em Educação Profissional pelo Programa de Pós-graduação em Educação Profissional (PPGEP/IFRN). Realizou período sanduíche na Universidade de Buenos Aires, Argentina, com financiamento da Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (Capes). É membro do Observatório da Diversidade.

E-mail: [caroliinaxavier1@gmail.com](mailto:caroliinaxavier1@gmail.com).

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3863-6683>.

##### A. A. DE LIMA NETO

Doutor em Ciências da Educação pela Université Paul Valéry - Montpellier III e pela UFRN. Líder do Observatório da Diversidade (IFRN/CNPq). Bolsista de Produtividade em Pesquisa - CNPq.

E-mail: ave.neto@hotmail.com.

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4810-8742>.

**J. THOMAS**

Doutora em Ciências do Esporte pela Université de Paris-Sud. Professora na Universidade Jean Monnet - Saint Étienne (França), vinculada ao Centre Max Weber (UMR5283). Colaboradora estrangeira do Observatório da Diversidade (IFRN/CNPq).

E-mail: [julie.thomas@uni-st-etienne.fr](mailto:julie.thomas@uni-st-etienne.fr).

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1718-4144>.

**Editor(a) Responsável:** Francinaide de Lima Silva Nascimento

**Pareceristas *Ad Hoc*:** Giselle Rôças e Marcus Vinicius Pereira



**Recebido 03 de outubro de 2025**

**Aceito:** 09 de dezembro de 2025

**Publicado:** 23 de dezembro de 2025