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*Combating feminicidal violence in Mexico: A
qualitative study of women's active
subjectivity vis a vis institutional violence.*

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Abstract

This study focuses on both the institutional violence against women and women's (facing direct forms of extreme violence) resistance by highlighting their voices and experiences, from a decolonial feminist approach. It examines the tension between oppression and active subjectivity, concluding that women experiencing extreme forms of feminicidal violence, through the resignifications of themselves are active subjects whose actions work towards the denormalization of violence socially and in front of governmental institutions. The data in this study was gathered through semi-structured interviews and participant-generated visuals with women living in women's shelters, staff in the shelters, and women in neighborhood associations. Furthermore, data were analyzed under thematic analysis and interpretative engagement approaches. By analyzing both faces of the context, violence, and resistance, this study opens the possibility of getting a deeper understanding of institutional violence but also about the possibilities to change the structures and improve women's lives.

Keywords: feminicidal violence, institutional violence, women, active subjectivity.

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1 Introduction

*Dry your cheeks and listen, lift your face up.
There is no justice you won't do for yourself.
You'd better start getting ready.
Here are others, us,
clandestine, underground, silenced,
Nevertheless, we are:
Inventing how to undo the bolt,
sharpening the spear,
learning how to throw stones at their heads,
kicking genitals.
Arm yourself, woman.
It is necessary to be ready for the revolt.*

Excerpt from the poem 'Basta' by Karina Sánchez Vergara
(My translation)

Mexican society is characterized by high rates of violence and sexism. By 2020, Mexico reached one of the highest rates of feminicides in the region, with 11 women killed per day (D'Angelo, 2021, p. 12). Despite feminist movements that have accomplished a stronger recognition of the variations of women's violence within Mexican laws (i.e., feminicide, Ingrid Law, Olimpia Law, etc.), the statistics on feminicide and overall violence against women remain high. Most of the research related to the history and functionality of feminicidal violence has been partially overlooked (or even hidden) by the State (Borzacchiello, 2021), and authors such as Lagarde (2012) and Monárrez (2005) underscore the common and

reiterated violence perpetrated by governmental institutions towards women. Following these statements, the governmental instances become an obstacle to the correct application of the law and more importantly they reproduce the violence that they (supposedly) seek to eradicate.

In addition, despite women's bodies being historically established as territory upon which violence is inscribed, trespassing legal, political, social, and economic spheres, there's also been a historical resistance that constitutes part of women's experiences and history. The creation of feminist and women organizations (Zapata, 2005) and collectives reflects how women fight and strategize to get better conditions for women's lives. However, considering the context of extreme violence against women, it's easy to depict the ones experiencing extreme forms of violence as passive actors, vulnerable, and incapable to fight back. It's important not to fall into these perceptions and to explore the actions made by women that are experiencing violence or going through a healing and justice-seeking process, that is, understanding women not only as victims but also as active subjects. This study claims that women experiencing extreme forms of violence, through the resignifications of themselves are active subjects whose actions work towards the denormalization of violence.

1.1 Aim and Research questions

This research aims to analyze the two-sided context of feminicidal violence: the oppression and violence exercised by government institutions and women's resistance. The interest is to explore the complex net of actions carried out by the government to reproduce feminicidal violence and the way women experience, fight against it and generate alternatives. To accomplish the purpose of the study I pose the following questions:

- *How do Mexican governmental institutions contribute to the continuation of feminicidal violence?*
- *How do women as active subjects in contexts of feminicidal violence navigate and resist institutional violence?*

1.2 Relevance to the field

This study is situated in gender studies, political sciences field, and peace and conflict studies. Its relevance lies in its contribution to the complex analysis of institutional violence (within the focus of feminicidal violence) towards women in Mexico. Moreover, it works to demystify women's subjectification as passive victims through their own experiences and voices. By analyzing both faces of the context, violence, and resistance, there's a window of possibility to obtain a deeper understanding of the violence perpetrated by the State but also the possibilities to change the structures by considering women's desires and proposals directly.

Methodologically, this study addresses the value of using visual data as a legitimate form of data within the social sciences, contributing to the overall field of visual studies.

2 Previous Research

There are two correlated moments in this study. The first aims to understand the context of violence against women in Mexico, whereas the second one will focus on women's strategies and resistance, facing violence.

2.1 Femicide and Femicidal Violence

For the first moment, previous research focuses on the conceptualization of femicide and femicidal violence. In the Latin American context, the feminist movement following Russell and Radford's contributions (1992, 2001), fought to give the concept 'femicide' a regional context and legal recognition, underscoring the historical dynamic of impunity (Lagarde, 2008). Moreover, Sagot and Cercedo (2004) point out that femicide has different versions: intimate, not intimate, or by connection. Regarding the conceptualization of femicidal violence, Lagarde (2005) and Monárrez coincide in stressing the responsibility of the State when violence reaches its last consequence, that is, with the killing of a woman. In relation, previous literature focuses on the impact of femicidal violence on women's lives in Mexico, its development, and its history (Borziachiello, 2020). In relation, there have been efforts on developing monitoring, communication, and information tools to combat femicidal violence (D'Angelo, 2021). The work of the national observatory of femicide gathers information, reports, and statistics on the matter, focusing on the impunity of women facing this type of violence (OCNF). This research is helpful to contextualize my study; to understand the topic in a quantitative way which at the

same time brings the possibility to understand deeply the role of the State and to learn women's contributions to the topic on a governmental and academic level.

2.1.1 Institutional violence against women

In the same way, previous research about institutional violence focuses on creating accurate concepts of it, such as the National Commission on Human Rights (CNDH in Spanish) (2018) which describes it as the "acts or omissions of public servants of any order of government that discriminate public servants of any order of government that discriminate or have the purpose of delaying, hinder or impede the enjoyment and exercise of women's human rights and their access to the human rights of women as well as their access to the enjoyment of public policies aimed at preventing, attending, investigating, sanctioning and eradicating the prevent, attend, investigate, punish and eradicate the different types of violence" (my translation). At the same time, CNDH gives information about how to proceed and where to go.

Furthermore, previous literature shows the complex way in which institutional violence is perpetrated. Evangelista and Tinoco (2016) identified in the Southern region of Mexico that institutional violence is exercised through three expressions: instrumental organizational expressions, cultural expressions, and expressions aimed at groups of women in situations of vulnerability highlighting that "these are omissions and negligence on the part of the institutions to guarantee the exercise of women's rights". This research is particularly relevant for my study because it shows the context of the country under study in terms of institutional violence against women; it also invites the reader to question the origin or causes of the institutions' negligence, impunity, and revictimization. Having these considerations brings the chance to explore profoundly these gaps, contributing to the overall analysis of institutional violence.

2.2 Women's resistance: organization and mobilization

For the second moment, the research focused on women's organizations in Mexico focuses primarily on the feminist movement in the XXI Century, assessing the history of women's mobilization and the history of feminist movements. These focus more on women's activism, strategies, and alliances (Zapata, 2005. Álvarez, 2021). The way I link this research is by observing the tendencies of the women's public resistances and the relations established among them. It also shows the current context of women's actions and strategies facing particular kinds of violence, where it can situate the actions of women against institutional violence.

When speaking particularly of women's victims of institutional violence, previous research uses the notion of "women associations", as a way abused women (and other groups of women) resist. Del Valle (2001) claims that women's associations function to create new socialization of women through empowerment; by putting women as social participants and protagonists, they also lead to social change and create political pressure to obtain more rights (p. 132) (my translation). At the same time, there's an emphasis on the history of the associations and how they can develop fulfilling the duties of the State (Puñal, 2001). These texts are helpful to understanding how women's organizations as a way of resistance work, and their possible connections and negotiations with the State and its institutions. However, previous research focuses on examining public ways of understanding resistance in a broader collective manner, that is through protest, mobilization, and organization. Understanding women's resistance as a long process of individual and collective nature, in addition to the focus on women's particular experience as a defined group, brings the analysis more depth.

2.2.1 Women's agency

An important aspect of women's resistance is the study of women's agency. When studying abused women's agency, previous research supports the idea that indeed women even in contexts of extreme violence exercise their agency (Lempert, 1996. Harris, 2001. Aldridge, 2013). Lempert (1996) suggests that "abused women are active, although not co-acting equals, in the interactions with their partners; in the development of their strategies to halt, change, and/or cope with the violence; and in the constructions and reconstructions of their relationships and their senses of self" (p. 270), thus there are actions that might function as masked and unaware strategies to escape or navigate oppression, following the dense web of relations that agency encompasses.

However, Aldridge (2013) argues that "it is also recognized that specific aspects of women's agency in unsupported domestic violence contexts are largely missing" in current research. This approach is relevant to this study, to keep in mind that, even when women (as a group) face violence, the degree of violence and access to justice might vary. In addition, the literature highlights the moments when women seek information as a step that demonstrates their agency, and the importance of assuring appropriate information services (Harris, *et. al.*, 2001). Consider this is important for this research because it allows us to understand the role of the entities in charge of giving protection and information. Moreover, this analysis can be linked when examining the interactions between women and institutions.

3 Theoretical framework

3.1 Decolonial feminism

This research is conducted under a decolonial feminist approach. Decolonial feminism implies an understanding of the modern global context, its power relations, and neocolonial forms, and at the same time understanding of how this context affects racialized, poor, women. (Curiel, in Espinosa, 2014, p. 26). Accordingly, to decolonize feminism means to unveil and criticize the white Eurocentric and bourgeois features of hegemonic feminism. (Espinosa et.al., 2014, p. 32). It means to assume a political position stemming from women's experiences in the Latin-American context to create independent thinking.

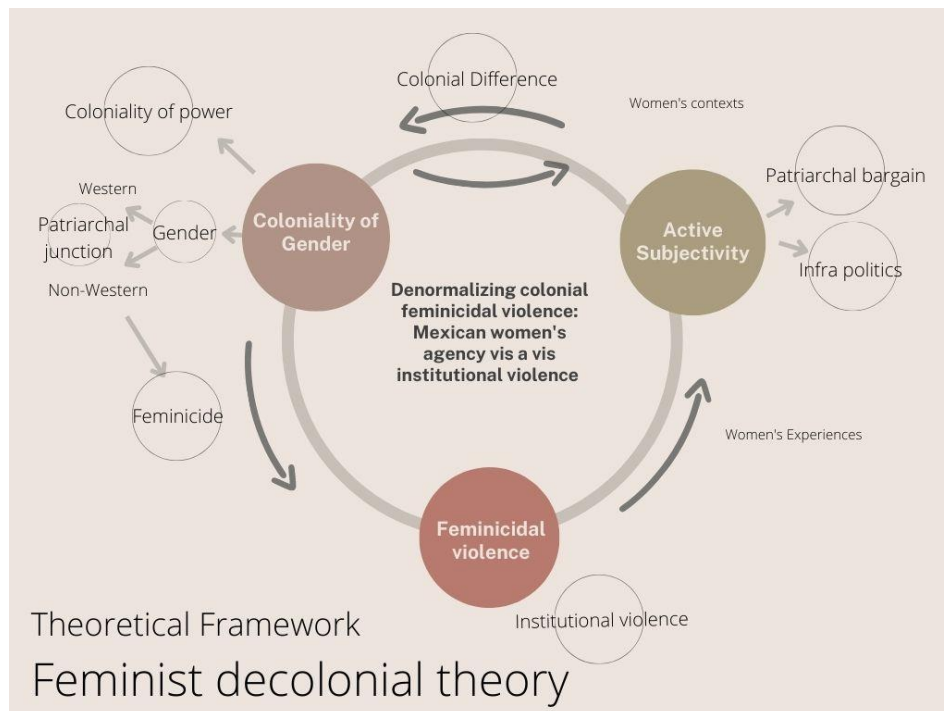


Figure 1. Theoretical framework

Out of this theory, I made use of the concept of coloniality of gender (Lugones, 2007, 2008, 2010) which alongside the patriarchal junction (Paredes and Guzmán, 2014) generates the perfect ground to potentiate violence against women. This violence is conceptualized as feminicidal violence (General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence, 2007, Lagarde, 2008) where the role of the State as a modern colonial institution plays an important part (CNDH, 2018). However, at the same time, the coloniality of gender is attached to the creation of a space of new knowledge that resists, sets the ground to expose women as active subjects and the flourishing of their resistances, which it'll analyze through the concepts of infra-politics (Lugones, 2010) and patriarchal bargain (Kandiyoti, 1988).

This approach contributes in several stages to this research: In the first place, as a metatheory, it helps to understand and reflect upon the Eurocentric production of knowledge, center women's experiences in a particular context, the researcher positionality, reflexivity, and the role of women within the research itself¹As a theory for the analysis, it is significant to analyze power relations and systems of oppression from the top to the bottom as a historical social web that results in today's modern world system, and in today's people's subjectification, that is, understanding the complexity of the context in which Latin-American women (particularly Mexican women) are understood and are created. At the same time, it contributes to a bottom-up understanding of the world by engaging with the analysis of groups' particular experiences concerning their active subjectivity and resistance. By considering the power dynamics from neocolonial relations that reflect on today's Mexican State and its institutions it is possible to understand the power relations exercised against women, but also to understand women's standpoint and ways of agency and resistance.

¹ This will be elaborated on later during the ethical aspects of the research.

3.1.1 Coloniality of gender

One of the main concepts of decolonial feminism is the coloniality of gender theorized by Maria Lugones (2007, 2008, 2010). This concept must be understood under the context of a global eurocentered capitalist power that is formed by two inseparable axes: modernity and the coloniality of power (Quijano, 2000, p. 242). The first represented the formation of a singular rationality model that will influence the global population, anchored by the hegemonic capitalist system, the Nation-State, and Eurocentrism (Quijano, 2014, p. 793). The latter introduces "the basic and universal social classification of the population of the planet in terms of the idea of race, a replacing of relations of superiority and inferiority established through domination with naturalized understandings of inferiority" (Lugones, 2007, p. 190).

This differentiated categorization was named by Quijano (in Mignolo, 2002, p. 66) the colonial difference. The colonial difference is presupposed in the coloniality of power and helped to legitimize knowledge subalternization and to justify people's subjugation. Paruzzo y Engert (2010) emphasize that the colonial difference within the colonial/modern system-world frame becomes a relevant space due to the possibility of minorities to create from there, "the colonial difference is a unique space in which forces operate in opposite directions; on the one hand, an oppressive force that tries to reproduce the coloniality of power by silencing and hiding the oppressed, and on the other hand, a liberating force that tries to rearticulate the oppressed-oppressor relationship by giving voice to the oppressed" (p. 1).

While Quijano explains the Nation-State control over the basic spheres of existence within the modernity through the coloniality of power where sex, its resources, and products (Quijano, in Mignolo, 2002), demonstrates the intersection between race and gender, Lugones (2008) claims this analysis is flawed due to its patriarchal and heterosexual approach (p.78). Stating the term coloniality (within the concept of coloniality of gender) means, on the one hand,

voicing people's classification made during the colonial times in terms of race and gender; on the other, and most importantly, it underscores the intersection of this classifications by "the process of active reduction of people, the dehumanization that makes them fit for classification, the process of subjugation, the attempt to turn the colonized into less than human beings" (Lugones, 2010, p. 745). This indicates, that colonized men and women by means of their racial classification (racialization) did not have the status of human beings, thus, they mustn't have been considered men or women, but creatures.

At the same time, Lugones (2007, 2008, 2010) argues that with the colonial system, the gender structure was imposed where there once was none. Moreover, this system is dichotomous and hierarchical. In this respect, she observes a modern/colonial gender system as the same coin with two different faces, the one that is visible and the invisible. The first is the hierarchical heterosexual organization where 1) men are above women and 2) there's a dehumanization of racialized people where "the non-white females were considered animals, sexually marked as females but without the characteristics of femininity" (Lugones, 2010, p. 94); the second, the invisible one, refers to the other ways of understanding human beings, e.g., male, and female complementary understandings, as well as the third gender. The first side of the modern/colonial system is central for my study because it shows the hierarchical organization of social dynamics among men and women that sets the ground for extreme violence against the latter.

3.1.2 The patriarchal junction

While it is crucial to understand the implications of colonial power relations in the construction of gender in the invaded territories of America, it is also important to be aware of the social dynamics already established in those territories regarding gender. Paredes and Guzmán (2014) claim that there was a hierarchical gender system before the invasion of America, to a different degree but existent, "it is

difficult to accept but is necessary to locate that there has also been an ancestral patriarchy” (p.78). They theorize around the combination of the western patriarchy and the local (ancestral) one naming it the patriarchal junction, arguing that it "sets clear the combinations, alliances, complicities between invading colonizers and indigenous men colonizers and native indigenous men, and unequal articulation between men, but complicit articulation against women, that confabulates a new patriarchal reality that is the one we live to this day" (p. 83) (my translation).

This junction has brought severe consequences for women in Latin America. Mendoza (2012) argues that, even though there are discrepancies among the claims around the origin of the gender systems and the patriarchy in Latin America, all agree that

for indigenous, African, and Afro-descendant women in Latin America, but also poor mestizo women, the phenomenon of femicide represents, as Segato says, 'the new barbarism or the intensification of the colonial/modern gender intensification of the colonial/modern gender system and should be seen as an extreme modality of gender coloniality and the patriarchal junction'. It is an expression of the lethality that results from the two patriarchies that combine and strengthen each other to violate and disregard women's lives (p.62) (my translation).

The concept of coloniality of gender is used in this research to understand the imbrication between race and gender in a capitalist euro centered system deployed and refined since the colonization times but adding the notion of the concept of the patriarchal junction to have a deeper understanding of women's violence in the Mexican context.

3.1.3 Active subjectivity

I employ the concept of 'active subjectivity' (Lugones, 2003) to highlight the existence of women's actions *vis a vis* feminicidal violence. Women are not passive actors even in high contexts of violence. This concept is useful to analyze what their actions mean and how they contribute to long-term changes for women as an oppressed group.

Lugones (2005) suggests that the modern western conception of agency is not useful when looking for a liberatory goal because it "presupposes ready-made hierarchical worlds of sense in which individuals form intentions, make choices, and carry out actions in the ready-made terms of those worlds. That is, the agency is constituted by potent intentionality in a particular vein" (p. 87). Considering the origin and conformation of intentionality is a key factor to understand (modern-western) agency and the more accurate alternatives to it. One main characteristic of intentions under the modern western agency understanding is that agency comes and resides on a single individual, however, intentions even when they appear within dispersed subjects "acquire life to the extent that they exist between subjects" (Lugones, 2003, p. 217), that is, intentions are socially produced. Moreover, being a successful (modern western) agent means to be an individual that acts backed up by social, political, and economic institutions, thus, it also means that the individual is a shareholder of power (Lugones, 2003, p. 210). In relation, Hoagland (1988), claims that modern western agency revolves under heterosexualism/oppression, where the primary mode of female agency is manipulation due to the historical-social imposition of moral 'feminine virtues' meaning that "the healthy and normal woman's actions are to be toward others" (p. 197).

For these reasons, Lugones (2003) claims the oppressed can't exercise (modern-western) agency since their intentionality is enacted either subordinated or in resistance. In the first case, the mere nature of the subordinate intention precludes the oppressed from the agency; in the second case, it's disqualified due to a lack of institutional backup (210). To point out the possibility of resistance, she suggests the concept of 'active subjectivity' (and active subjects), which gets out of the presupposed hierarchical worlds. Thus, she underscores the collective

capacity and efforts of social groups operating within and against power structures. Following the idea of moving within power structures, Mahmood (2012), highlights the necessity to understand individual and collective changes historically (both in terms of what constitutes 'change' and how it is carried out). In that sense, she implies one must analyze "not only those acts that resist the norms, but also the multiple ways in which one inhabits the norms" (p.15). Accordingly, McClintock (1995) seeks to bring to light the inflexibility of the power-subordination dichotomy, defending the spectrum of actions realizable in contexts of high social inequity that "involve a dense web of relations between coercion, negotiation, complicity, refusal, mimicry, compromise, affiliation, and revolt" (p. p291). Finally, Hoagland (1988) agrees by stating that any useful political theory "must not convince us that either we must be in complete control, or we are total victims. While we don't control situations, we do affect them" (p. 202).

Understanding women as active subjects from Lugones approach, in combination with the importance of women's movements within power structures highlighted by Mahmood and McClintock, allows us not only to see the resistance towards the norms but also to acknowledge the relevance of everyday and small actions as part of women active subjectivity, considering the context of high violence and inequality in which they live. This might not lead to a revolution or a radical social change but as a reactive strategy in the short term. In addition, it is also important to acknowledge women's limitations and to understand how they navigate the intersecting systems of oppression to survive.

3.1.4 Infra-politics and Patriarchal bargain

Lugones argues that "resistance is the tension between subjectification (the formation/information of the subject) and active subjectivity, that minimal sense of agency required for the relation oppress→←resists to be of an active kind, without appeal to the maximal sense of agency of the modern subject" (Lugones,

2010, p. 246). Resistance is seen by her not as the objective of subaltern people, but as the beginning of a political fight, at the same, she underscores how resistance might appear:

Resistant subjectivity is often expressed infra-politically, rather than in a politics of the public, which is easily inhabited by public contestation. Resistant subjectivity is denied legitimacy, authority, voice, meaning, and visibility. Infra-politics marks the turn inward, in a politics of resistance, toward liberation, and shows the power of communities of the oppressed in constituting resistant meanings and in constituting each other against the constitution of meanings and the social organization of power (Lugones, 2010, p.246).

That is, infra-politics is a way of resistance that might not be acknowledged by the resistant, or the oppressor and might not seem like a revolutionary or radical change but might contribute to depicting a way for women to survive the context of feminicidal violence and to the process of decolonization in a deeper and long-term way. Lugones (2010) exemplifies an infra-politic achievement as the new significations that subaltern people give to themselves that are differentiated from the ones assigned to them by the hegemonic powers. In this regard, making use of the concept of infra-politics allows us to consider how women that have faced feminicidal violence resist, particularly, how they create new meanings for themselves.

By acknowledging the different ways of resisting, in relation to the flexibility of the relation power-subordination dichotomy, it is possible to observe the range of women's actions to survive and in parallel how they change the meanings of being women and a victim of feminicidal violence. Kandiyoti (1988) sheds light on the existence and value of strategies within a set of social limitations and/or extreme inequalities, naming them 'patriarchal bargaining'. These agreements influence both the potential and the specific forms of active or passive resistance of women to their oppression. Furthermore, "they are not timeless or immutable entities, but rather they are susceptible historical transformations that open new spaces for struggle and renegotiation of gender

relations” (p. 275). This concept brings the opportunity to observe the negotiations women sometimes make in accordance with the system, as means to survive while major processes happen to achieve greater and radical changes.

McClintock's approach is useful to understand more deeply the diverse actions and reactions of women facing feminicidal violence. By positioning in the traditional way² of understanding resistance appears to the risk of denying women's status of active subjects during this research, that is, analyzing them as passive subjects subjected to violence and subordination because they might not fulfill the characteristics of what resistance means in these terms. In turn, Mahmood's approach goes together with Kandiyoti's patriarchal bargaining concept when thinking about the ways women who face feminicidal violence navigate the system in which we live and from which violence is exercised.

As it happens with the concept of resistance, approaching these concepts in this way allows us to understand women's points of view, experiences, actions, and reactions in a particular context and in a particular set of time. It also gives importance to women's creativity and ways to survive and support each other even though there's not a radical, global revolution or change in the short term (without denying that these actions might contribute to bigger changes in the long term).

² Hollander and Einhower (2004) synthesize the debated characteristics for considering a series of actions as resistance: action and opposition (by the oppressed); recognition (by the oppressed and external people); and intention. Moreover, they point out the importance of cultural recognition of these actions as resistance, noting that “issues of intention and recognition can affect each other: an observer (such as a researcher) may not recognize an act as resistance if he or she lacks the cultural knowledge to identify the intention behind the action” (546).

3.2 Feminicidal violence and institutional violence

The feminicidal violence concept has its origins in the concept of femicide³. It is important to highlight that the concept of femicide stresses the particular characteristic of the global capitalist relations between the Global North and the Global South where women are deeply affected; it also shows the Latin-American feminist political mobilization to enforce the concept as a legal term; and finally underscores the impunity in the Latin-American context (Lagarde, 2008).

Lagarde (2005) claims that for a femicide to occur "there is a criminal concurrence of silence, omission, negligence and partial or total collusion of authorities in charge of preventing and eradicating these crimes" (p. 362). Thus, she (2006) considers femicide as a State crime, it is "a fracture of the rule of law of the rule of law that favors impunity" (my translation). Accordingly, Monárrez (2005) considers that "femicide includes a whole progression of violent acts ranging from emotional and psychological abuse, beatings, insults, torture, rape, prostitution, sexual harassment, child abuse, infanticide of girls, genital mutilation, sexual violence, domestic violence, and any policy that derives violence, and any policy that results in the death of women, tolerated by the State" (p. 43) (my translation).

The progression of factors that might lead to a femicide is understood under the concept of "feminicidal violence". The General Law on Women's

³ Femicide comes at the same time from the concept of "Femicide" by Diana Russell and Jill Radford (1992, 2001) (concept proposed in their book *Femicide. Politics of killing women* (1992) refers to "the misogynistic killing of women by men". The concept was revised by Russell in the book *Femicide in Global Perspective* (2001) stating that femicide as "the killing of women by men because they are female". Marcela Lagarde (2008) used the term to describe the situation in Ciudad Juárez. She translated it from 'femicide' to 'feminicide' clarifying that "in Spanish, femicide is homologous to homicide and only means homicide of women; and to refer to all violations of women's human rights, including crimes and disappearances, women's human rights violations that include the crimes and disappearances of and that these should be identified as crimes against humanity" (2004).

Access to a Life Free of Violence (2007) states that femicidal violence is "the extreme form of gender-based violence against women as a result of the violation of their human rights, in the public and private spheres, made up of the set of behaviors that entail misogyny, impunity, social and State tolerance that can culminate in the homicide and other forms of the violent death of women" (my translation). In addition, misogynistic conduct such as mistreatment, physical, sexual psychological, economical, communitarian, and institutional violence is considered fundamental factors of femicide and thus is part of the femicidal violence (Lagarde, 2008, p. 217) (my translation).

Both Lagarde and Monárrez stress the role of the State and its institutions in the perpetuation and facilitation of femicides in Mexico. This approach directs my research when understanding the interactions between women victims of femicidal violence and the government institutions created to support them, and the link between these interactions and women's resistance. Thus, I draw upon the concept of institutional violence, which refers to "the acts or omissions of public servants of any order of government that discriminate or have the purpose of delaying, hindering or preventing the enjoyment and exercise of women's human rights, as well as their access to the enjoyment of public policies aimed at preventing, addressing, investigating, punishing and eradicating different types of violence" (CNDH, 2018, p. 6) (my translation). While femicidal violence encompasses the conjunction of several other types of violence with the characteristic of leading to the violent death of a woman, this research focuses on institutional violence as part of femicidal violence to understand State dynamics, on the one hand, and on the other, to understand the particular way of violence towards Mexican women and how these actions impact women's organizations, strategies, and resistances.

4 Methodology

This research is a qualitative study from a feminist decolonial approach oriented to creating partnerships and contributing to social change and justice. I start from feminist decolonial studies to examine the nature, purpose, and significance of my research for the production of knowledge and society; also, to reflect upon my role as a researcher connected to my personal, academic, and professional background and the impact it has to the participants. Following Tuhiwai's (2012) arguments, research is not an innocent activity, it is a site of struggle where different interests are contested. This idea is connected to the colonial difference (Mignolo, 2002) as a space where oppositional knowledge inhabits, the hegemonic knowledge and the resisting Other, and where a powerful alternative can be created. Tuhiwai argues that from the colonized gaze "the term 'research' is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism" (p.1). This affirmation is accompanied by the historical way in which research has been conducted and has produced "the object of study", the dehumanization of the colonized (Lugones, 2010), as explored above. Accordingly, Mohanty (2003) points out the universalization and cross-cultural validity uncritically provided, the creation of a "third world difference" which produces a depiction of an "average third world woman" who is a homogeneous group with homogeneous oppressions, leading to the image of "an essentially truncated life based on her feminine gender (read: sexually constrained) and her being 'Third World' (read: ignorant, poor, uneducated, tradition-bound, domestic, family-oriented, victimized, etc.)" (pp. 21-22).

Thus, I'll conduct my research following decolonial feminist epistemologies. I start by considering the arguments above adding Narayan's (2004) claim about the epistemic advantages that our location in the world as

women encompass, that is, to “perceive and understand different aspects of both the world and human activities” (p. 213). Furthermore, feminist epistemologies tried to reintegrate values and emotions into our account of our cognitive activities (p. 214), in relation I’ll add into my approach the understanding of feeling-thinking (Borda in Ramos, 2020), that is, the “way of feeling with the heart, with the emotions and connecting them to the thoughts. In other words, and starting from the original proposal of feeling-thinking, what is united is precisely what has been separated: thinking (logic) from feeling (emotions and affections)” (p. 115) Leaving aside the western, male, Eurocentric insistence of separate feelings from the research.

4.1 Participants and accessibility

I conducted fieldwork where I visited 3 women's shelters (victims of extreme feminicidal violence) and a neighborhood association. I made the selection of States in Mexico to visit by focusing on the states with the alert for Gender Violence (AGV)⁴ and I visited the ones which I was allowed to access. I got access to Women's shelters in Guanajuato, Nayarit, and in a former shelter, now a support center, in Veracruz, and a neighborhood association in the Mexican State. To get access to these spaces I wrote a recruitment letter for the women and the organizations, a small document with a summary of my methodology, my student

⁴ To declare a state or a municipality with AGV is necessary to prove that "in a given territory (territorial delimitation) there is systematic violence against women; that such violence translates into common crimes against life, liberty, integrity, and security of women; that there is a context of impunity or social, and that the violence stems from a set of behaviors that are violence stems from a set of misogynist behaviors that disturb social peace". (Chamber of Deputies, 2011) (my translation).

As of December 2020, 45 Declarations of Alerts of Gender Violence against Women (DAVGM) have been requested in Mexico. The states are: Aguascalientes, Baja California, Campeche, Chihuahua, Mexico City, Colima, Durango, Guanajuato, Guerrero, Jalisco, Michoacán, Nuevo León, Oaxaca, Puebla, Querétaro, San Luis Potosí, Sinaloa, Sonora, Tabasco, Tamaulipas, Veracruz, Yucatán and Zacatecas. (Observatorio Ciudadano Nacional del Femicidio, 2021).

identification, and proper documentation from a scholarship I received to conduct my fieldwork. The process involved several calls and emails and, in some cases, sending University contact references.

I selected two different groups of participants, all of them with the characteristic of resisting, strategizing, and/or fighting against femicidal violence, particularly institutional violence. The first group encompassed 13 women working in the shelters or associations, that is lawyers, nurses, psychologists, and teachers, one of them was a homestay mom: with or without a background of having experienced violence by their partners. The second group encompassed 11 women that faced extreme violence from their partners and used support services (shelters or neighborhood networks), two of them belonged to an indigenous community, and one didn't know how to write or read. The others differed in academic degrees and jobs, in general, had informal jobs or were housewives. The participants encompassed women between the ages of 20 to 50 years.

4.2 Methods for gathering data

As it was clarified above, I decided to have two different groups of participants, the first group is female staff in the shelters or women's associations; the second group encompasses women users of these services. I decided to utilize different methods to gather data for each group; for the former, I conducted individual semi-structured interviews, and for the later focus groups using creative methods via participant-generated images (drawings), collages, and/or letters followed by discussions around their creative products.

Even though women in both groups have faced violence and are active subjects. I decided to carry out different methods because there were particular differences among them. I believed the semi-structured interviews were useful for the first group because I value women's experiences and feeling-thinking, thus,

talking directly to them allowed me to have closer contact with their stories through their body language, tone, facial expression, etc. Also, the interviews allowed me to reflect upon my position as a researcher instead of approaching a neutral data collector (Mason, 2012, pp. 111-115). Moreover, I decided to conduct the interviews individually, because women expressed feeling emotionally stronger to relate their experiences orally and because they felt more comfortable speaking about the workplace and their experiences working in a team for women's rights in an individual manner. Finally, their schedule limited how the meetings were carried out, leading me to make them individually (in some cases I talked with two participants at a time).

The interviews were conducted in the areas of Social Work, Psychology, Legal areas, Head office, and in some cases Pedagogy and Nursing areas. The topics for these interviews encompassed the general functions of each area; the general women's process in the organization (entry, stay, egress and follow-up) women's reasons to seek support, institutional violence, women's individual process, women's interactions, and relationships (inside and outside the shelter), the aggressors' profile and their feelings towards the kind of work they are doing, their purposes and expectations.

For the second group, being women victims of extreme violence (including institutional violence), I decided to carry out creative methods via drawings. This decision was made thinking about the value I give to experiences and also about women's comfortability when telling their stories and the possible difficulty to articulate them in words (Eldén, 2013. Duncan & Sawyer in Drew & Guillemin, 2014). Moreover, I believe having a range of registers would allow me to understand in different and deeper ways women's experiences and feeling-thinking. Finally, this method engages the participants to collaborate and participate in a more equal relationship with the researcher (Mason, 2012, pp.165-168). However, some women expressed their disinterest in drawing, they proposed new activities such as a collective collage, or writing letters instead of drawing. Accordingly, I decided to conduct focus groups (Leavy, 2019, p.139) where women can explain or talk further about their drawings. The disadvantage

of the focus groups was that women didn't go into details about their stories; however, the advantage was that being surrounded by people they knew and trusted gave them the comfortability to speak their minds, and they could also notice similarities among their stories and voice them.

The dynamic and organization of each meeting changed according to the space and the group of women. In 3 Shelters some groups consisted of 2 to 6 women. This depended on women's availability. As explained above, each woman in each group created a drawing that was immediately discussed in the group. There are 6 topics for the activities/drawings as it's shown in the following table:

Table 1. Creative methods: participant-generated image structure.

Drawing	Topic	Instructions	Nourished research questions.
1	Firsts contacts with support networks	Describe the day/days you learned about the network or contacted someone from the network. -What did you think? -What did you feel? -Did you have support networks?	How do Mexican governmental institutions contribute to the continuation of femicidal violence? How do women as active subjects in contexts of femicidal violence navigate and resist institutional violence?
2	Your life being part of a support network	Describe your day-to-day life after starting to be part of the Network, feelings, situations, and thoughts	How do Mexican governmental institutions contribute to the

		<p>that make you happy since you are part of the network</p> <p>-What do you do now that you didn't do before?</p> <p>-Do you feel supported?</p> <p>-Have you made any friends?</p> <p>-Do you feel safe?</p>	<p>continuation of feminicidal violence?</p> <p>How do women as active subjects in contexts of feminicidal violence navigate and resist institutional violence?</p>
4	In the past and now	<p>Describe the process you've lived through to be where you are now.</p> <p>-What has changed in you?</p> <p>-What do you think has changed in the people you know?</p> <p>-Meaning of your experience here.</p>	<p>How do women as active subjects in contexts of feminicidal violence navigate and resist institutional violence?</p> <p>How do Mexican governmental institutions contribute to the continuation of feminicidal violence?</p>
5	<p>Plans for the future</p> <p>*Collage</p>	<p>Describe what you will do/want to do in the coming years.</p> <p>-Where do you want to live?}</p> <p>-Do you want to keep seeing people you meet here?</p> <p>-Do you want to be part of a more formal organization?</p>	<p>How do women as active subjects in contexts of feminicidal violence navigate and resist institutional violence?</p>
6	Letter (optional)	<p>Write a letter to women (that are living what you lived or women in general)</p>	<p>How do women as active subjects in contexts of feminicidal violence navigate and resist institutional violence?</p>
<p>After making the drawings, each woman explains her drawing and shares comments on the other's drawings. The questions posed for each drawing would help to guide the discussion.</p>			

I conducted these activities for 2 to 3 days for over 1 or 1 hour and a half with women in Guanajuato and Nayarit Shelters; in Veracruz, the dynamic was different since women weren't living there anymore and they could attend just one day. Thus, I merged some topics to reduce the activity to a two-hour meeting. Moreover, in Veracruz, I also conducted 2 semi-structured interviews with women that used to live in that Shelter via telephone because these women lived further away, and they could not attend the meeting in the Shelter; I followed the topics and questions from table 1. In addition, since women in Veracruz were coming from different parts to gather, in what was once their home with their roommates/friends, at the end of our meeting they gathered and talked to each other, and with the staff, I took advantage of this situation to make notes (because being with people they have more trust more, they disclosed in a more detailed way part of their stories) and to observe the dynamics between staff and users. In the Mexican State, I conducted a semi-structured interview with one of the members of the neighborhood association following the contents of table 1. As in the case of Veracruz, women in the Mexican State lived in different parts of the state and had tight schedules, therefore it wasn't possible to gather a group of women. Thus, I conducted a semi-structured interview with a woman founder of the neighborhood association.

4.3 Methods to analyze data

Since I gather two kinds of data: interviews and drawings/collages, I decided to make use of different methods to analyze each group of data. For the interviews and the letters that women wrote I selected Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012, 2010). I believe that thematic analysis is a better fit to analyze, on the one hand, the different meanings that women give to their practices and experiences which allows me to grasp in a better manner the connections of their feelings with

their thoughts, this leads me to detect commonalities in their experiences and their feeling-thinking acknowledging them as a heterogeneous group. On the other hand, the patterns in the meanings that governmental institutions give to women and violence.

I transcribed the interviews with the help of the Trint application. Subsequently, I double-checked the transcriptions and translated each of them from Spanish to English. I continued by following the phases stated in the method which are 1) familiarizing with the data; 2) generating initial codes; 3) searching for themes; 4) reviewing potential themes; 5) defining and naming the themes; and 6) producing a report (Braun & Clarke, 2012, pp. 60-70). The data was organized and analyzed with the help of Nvivo software. As part of the second phase of the analysis, I created codes to check patterns that help to answer my research questions (see appendix 1). I took an inductive-deductive (Braun & Clarke, 2012: 60) approach to code my information, that is, mainly code from the data based on participants' experiences but at the same time, drawing upon my theoretical constructs such as agency, institutional violence, infra-politics, etc.

For the drawings and collages, I decided to approach through the interpretative engagement (Drew & Guillemin, 2014) method because it allows me to analyze participant-generated images and because it aligns with thematic analysis detecting themes to create or reveal meanings by codifying and observing patterns. In addition, this method focuses on meaning-making claiming three main stages to achieve it: 1) meaning-making through participant engagement (Stage 1), which is the interpretation that participants give to their drawings. For this part I made use of the discussions that followed the drawing-making; 2) through researcher-driven engagement (Stage 2), meaning the interpretation that I give to the images themselves and the participants' interpretations; and 3) through re-contextualizing (Stage 3) by thinking in theoretical terms and also adding the audience possible perceptions (Drew & Guillemin, 2014, pp. 59-65). These stages will help me to achieve a more rounded analysis of my data. Finally, since part of the process of analysis is to locate themes within the data, I made use of Nvivo software, adding the codes, and merging the patterns into my code book.

4.4 Ethical matters

4.4.1 Reflexivity and Positionality

I share the epistemological position of recognizing knowledge as a collective exercise. Also, I align myself with the perspective of trying to counteract the historical pattern of knowledge and research being shaped by power relations, hierarchizing and marginalizing certain people and their knowledge (Levy & Harris, 2018. Tuhiwai, 2012. Narayan, 2004. Mignolo, 2002, Spivak, 2003). In relation, I believe knowledge production is always partial and situated, it is affected by the position of the researcher and the socio-economic context (Harding, 2019, pp. 83). Thus, I start by reflecting upon the research process and my position in it by situating my personal, political, intellectual, theoretical, and autobiographical self during the process of research (Carroll in Levy & Harris, 2018) considering the perception others (particularly people involved in my research) might have of me.

Even though the participants in my research and I share several characteristics such as being women in a violent and corrupt country, nationality, age (within the range), facing violence, and language, among others, there are several differences that might have an effect during the research. Coming from the capital of the country I have geographically quicker access to support and information centers, hospitals, schools, etc.; Also, I am not registered nor look like part of any indigenous group. Historically, these communities are marginalized and excluded in Mexican society for several reasons, mainly due to racism; moreover, even if I don't consider myself or my family to be wealthy

people, I had access to higher education and to a scholarship that allowed me to study, have a bachelor's degree and to study a master's program abroad. I acknowledge the privileges and advantages that my background encompasses. I position myself as a feminist within the decolonial perspective seeking power-sharing within the research process, making research with and for the people and experiences under research, and contributing to social and political justice.

4.4.2 Ethics in methodology

Due to the sensitivity of my topic which includes vulnerable participants and the locations of high risk, it is necessary to reflect upon the emotional and safety work (Levy & Harris, 2018. Israel, 2015) that the research will encompass, that is, how I'd protect myself physically and emotionally, how I'd be affected by the information and how I interact and create relations with the participants. Regarding the safety and emotional impact that the information provided in fieldwork had on me, on the one hand, I prepared a safety protocol (Israel, 2015, p. 15), including emergency numbers, location apps, and companions for the trips. On the other hand, I considered the great diversity of stories and the level of violence included in them, also watching the participants cry, or react in impressive ways. However, even when I tried to take this into account, the information and the interaction with the participants had a great impact on my emotional and mental health, manifested in paranoia on the streets (when being in the fieldwork) and stomach problems after the fieldwork.

Regarding the relationships with the participants, as part of my emotional labor, it is of high importance to commit to respecting their dignity (Levy & Harris, 2018. Tuhiwai, 2012). I conducted myself with empathy, culturally appropriated language, and active listening to establish a space of trust where they feel comfortable. To accomplish this, I started by sending a recruitment letter to the people in charge of the Shelters or Women's association, to participate in the research (Appendix 1). This letter included information about me as the

researcher, about the research (summary, objectives, and methodology), social benefit, and in some cases gave university contact for further information and an idea for dissemination, that is creating a booklet with women's statements and creative products. Furthermore, it was imperative to me to obtain the participants' informed consent and voluntary participation. Once granted the access to the shelters and before each interview, I introduced myself and gave each participant an 'informed consent' document (see appendix 2) where I give a summary about myself and my research; my commitments as a researcher, which include my reflexivity, avoid revictimization and talk more about resistances, present and future topics, confidentiality, recordings of the discussions; and options for the participants, invitation to give comments and make questions whenever they want as well as withdrawing from the research if desired. After reading it and posing questions each participant signed the document to grant the interview voluntarily and with all the information they required. However, I pointed out the possibility of making questions at any stage of the interviews.

The methods to gather data pose ethical considerations as well. In the first instance, language is a crucial factor in active communication, it also facilitates trust and understanding of different meanings. Coming from Mexico, my mother tongue is Spanish, so it was an advantage for me to interact with the participants sharing the same language. Moreover, the methods I chose could result in interviews in asymmetrical power relations during the process, due to “the interviewer’s monopoly of interpretation” (Kvale, 2006, p. 485), to avoid this asymmetry, I asked the participants to explain in different ways some of their declarations so I could grasp more fully the meanings they were trying to convey (this is helpful more visibly in stage 1 of the interpretative engagement method).

Finally, when analyzing the data, I consider the aspects of validity and reliability. The first aspect to check is "the subject error" (Graham, 2012) even though we as humans change every day and might have different moods or contexts that influence our perception, I believe the usage of creating a code journal to state our feelings and thoughts daily might serve as a guide for ourselves to give continuity to our thoughts and avoid the subject error. The

second aspect is the "observer error and bias" (Graham, 2012), this encompasses the researcher's positionality and preconceptions, which might influence negatively or positively the research, thus, I think the best way to avoid or diminish the bias is through being clear and honest about our positionality as researchers. The last aspect might be a little bit out of my control as a researcher, which is the "subject bias" (Graham, 2012), where the participants change their answers to please the researcher. I think establishing a cordial relationship and transparent relationship with the participants might help to avoid this.

4.4.3 Dissemination

My objective is to make my research accessible for people outside academia, particularly to give back to the participants some of the knowledge shared and produced collectively. Thus, I plan to produce academic articles and variants of my research but also make a booklet or fanzine where participant's quotes and drawings appear, this could help campaign strategies for stakeholders and public servants. Regarding this subject, when talking about the dissemination of ideas with the participants, particularly women users of the shelters or associations felt pressured to produce professional drawings or to be ashamed of their way of drawing, I think this might have been a factor for some of them to refuse drawing and wanting to do something else (collages or letters).

5 Analysis

I found two major themes after coding the data I collected: 'violence' and 'resistance/bargain', themes that are characterized by the umbrella theme of 'women'. As it's shown in the mid map below, women appear at the center of both violence and resistance. Either as users or as staff, both of them experienced different degrees of violence and both of them resist or bargain with the institutions in different ways and collaborate creating women networks. Thus, I divide my analysis into two sections. First addressing the context of femicidal violence and how governmental institutions operate in relation to it; and in the second part, I address the ways women facing violence resist and negotiate.

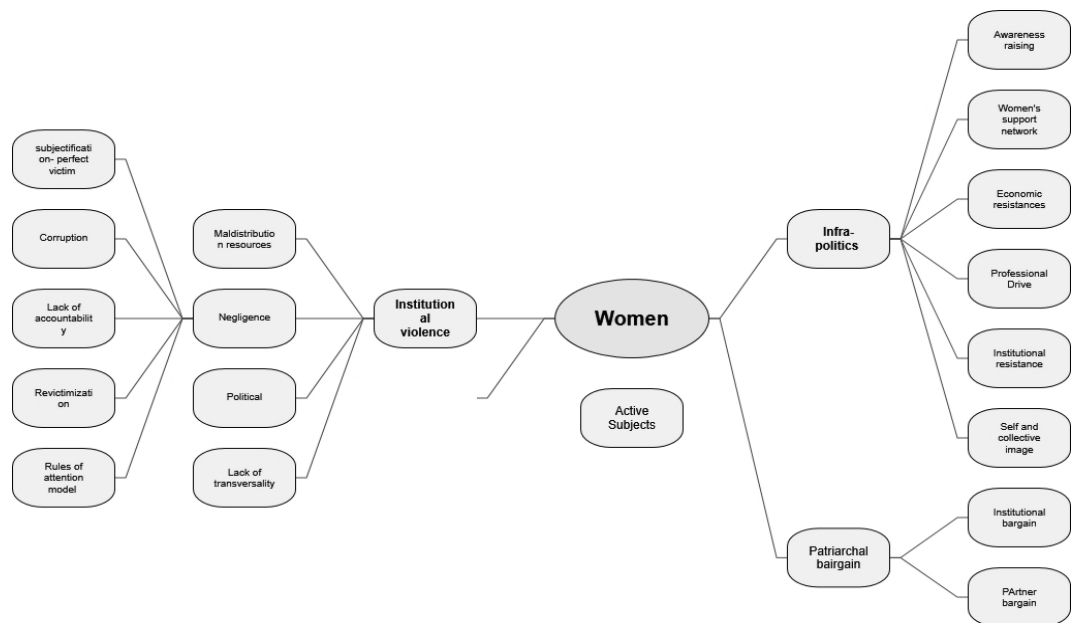


Figure 2. Research themes

5.1 Mexican governmental institutions' contribution to femicidal violence

They do not take the matter seriously, as seriously as they should, because it is not just any old thing, right? They are lives, women's lives, and they are not given value. Like everything else, I mean, we are second class, I think, women.- Lawyer, Veracruz Shelter.

The analysis of this section works toward answering the research question: *how do governmental institutions contribute to the continuation of femicidal violence in Mexico?* Following this approach, one of the main words mentioned by women, both staff and users, was violence, followed by the words: women, support, work, and time (see appendix 3). When talking about violence, as I code the interviews, I noted the participants underscored, on the one hand, femicidal violence as a general characteristic and on the other hand institutional violence. This last one is represented by several aspects such as negligence, lack of transversality, maldistribution, corruption, and lack of accountability as will be elaborated below.

Particularly the staff interviews pointed out the deficiencies they notice within governmental institutions when helping a woman victim of violence⁵. Explicitly, the lawyer and psychologist of Guanajuato's Shelter underscore the lack of public servants' sensitivity, training, and overall knowledge or willingness to support women victims of femicidal violence.

⁵ An essential part of the Shelter process is the role of certain governmental institutions such as the Prosecutor's office, Health Secretariat, and organisms focused on women's rights and protection because they function also as channeling institutions, that is, they are in charge of asses women's situation and give them the options they have, being the shelter one of them. Thus, shelter staff works closely with these institutions.

What is happening with all those workers and all those public servants, and this institutional violence? It is a lack of knowledge, it is a lack of sensitivity, and it is a lack of many things. They don't even have the proper profile and I don't know why they are there. -Psychologist, Guanajuato Shelter.

There is sensitivity, indeed, the thing is that we are just another number. Women are just another number, unfortunately, and everything is urgent. Is there a lack of sensitivity? Yes, there is. Even from day one, there is training because the Prosecutor's Office is fond of sending out courses of all kinds, especially sensitization and more in these areas that deal with women, victims, and survivors of violence. -Lawyer, Guanajuato Shelter.

These participants' statements highlight the public servants' lack of basic requirements needed to offer the proper support for women. They demonstrate their feelings of frustration and disappointment showing at the same time the commitment and professional drive they conduct themselves. Moreover, the lack of sensitization despite the existence of specialized training shows that public servants are disinterested in women as human beings and their social value. This can be linked to how the dehumanization of people and the hierarchization of men above women (part of the colonial legacy and its junction with the ancestral patriarchy) persist in nowadays sophisticated ways.

However, another factor is the lack of continuity within the governmental institutions focused on women's rights and justice. As it was highlighted in the Nayarit shelter.

I feel that there is not so much sensitization on their (public servants) part, but that has a lot to do with the fact that the staff does not have the specialization in the area, and that they are not permanent personnel. -Psychologist, Nayarit Shelter.

Even when she agrees with the previous statements about lack of training and specialization, she adds another important factor linked to institutional violence, which is political violence. Every term the entry party changes all the personnel

that doesn't belong to the party, removing qualified personnel to insert people usually less or not qualified at all, and thus, facilitating the continuation of negligence and violence towards women. The lack of personnel continuity is a consequence of the political aims of a particular government administration as it's shown in the next statements:

So, it takes a year, two, three, or four years to train the personnel and when they are already achieving a more or less good level in terms of training and knowledge of how to deal with women in situations of violence, suddenly there is a change of government and everyone is removed, new personnel is included, and it is starting from the A, B, C of gender all over again. And then there is no evolutionary knowledge, you have to go back, and you have to train them from the basics and that is the way it is in all the agencies. - Director, Nayarit Shelter.

These people from Morena⁶ arrived and they removed us and the people [...] who had been preparing and training for years. Because sensitization, the gender perspective, understanding of how this issue of the gender vision is constructed, how being a man, being a woman is constructed, all these things are learned, it is not with a course and many people see it as a course and they pass the paper and leave it, but we assume it as a way of life. Then they arrive and all the prepared people are removed, they take them out [...] they put back in people who know nothing, as they do in the institutes, they remove those who are there and put in people who know nothing. And this happens every time the administrations change. But there is no commitment. -Director, Veracruz Shelter.

In the first quote, the Director points out the collaboration that the shelter staff has with governmental institutions to improve the support for women. On the one hand, one can grasp the bargain⁷ they practice towards institutions they

⁶ Current government administration party.

⁷ This analysis will be widely addressed in the second part of the analysis about women's infra-politics and patriarchal bargain.

acknowledge as oppressive by giving them workshops and training, showing their commitment to women. On the other hand, it shows the setback that political violence implies towards women's victims of violence. In the second quote, the Director also points out the political violence behind the change of administrations. However, she stresses the potency and significance of embracing the fight against violence from a feminist perspective changing the narrative⁸ about training and workshops as a mere topic for servants, to see the feminist approach as a way of life.

Accordingly, women victims of feminecidal violence that sought support (users) agree with the lack of knowledge and willingness in governmental institutions responsible for women's protection.

We went because here in the city they usually go to the Prosecutor's Office, but in the towns, they go either to the congregation with the municipal agent or to the town with the union leader, who are the ones who deal with the cases. But sincerely, neither the union leaders nor the supposed 'Casa de la Mujer'⁹, sometimes is fictitious that they exist in the towns, do not work, they are useless. In reality, they don't even know how to defend or even know the rights that a woman has. -Lizeth Veracruz

On the one hand, this statement follows the thread about governmental institutions' lack of preparation to give women support or even a place to turn to. On the other hand, and very importantly, this quote unveils the intersection between feminecidal violence (particularly domestic and communitarian violence) and violence towards the indigenous population. By addressing the lack of knowledge, the uninterest, and even the 'fictitious' governmental support, the

⁸ This feature is part of the infra-politics which will be widely addressed in the following part of the analysis.

⁹ The actions of the Casas de la Mujer Indígena o Afrodescendiente (Indigenous or Afrodescendant Women's Houses) are a tool for access to the rights of indigenous and Afro-Mexican women; they are a space where indigenous and/or Afro-Mexican women provide culturally relevant care, a

interviewee indicates being aware of the intermeshed oppressions she experiences as an indigenous woman.

On that matter, violence against indigenous women is attached to the spatiality of access to the justice system. As it's declared by the lawyer in Veracruz shelter:

Besides, imagine that to press charges, first of all, the Prosecutor's Office is very far away, a woman coming from La Perla, well, at least to get to the Prosecutor's Office she needs to spend about 150 pesos¹⁰. And for you to go and they say no! So? Well, all this favors impunity. The people from La Perla are like Gema (part of an indigenous community). The one from Atzompa is also very expensive for her to come to Orizaba and from Orizaba to the Prosecutor's Office. -Lawyer, Veracruz Shelter.

The options that indigenous women have is either turn to 'Casas de la Mujer Indígena' (which are located usually in the towns) if the space exists at all, with no capable personnel; or go directly to the Prosecutor's office in the big cities (that usually are located far away from the indigenous communities, implying more time and money). Locating the spaces of protection far from the people who need them is a statement against them, indigenous women are then devalued as women and humans, relegated to the margins, and rendered invisible. In connection, the lack of support within the indigenous communities' organizations goes hand in hand with the lack of importance women have within society. This gives the possibility to grasp the patriarchal junction where the community violence is exercised on one side, and the other, the violence exercised by 'non-indigenous' institutions.

gender perspective, and human rights in the areas of women's rights, prevention of violence against women, and sexual and reproductive rights (Mexican Government, 2020).

¹⁰ 7.39 USD. It is relevant to point out that in Mexico the minimum salary per day is 7 USD and according to the National Survey of Local Income and Expenditure (ENIGH in Spanish) 2018, seven out of every ten indigenous language speakers are in poverty, almost doubling the respective

5.1.1 Negligence

Following the interviewee's statements regarding the deficiencies, they notice within governmental institutions responsible for women's protection. I identified a high remark towards negligent acts (see appendix 1) when interacting and working with personnel in these institutions. The negligence of Mexican institutions appeared in several branches of the women's protection process: interaction with the authorities, filing a complaint, medical assessment (physical and psychological), legal process, and follow-ups.

5.1.1.1. Interaction with the authorities.

The first of women's path toward a safer place for themselves and their kids is to reach the authorities and get information about their options. However, during this first interaction, the participants highlighted various neglections. As one of the participants described an interaction, she had with the back then new appointed Veracruz Women Institute's Director:

Because that is very serious, what she came to tell us, that she worked with the previous (Director) one, and that she had been told not to file complaints, not to go to the prosecutor's office, don't get into trouble. If a woman comes to ask you to support her because she is experiencing violence, well, try to explain to her that she should behave well so that she does not provoke her husband to beat her... Imagine how it goes... No, they don't attend, they don't really attend, they pretend to attend. -Director, Veracruz Shelter

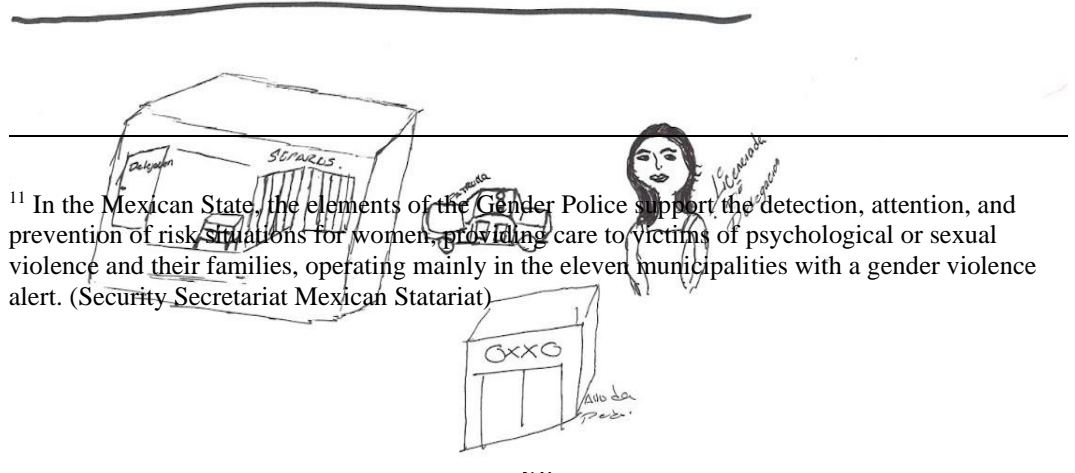
figure for non-speakers (74.9% vs. 39.4%), and in the case of extreme poverty, the figure is six times higher (35.6% vs. 5.6%) (INMUJERES, 2021).

Accordingly, both staff in Nayarit and the Mexican State pointed out the same situation:

Some of them also mention to you: "on other occasions, I had already gone, and they told me no, go home, it is not appropriate, we are not going to do anything for you, it is better to make peace and it will be as if nothing happened". Yes, it happens! Or they called the patrol car, and they were told 'this is a couple's fight, they can settle it later.-Lawyer, Nayarit Shelter.

We go to a lawyer and 'no ma'am, I suggest you go back home, and that's when women say 'well, I don't have any support. There was a woman here that the gender police¹¹ came to support her, and the police told her 'no, look, think about it because it is your husband, and the children?'. -Neighbor part of the communitarian association, Mexican State.

Also, the women that sought support in these instances talked about the authorities trying to deny support or push to get back with the aggressors. In the following picture, a user drew the process of scraping her house to seek help and get to a shelter, she states:



¹¹ In the Mexican State, the elements of the Gender Police support the detection, attention, and prevention of risk situations for women, providing care to victims of psychological or sexual violence and their families, operating mainly in the eleven municipalities with a gender violence alert. (Security Secretariat Mexican Statariat)

Moni, Nayarit.

Figure 3. Interaction with authorities.

They (the police) told me that they were going to take me back to my aggressor because they couldn't do anything, that he (aggressor) could give me money, or I could just go back to him. They took me back to the house and knocked, but it was locked. Moni, Nayarit Shelter.

While answering, the interviewee showed confusion about the police officer's decision during her process. The drawing, moreover, stressed a lot the fact of being put in a jail cell, which was also reiterated verbally. This showed the impact the authority's handling of the situation had on her:

I already felt like Chapo Guzmán¹², already there, restricted, guarded...-Moni, Nayarit Shelter.

By putting her in a jail cell the authorities were sending a message to the interviewee about being guilty and dangerous, comparing herself with a powerful drug trafficker, thus, she depicted a prosecutor as the big figure, surveilling her

¹² Joaquín Guzmán, CEO of the Sinaloa cartel. "El Chapo" is the world's most powerful drug trafficker. The cartel is responsible for an estimated 25% of all illegal drugs that enter the U.S. via Mexico. (Forbes, 2022)

instead of the process. Considering that the interviewee just escaped a violent attack being out in a jail cell is a representation of the continuation of the control, limitation, shame, and blame from which she was escaping. Adding up the first authorities' reaction to take her back to the aggressors' location, the process she undertook by the authorities was a violent act.

Accordingly, another user exposed the excuses offered in the Prosecutors' Office when she tried to press charges even when she showed physical proof of her attack (this aspect is important because in other cases they just offer help, believe, or pay attention to the victims if they show up highly beaten up):

I arrived, but supposedly at the Public Prosecutor's Office, at that moment there was no ink to press charges, and that no, I should present myself another day, because at that moment they could not file a complaint. So, yes, that bothered me because I had already been beaten up like that and even then, they did not want to pay attention to me. -Ana, Veracruz.

When speaking about this situation, the participant linked her feelings with her sense of getting justice. This showed her thinking process engaging her feelings and questions about the State's responsibility towards her. Overall, both statements above depict how the ineffectiveness of the authorities has a top-down effect on the Institutional hierarchy, showing again the lack of commitment and importance to high levels of violence against women, and the devaluation of women per se, as mentioned before.

In relation, there were particular mentions of the National System for Integral Family Development (DIF in Spanish), because it is usually the place where women go first, and because of the neglect towards women.

But the experience we have with DIF is that they try by all means to keep the family together, that is, if you experience violence, it doesn't matter. You put up with it because he is the father of your children and because he is the breadwinner, so it doesn't matter. In other words, the priority here is the family and if your wife goes out to work because the man is disoblising, then DIF arrives and takes the children

away from you for the omission of care, because how can I believe that you left them alone and went to work? and nobody questions the man about why you are leaving his wife and children in a situation of vulnerability. So that was really the message that DIF was sending. -Lawyer, Veracruz Shelter

This statement highlights the still existent sexist value judgments of public servants that leads to a lack of support for women victims of violence. Women are usually questioned, doubted, blamed, and shamed as several staff and women pointed out:

Many times, there is re-victimization, yes. (They say) "Ma'am, why are you so stupid, why did you let yourself be beaten? Ma'am, why didn't you run away? Oh, ma'am, they already gave you one (pounding) and you come back. Oh, ma'am, you don't understand. You are so stupid". -Lawyer, Guanajuato Shelter.

Then I started to talk to her and she told me 'the doctor scolded me very badly, she told me that I looked like a prostitute, that they were going to take the children away from me if I went like that and she forced me to wash my face when I took off my dress and she gave me this skirt and told me that she didn't understand how I could dress like that. And then she started crying and told me: 'I don't know, I have never bought a dress. And then when you take me to buy a dress, I already feel very sorry for you because I chose a prostitute's dress. Director, Veracruz Shelter.

The use of diminishing words to refer to women is a practice the authorities exercise during the justice process for women. More than helping women, it is easy to perceive the emotional damage these actions have on women. There is a reproduction of sexist ideas of how women must be and act, that is, the idea of 'women' as holders of the family, sacrifice, commitment, loyalty, and endurance; at the same time, the idea of women being passive, weak, and dumb is reinforced. This violent act is part of the web of actions that lead to impunity and pave the way to femicide. Even though, until now it's been shown how the institutions

deny women access to support and justice, there's a contradiction due to the display of political violence as is explored in the following section.

Related to women's re-victimization, authorities also create the idea of what a woman victim of psychological, sexual, and/or domestic violence should look like. Staff and users commented about interactions with the authorities where women were doubted because of their looks (clothing and body), their education, the quantity of money they have, or even the changes they obtain by entering the shelter process:

Because you go to the command, and they don't help you. (They say) 'We can't help you, or that you need to come like this and like that that is until they kill us! Just like that. -Moni, Nayarit.

When they reach the instances, they arrive more empowered. Because we also have this idea of... the stereotypes of... you imagine that a woman is going to come like that, crying, unable to speak and not knowing anything. And if she doesn't arrive like that, it's because she's not (a victim).-Psychologist, Nayarit.

Lizeth was always sad because she says the man told her she was a cow's legs. Then she started training. Of course, when it was her turn to be presented (to the Prosecutor's Office) she had already lost a lot of weight, the dress was not short either, it was at the knee. But she was no longer the same, she looked different, and she got dressed up. And then the authorities got scared... -Director, Veracruz Shelter.

The construction of a 'perfect abused woman' also creates women as a particular subject. When summing this up with the imaginaries stated by re-victimizing women, it generates the hegemonic ideas of the women's subjectification.

5.1.1.2. Press charges

Some of the participants talked about their interaction with the authorities after being attacked and seeking support. In some cases, public servants force women to press charges:

There are times when they force them to press charges. They condition them to provide them with a place of protection, which in this case is us (the shelter). So, this is something or a negative point that the institutions, the instances, and the justice centers regularly have, that they condition the woman to report the crime. -Lawyer, Nayarit Shelter.

By forcing women to file complaints, the institutions increase their statistics on 'how many women were helped per year'¹³ favoring the way the government in turn is perceived. This means that forcing women to file complaints has a very particular aim which is far from helping women, making it part of political violence.

The lawyer further explained that it is not necessary to press charges to get access to the shelter, on the contrary, it might be helpful for women that are indecisive to get the strength and information to make the best decision for themselves. One of the participants corroborated this situation:

I had to file a report to get in here (the shelter). If I didn't, they couldn't help me because it was like covering up for my aggressor what he did to me. So, I filed the complaint. And they put me in as such. -Moni, Nayarit Shelter

Moni expressed that by not filing a complaint she will cover up what her aggressor did to her, however, there seems not to be a direct correlation between the action and the consequence. Not filing a complaint at that moment (or ever)

doesn't always mean one tries to help the aggressor, it could represent the shock, anguish, and fear that women are under, that they need time, or any other particular reason; each woman and case is different. Moreover, labeling 'not filing a complaint as something bad induces and constrains women's decisions. As was mentioned before, there's an advantage for the authorities of having many complaints filed, thus, the narrative of 'covering up the aggressor' could be constructed by the authorities for their benefit.

Another type of conditioning for women is about forcing women to go to a shelter.

Then we began to see that they (workers in the Prosecutors' office) began to condition them. 'If you don't go to the shelter, we take your children away from you because they can't live with violence, because you have them at risk, then DIF enters...'. -Psychologist, Guanajuato Shelter.

Forcing women to get into a shelter might also respond to the political aims of improving governments' work and image. However, there were other testimonies of Institutions not giving information to women, and/or referring them to the shelters.

5.1.1.3. Medical assessments

An important part of the shelter process is for women to be medically checked and for the staff to have accurate and detailed medical assessments. This is intending to learn about women's entry physical and mental state but also is fundamental for the legal process (i.e., for the repair of damage). However, the staff particularly pointed out the deficiencies the channeling institutions have during this particular part of the process:

¹³ To be resumed in the 'lack of accountability' part of the study.

Yes, there are some (physical medical assessments) that do not arrive because in the institutions where they are referred there is no doctor or because there is no doctor at that time, for example, the doctor was resting, let's say, or they went to the Red Cross, but there were no doctors and therefore the assessment is pending. I make my assessment and if I find something altered, we go to the doctor's office. Nurse, Nayarit Shelter.

They were sending us people who did live in violence but did not meet the profile. Let's talk about it. They were sending us psychiatric patients in other different situations. So, it was not so much about sensitization, but about getting rid of the problem and sending her away and channeling her. Then we began to ask for psychiatric evaluations, and they would send us the psychiatric evaluations, but we realized later that the interns were doing it. Then they medicated them wrongly, that is, they sent antipsychotics to the depressive patient and then sent antidepressants to the psychotic patient. In other words, it is not being functional. -Psychologist, Guanajuato Shelter.

As in the quote about the lack of ink presented above, the first quote in this part talks about the lack of medical staff within the channeling institutions. Even when we are talking about an object (the ink) and a person (the doctor) both take an important role in social justice for women. Lacking the basic tools and people enables impunity and is an important part of institutions' negligence. That means interfering with women's pursuit of justice and at the same time reproducing the violence themselves.

In addition, the second quote expresses the lack of knowledge the channeling institutions have of their work which can be connected to the lack of accountability they have, and also the lack of communication between them and institutions which is an issue of transversality¹⁴.

¹⁴ Both lack of accountability and transversality will be addressed below

5.1.1.4. Legal Process and Follow-up

As well, several inconsistencies were pointed out during the legal process (usually when women were staying in the shelter or separated from their partners) women undertake regarding their protection, divorce, child support, and criminal prosecution of the attacker.

What we have been seeing is that no, they do not attend to the legal cases of the women that they brought to us several times, not only did they not bring them, but they also left them and went away and never followed up on them. -

Director, Veracruz Shelter

Overall, participants' answers pointed out institutions' detachment from women's process once they enter the shelter. It became a one-sided work when it is designed to be held in collaboration. Regarding this topic the social worker in Nayarit said:

I have come across this type of situation. I need this document corrected and I know that you can do it because it is close to you (the office)... And you can do it, it is easier for you legally speaking. I am three hours away from here. Well, the document was either misplaced or they did not give it the proper follow-up, or they gave it to me as it was not, not as I had requested it. And really, I mean, processes that could be carried out in a week, for them it has already been three months and my time here is already gone. My time is really gone...-Social worker, Nayarit Shelter.

The social worker expressed frustration and despair due to the lack of response and commitment of the channeling institutions. Becoming a one-sided job it's been implemented as teamwork with co-responsibilities.

In addition, there are contradictions in actions in the way institutions conduct the cases:

Also, within the protection measures established by the authorities. They do it wrong because they first separate the woman from the home, they send her with us to the shelter and establish a protection measure, of surveillance at her home. So, who are you going to watch over? Who are you going to protect? [...] It would seem that the one they are watching over is the aggressor. This is a very constant problem. -Lawyer, Nayarit Shelter

These people from the DIF commit brutalities. This girl Rebeca, who was the last one who was with us, who was with us for two years, the man is an extremely violent guy, extremely. The DIF gave him the address of where she was, because 'he had the right to see his children. Then the guy started spying on the house (the shelter), screamed, and attacked us, and she did not go out and neither did the children. This is the only case in which the aggressor has come because the DIF sent him. -Director, Veracruz Shelter.

The situations stated by the participants depict an illogical set of institutional decisions that end up affecting women's processes. More importantly, it shows a certain notion of help given to the aggressors, which follows the patriarchal junction with the heterosexual hierarchization of men above women, being the latter disposable.

5.1.2 Lack of Transversality

Another big part of institutional violence is the lack of knowledge institutions have about the matter and about the right instances to approach. Thus, they can't give correct information to women looking for help, or worse, they interfere with legal processes that favor women. Moni stated that

*[...] in the Prosecutor's office is where they help you more than elsewhere'-
Moni, Nayarit Shelter.*

She offers this answer because she previously went to police stations and DIF. Thus, it can be assumed she acquired this knowledge by going to different institutions and comparing the support they offer. Not because she was properly informed where to go to receive direct support. In this regard, the lawyer in Nayarit points out:

The information must be in all the spaces, even if you are not the appropriate institution. But you have the way to inform her where she can go and the suggestion: "within the DIF we do not take care of this, of these situations, but I do know that the Justice Center, you can go to the Justice Center and there they will do this for you", that is, to have the information also as institutions of the places where she can go, depending on the woman's problem. -Lawyer, Nayarit Shelter.

Besides the lack of knowledge about the government structure, its institutions, and their functions, there's a lack of communication among institutions:

The INPI¹⁵ had a program to benefit indigenous people who were incarcerated, but for lack of money to pay bail for minor offenses they paid their bail, and they were going to pay him (the aggressor). So, we went to talk to them and that is what prevented them from paying his bail. That is why I am telling you about the lack of knowledge, the lack of coordination, the issue that they do not know, and that they do not really have the transversality. -Director, Veracruz Shelter.

¹⁵ National Institute of Indigenous Peoples.

5.1.3 Corruption

Corruption is another characteristic of institutional violence, the statements showed the several occasions where irregular processes took place and the public positions about it. Lizeth describes how the aggressors can negotiate with the authorities in order not to get fined or even be prosecuted.

Not even like that (women bleeding), because if the husband arrives and negotiates with them (the police officers), it no longer works. - Lizeth, Veracruz Shelter.

As well, in fatal cases, when a femicide occurred, there are inconsistencies and irregularities in the process to find the responsible person for the crime. A participant explicitly stated to be aware of the corruption of the authorities:

I only have one case of femicide in which they are in collusion with the authorities, I don't know if it is also with organized crime, but with the authorities, yes. The body was handed over to them after many days. They had been told that they had to do other studies because they could not define the cause of death. At the Semefo they said no that they never sent any organs, they never sent anything. Everything, everything was very bad. Besides, the judge in charge of the case went on vacation and never came back, which makes me think that the mastermind is in collusion with the authorities. - Neighbor part of the communitarian association, Mexican State

In this regard, another participant statement talks about a conversation between the Veracruz Women Institute's Director and an institute's former worker:

She was very brave, she stood up to the director and started telling her about all the Prosecutor's Office irregularities, and she said 'are you crazy? Why did you come to tell me that? How do you think I'm going to do that? It's as if you were shooting yourself in the foot, don't you understand that we are the same?' And the worker came out disappointed. -Lawyer, Veracruz Shelter.

The statements related to corruption so far demonstrate the support that the institutions give to men, although factors such as class and race influence the negotiations between men and institutions. Moreover, the government's aim of gender quotas to make 50%-50% men and women public servants, doesn't mean that women working in these positions have an actual commitment towards women, as was stated before, feminism and gender perspective is not a course one passes and that's it, it is a way of seeing life.

5.1.4 Lack of accountability

In connection there are traces of corruption even in the ways statistics are presented to benefit the public image of the government in turn:

What they (the Prosecutor's Office) did was to make up the statistics and they are reclassifying them, now they are making public that feminicides are down, but there is another item that says, 'intentional homicide of women', so they are feminicides, but they are reclassifying them so that the figures decrease. A woman dies and they try in every way possible not to classify it as a feminicide to reduce the statistics, but even with that, they have not succeeded.-Lawyer, Veracruz Shelter.

This shows the political violence due to the purpose of benefiting the government despite women's safety. Moreover, it means a corrupted way of government accountability, thinking there's accountability at all. The manipulation of legal classifications constitutes a big limitation for women's justice. The participants mentioned this situation linking their feelings towards their perceptions about what should be done and the State's responsibility. Furthermore, the participants underscored the emphasis the government puts on showing numbers and statistics with no explanation on how they got them, and what are the women's process status:

Just numbers, how many of them they attend and how many of them they gave legal advice, how many of them psychology, how many of the social work, where they analyzed them. But one also must ask them to show their demands. What stage do they reach, at least so that they (new personnel) know where they left off and when the programs return, at least take up those issues again. But they do not justify their actions, nothing!- Lawyer, Veracruz.

Furthermore, focusing only on numbers and statistics means losing the sense of women's humanity for the State and the public servants. The Veracruz Shelter Director indicates:

But what kind of help are you giving that woman? Because you are supposed to give her a comprehensive orientation, comprehensive help, fulfilling the necessities of each woman's case [...] it is not possible, we are not talking about numbers, about things, we are talking about people and life processes.
-Director, Veracruz Shelter.

5.1.5 Maldistribution

The last problem to be addressed under institutional violence is the way the government establishes and keeps control of the budget granted to women's shelters or associations that support them. The Veracruz Director exposes an overall picture of the current situation:

I feel that we are going backward in terms of women's human rights because they are canceling programs, they are canceling the instances that were places where women could find refuge and the State is not complying with its responsibility to safeguard women's lives and safety.- Director, Veracruz Shelter.

Starting from the institutions at the top of the governmental structure, the distribution of economic resources has been cut down reaching the lower organisms, shelters, and associations. For that reason, the middle-level institutions establish harder requirements and guidelines to obtain money from the State, at the same time, the number of months where the economic support was given, was reduced:

There are a series of guidelines as to what can be purchased and what cannot be purchased and the amount, they (INDESOL¹⁶) also determine the execution is also determined by them. How much goes to each of the items in which the resources are used for the operation of the shelter. However, you cannot base the budget, which is determined by many situations, on just the number of women, because for example, in 2020 we talked about it with the professionals. The cases were much simpler. In 2021 they had a large majority of women with these psychiatric medication needs. - Director, Nayarit Shelter.

That is very complex because they are supporting 10 months. But well, what happens during the other two months? I mean, as you saw, there are families, they eat, they clothe, they have needs. But the truth is that there is also rent and electricity, water and gas; food and salaries are left floating. The truth is that you can prepare for a month, but working for three months without a salary, without anything, is very complex and it is also quite violent. Institutionally, it's like "you don't have to pay", so you don't have to work. And you see who stays to work, it is because there is a vocation.- Director, Guanajuato Shelter.

Both statements indicate the disconnection between the administrative budget management and the reality of operating a shelter. In the second quote, it is interesting to notice the focus on violence against the staff by not considering

¹⁶ National Institute for Social Development.

enough budget for salaries. Not thinking of the complexities surrounding a space aimed to help women, on the one hand, contributes to the exploitation of staff members of these shelters, and on the other limits women's healing process, replying and continuing violent actions.

5.2 Women as active subjects: infra-politics and patriarchal bargain facing institutional violence.

*We (women) are strong, we are great, we are brave, we are always better united.-
Lizeth, Veracruz.*

The analysis of this section works towards answering the research question: *How do women as active subjects in contexts of feminicidal violence navigate and resist institutional violence?* Thus, it includes women's actions in front of the particular ways of institutional violence stated above and also the ways they resist and navigate feminicidal violence in general. The data indicated resisting politics mainly in the realm of infra-politics through actions such as consciousness awareness, economic resistance, professional vocation, and women's support networks; in addition, it indicated women's strategies represented through negotiations with two violent figures: the institutions and the aggressors. Likewise, it was possible to identify the small references to the women's movement to the politics of the public, part of the process of resisting acts. The underlying factor among women's actions is the formation of self-significance (individually and collectively), which boosts their actions in different ways concerning hegemonic presuppositions and structures.

5.2.1 Women's Infra-politics

The acts of resistance carried out by the users were constantly depicted in their drawings and interviews, most of them as part of infra-politics practice, that is in the realm of the collectively and individually inwards:

Because he saw what I was doing. That I was aiming at bigger things, I didn't keep quiet anymore, I had to raise my voice and say enough is enough. Then he saw that I was serious, and as I said, I received psychological help. Then I

became stronger and stronger for my children because I have two children. -

Ana, Veracruz.

Ana indicates the tension between the significations bestowed on her and the 'minimum sense of agency' (Lugones) that makes her an active subject, that is, by not believing in her word and her actions her (ex) husband position her into an imaginary of weaknesses, fear, and suppression, whereas Anna breaks this imaginary boosted by the feelings and commitment to her kids, revealing the significance of herself, showing her voice, defending herself, unveiling her strength.

The previous statement speaks about the disruptive moment when women create and display their significance while facing the context of violence. However, some participants also indicate a desire for a future style life based on the significations of themselves and women as a group:

Yes, I would like to continue exercising and doing yoga. I would like to finish my degree and I would also like to write a book, I would like to visit exotic places, travel, do extreme sports like scuba diving, eat exotic dishes too, spend time with my daughter and also travel and go on a cruise to Europe, I also want my house and I also see and visualize myself being a successful woman and inspiring women... -Vero, Guanajuato

By expressing the different desires, she wishes to accomplish in the future, Vero breaks with the idea of living next to a man, and also with the 'perfect abused woman' as a mark of her identity that will follow her forever. In the end, she connects her success as a way to help women, putting value to her story and experience to influence women's life¹⁷, that is, on the one hand, politicizing her experience by giving it value to herself and to others (as a way to help others); and

¹⁷ This can also be part of the creation of women's networks which will be addressed later in the text.

on the other becoming an active subject by changing the narratives and significance of herself influencing her intentions.

5.2.1.1. Consciousness-raising

Concerning violence, women (both staff and users) declared the acknowledgment of their normalization of violence, which led women to render invisible the different ways violence is exercised, focusing only on physical violence.

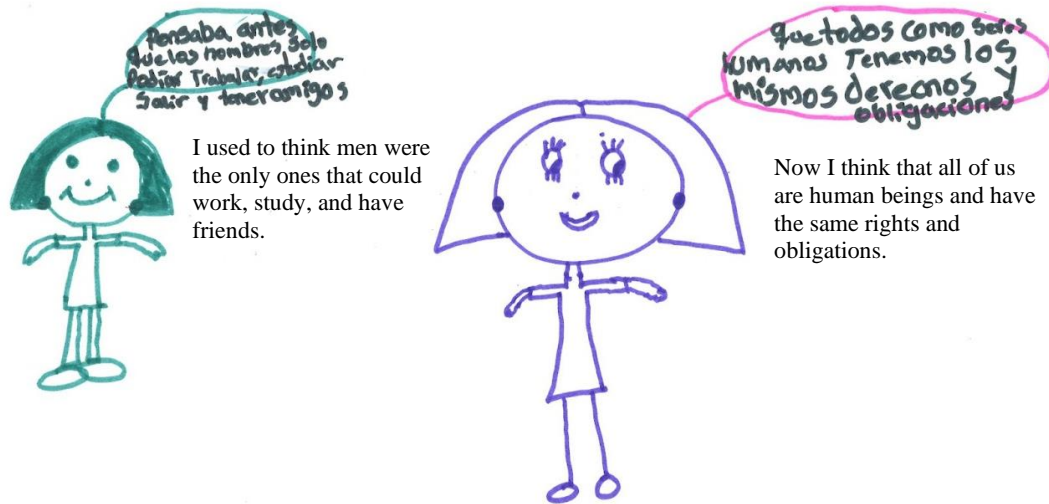
As the days went by, I began to feel happier, and more secure, because where I was, now was no longer living. After all, I was living with my children's very aggressive father.- Gema, Veracruz.

The reason was that, as I said again, I was suffering physical and verbal violence, and now also because of my children. So I decided to denounce it because the truth is that it is not a good life, to live like this as an aggressor who was yelling at you, humiliating you, and humiliating you. -Ana, Veracruz.

The active subjectivity of both participants appears by recognizing a life full of violence as no life, contrary to the hegemonic idea of love about holding on, forgiveness, and loyalty (reproduced by some institutions as indicated above), and acting upon this new understanding of life. They break with this hegemonic idea and mobilize looking for their safety and at the same time denormalizing violence.

Moreover, some participants focused on changes they experienced by seeking support or entering a woman support network:

Lo que antes Pensaba, Lo que hoy Pienso



Caro, Guanajuato.

Figure 4. Consciousness-raising

Caro, when speaking about the changes she experienced in her healing process made two representations of herself, focusing on the things she used to think and what she thinks now. Even though the figures are both her, the one on the left is smaller in comparison to the one on the right side. This depicts a sense of growing and/or of major importance to what she thinks now. Accordingly, there's a distinction between the facial expressions, the left one shows a closed smile with dots as eyes, whereas the right shows an open smile and open eyes. This, in connection to the growth she experienced, shows the change of perspective, receptiveness, and happiness she experiences.

Her drawing also indicates a reflection upon women as a group overall acknowledging herself as part of this group. Moreover, she in writing expresses the fact that we are all humans, showing that in the past she was made to feel like a non-human for the fact of being a woman. She acquires the consciousness of women being human beings creaking with the notions of coloniality of gender. In relation, Gema claims:

We have to be strong... Not only men as men, that they realize that we as women can also be more and we are worth more too... -Gema, Veracruz.

Both statements break with the visible face of coloniality of gender. Caro emphasizes women's quality as humans whereas Gema breaks with the heterosexual hierarchization narrative.

5.1.1.4. Collective and self-image

A crucial part of consciousness-raising, and also the resistance to hegemonic significations of women is the discovery and acknowledgment of one's value, skills, feelings and even looks. The first drawing shows the individual change of perception of a woman that experienced violence, whereas the second focuses more on the collective experience of violence, speaking to a broader audience.



Vero, Guanajuato.

Figure 5. Collective and self-image

Vero draws 5 figures depicting, what appears as a chain of events of what she describes as her metamorphosis. She starts with a set of faces representing her emotions, she stated the importance of managing her emotions. However, it also shows the acknowledgment of her feelings, that is, the self-permission to feel. Very important is that she follows her feelings with her brain being the knowledge

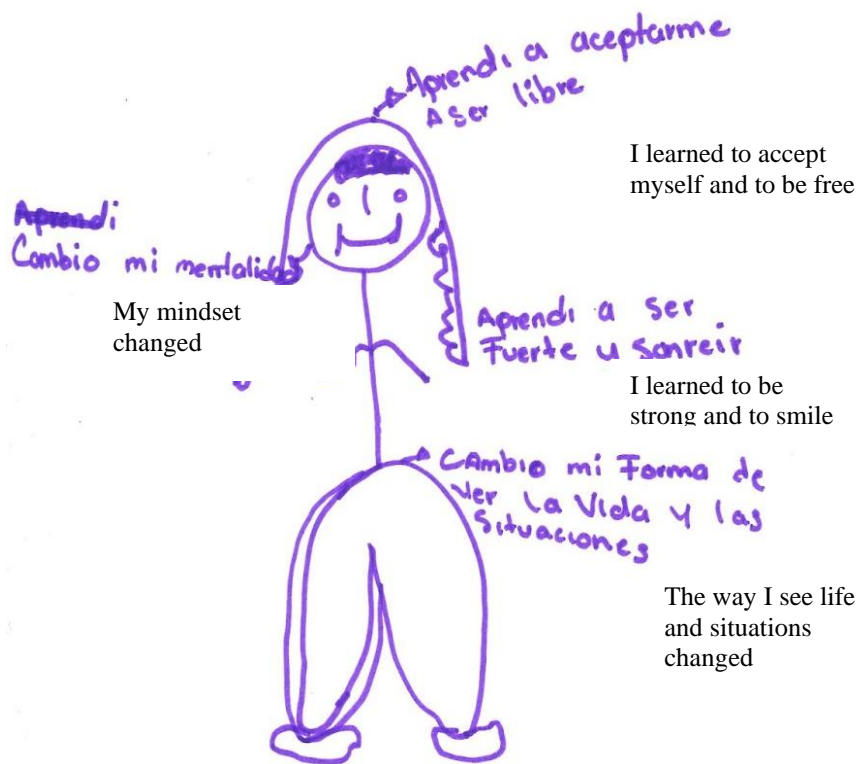
she gathered from her experience and the courses offered in the shelter. She indicated the sensation of being stronger mentally and emotionally. The source of her strength, thus, could be the combination of the value and acknowledgment of her feelings linked with her knowledge and thoughts. Following that chain, the result is the capacity to say no, to set boundaries. She emphasized the importance of leaving at the first sign of mistreatment. And finally, depicting her current situation, she draws a figure representing herself, in a happy mood.

Lizeth, however, explicitly talks about what her feelings and thoughts were before her healing process and consciousness-raising:

I learned to accept myself, I learned to be free. Before, I was traumatized by my weight, with everything, because my self-esteem was a disaster. I was depressive, I tried to commit suicide twice. I learned that things, no matter how bad they are, must get better at some point and that I have to smile even if the world falls. -

Lizeth, Veracruz

She emphasizes the action of learning throughout her process, also associating her thoughts with her feelings: learn to be free. Learning for Lizeth was a liberating experience. She was constructed as a subject with negative characteristics by her partner, thus, one can say that she had to unlearn the significations forced upon herself and by making use of learning as a liberatory action, create new significations for herself.



Lizeth, Veracruz.

Figure 6. Collective and self-image 2

Lizeth's experiences are remarkably characterized by the impact on body issues and image. Her drawing shows in detail her head, hair, and legs; at the top, she writes 'learning to accept me' which goes down to her change of mind about life and situations, this last part is written next to her legs (the legs have an important significance since her husband insulted her weight and her legs particularly), she draws thick legs changing the narrative of ugly for strong leading her to happiness.

Furthermore, Moni dedicates a drawing/letter to abused women as a group as also a message to women as a broader audience. She speaks both of her processes and about the collective experience of abused women:

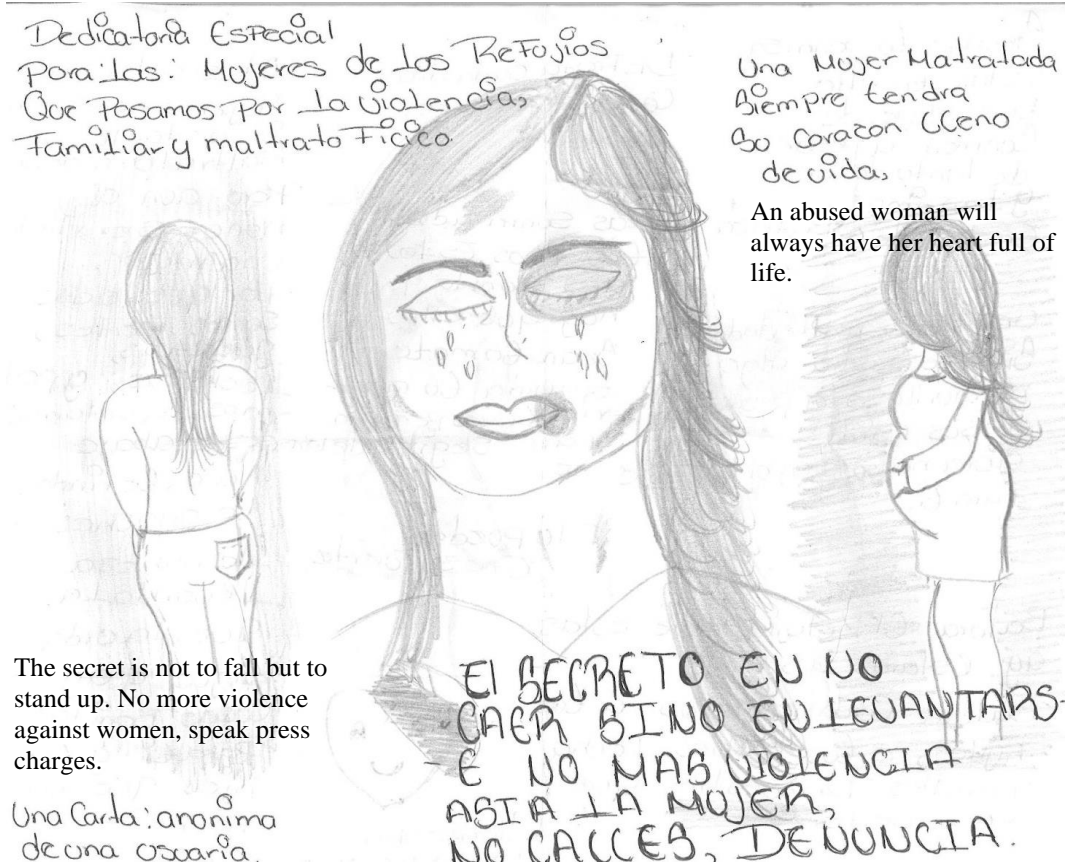


Figure 7. Collective and individual image 3

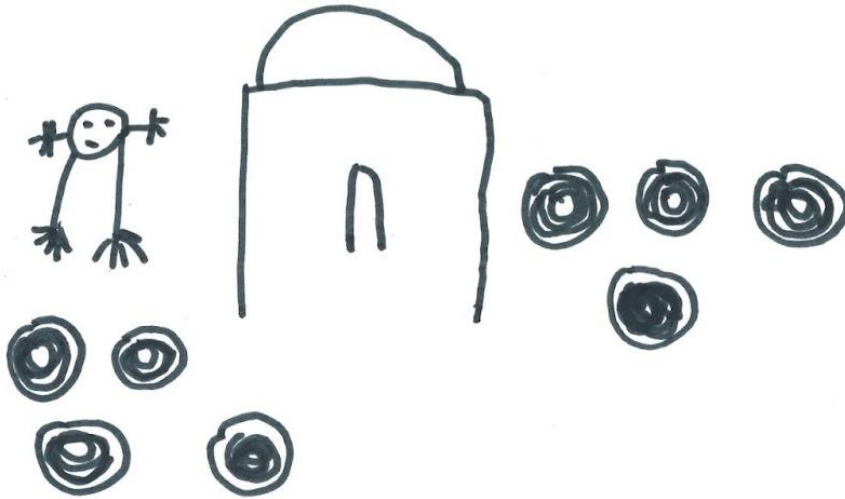
She draws three figures, two hiding their faces and one facing the audience. It is important to highlight that she usually draws women covering their faces or drawing their backs, which might correspond to feelings of shame. Thus, the drawing in the middle has a particular intention: to demonstrate that it is not an isolated case, and those women are not alone in this, a lot of women have suffered and can share their experiences. She breaks with the idea that women must be ashamed of what happened to them, that is not their fault. Moreover, she writes a message where she changes the narrative about abused women, they haven't given up, they have lived inside them and it'll always be like that. She also writes this above about a pregnant woman. This can be a relation of literally growing life inside them and can be linked to the future references that she makes of children being women's motor.

5.2.1.2. Economic resistance

The global context of capitalist power is characterized by an intrinsically violent structure towards women. Participants expressed several ways in which they are systematically excluded or diminished in the assignment of resources or acknowledgment of their work. On the one hand, users talked about their economical vulnerability; on the other hand, as exposed before, the shelter or organization's lack of resources and shortages represent a violent act for them as workers and for the women living in the shelter. As part of infra-politics, women discover their desires and the value of their work and also come up with creative ways to face the structural disadvantage in which they are placed.

With what we worked, we bought the rest, the daily tortillas, the food, and the rent we paid for ourselves. I lived with the women here for fifteen years. Because we didn't have money to pay people to take care of it [...] we kept the money, from what we worked, we contributed it. -Director, Veracruz Shelter.

Overall, the staff was in charge to make savings or handling the shortages in different ways. Of all the Shelters, the one in Veracruz was the one with fewer economic resources. Facing the lack of governmental economic support, women (both staff and users) organize to get food and basic products in different ways. Gema underscored how women living in the shelter had always a plate of food on the table:



Gema, Veracruz.

Figure 8. Economic Resistance

In the picture, Gema draws herself next to a building representing the shelter and 8 circles that represent plates with food. She might've drawn 8 for each kid she has. The fact that only she drew herself could represent the responsibility she feels upon herself, at the same time, it could show the success of protecting her kids (from physical and economical violence). Food security within the shelter was achieved by women's active organizations. Still living by stretching the small number of resources one has means living in a violent context, thus, it is necessary to analyze this matter without romanticizing it.

The other side of women's economic resistance is by discovering, acknowledging, and strengthening their skills.

you get there all defeated and then you realize that you have the skills and abilities to get ahead and that you don't necessarily need to be with that person to... because you lost confidence.- Vero, Guanajuato.

Vero indicates a change in her views about the necessity of being dependent on someone, particularly on the aggressor. The economic resistance women develop

starts by acknowledging their capacities attached to the fact that women as a group can work and that their work is valuable.



Lulú, Nayarit.

Figure 9. Economis Resistance 2

Lulú makes a drawing of two figures representing herself. The complexity of the drawing is reflected in the excitement and load of work she has in mind which, contrary to stress, gives her tranquility. The right-side figure is surrounded by ideas and feelings towards goals, projects, and dreams (she draws a car referencing the difficulties she had working with a motorcycle but also meaning the desire to have a comfortable and safer life). This is her inner-self whereas the out-self is drawn under a sun looking at her and labeled 'tranquility'. The sun at the same time means her 'hope for life'.

Accordingly, the desires women develop or impulse in their process of consciousness-raising materialize, individually or together:

Two users when being out there, met again, got together, and decided to create this self-employment project. They started first with desserts, but later they had the opportunity to rent a hamburger and hot dog stand, and so they decided to start their own business. -Social Worker, Nayarit.

Become aware of one's skills and values and acknowledge one's goals as possible and valid lead women to materialize their projects. Women's skills then are now understood as potential sites of paid labor opening the possibility of making a living by themselves.

5.2.1.3. Women support networks

Women's relationships in contexts of violence appeared to be an essential factor for women to survive and resist. Starting by helping other women by giving information, temporary shelter, emotional comfort, listening to each other, and promoting women's rights and protection. They de-normalize the violence by speaking up and giving support, thus, they are deployed as active subjects within these violent contexts.

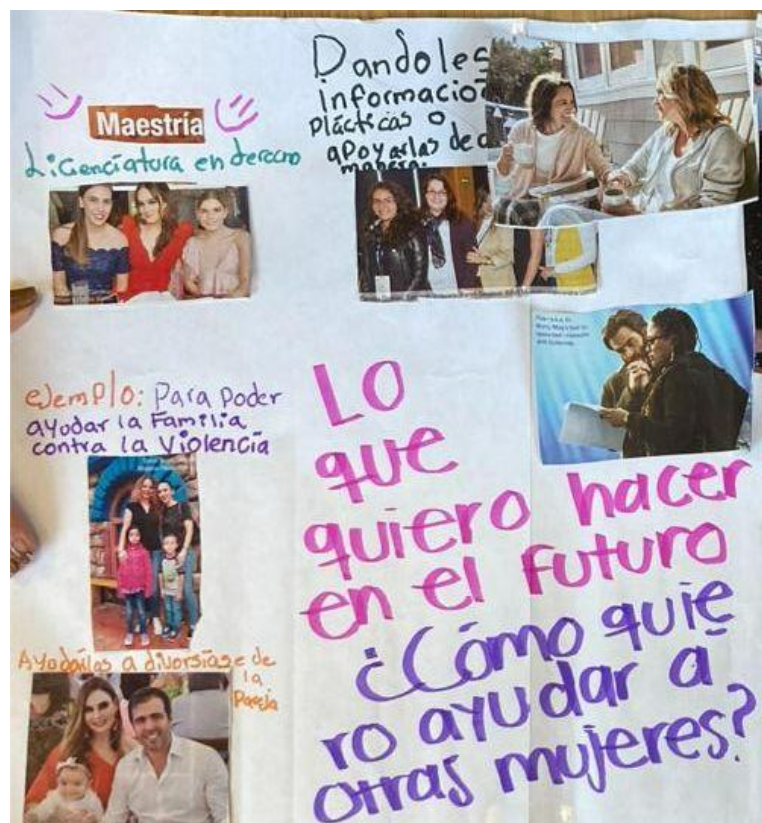


Figure 10. Women support networks.

Ana's drawing depicts three figures, a woman labeled as her cousin, her house (as the place of violence), and her aggressor. The cousin shows how Ana could have felt supported and guided; Ana even writes that the cousin used the noun 'we' (must do something) instead of 'you' alone. Moreover, it shows the

denormalization of violence, due to the cousin's indignation and motivations to pursue justice. She is drawn as a big figure in comparison to the house and the aggressor, showing the place she holds for the user, strength.

In addition, users showed through a *collage*, actions they would like to carry out to support women.



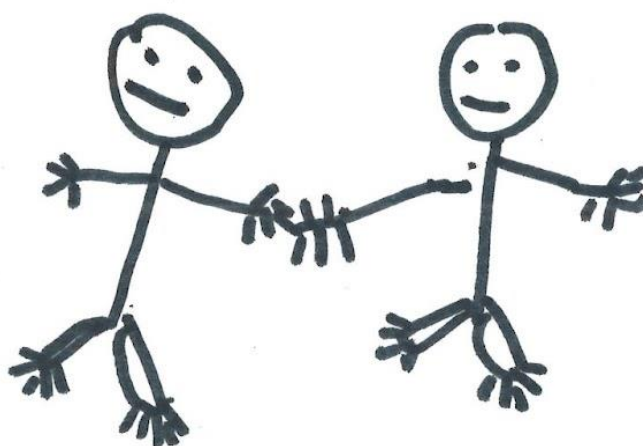
Caro and Vero, Guanajuato.

Figure 11. Women support networks 2.

In the first image, Caro (Guanajuato) started by showing her desire to keep studying to get a law degree. Even though the motivation to study can mean a change for economic improvement, she didn't make any suggestions that she wanted to study to earn money. Following the images she used from the top-down of the left side of the collage, she exemplifies using images of families to help them if they experience violence and also for women to get divorced (she just used one image with a man on it, the other one was from the other participant). Thus, it is possible to notice that her motivations are aligned with helping women through her life experience and academic knowledge, that is, the participants

ourselves as a group marked and differentiated by our bodies, history, and experiences, and I'll add resistance.

In a dedicated drawing for all the women in the world, Gema reinforces the idea of women's unity by making the figures hold hands. She also draws thicker legs in comparison with the other body parts of the figures. This can be related to strength and also the motivation of moving forward together.



Gema, Veracruz.

Figure 13. Women support networks 4.

By reflecting upon women in their lives, and particularly in their process of getting out of violent contexts, women users conclude the necessity of sticking together. Their collective intentions come from the fact of understanding women on their own terms (as women), with the explicit aim of facing femicidal violence, but at the same time impacting the heterosexual and hierarchical notions of what women are.

5.2.1.4. Women's commitment and vocation.

Also, as part of women's support network, there's women's commitment to each other, as women and within professional labor. So far, the users have indicated their desire to help other women in several ways and also how other women have

helped them at some point in their lives. I connect this idea with the perception the staff has of themselves as professionals concerning the women they work for.

We are nothing and we are a lot because we are not, we do not have a career in law or psychology, we are simply women who are trained to be able to help and accompany other women.-Neighbor parts of the communitarian association, Mexican State

This statement on the one hand makes a differentiation between women that have a degree and 'simple' women (referring to housewives, or women with no higher education). On the other hand, sheds light on the potential of all women to support each other, the willingness and the necessity of it. Very importantly, she breaks the idea of a degree as a requirement to help other women. She, then, politicizes her existence as a woman through the potential of her experiences inhabiting a particular body in a particular context.

Furthermore, women working in an organization and with academic credentials also emphasize the need for commitment to supporting women in contexts of violence.

Yes, very tired, yes, also, because you also get to be in a point as an employed worker who is professional, of hypervigilance, of this, is not an emergency and go, there are moments in which due to the situations, due to the cases we have, we have arrived just like that, sleep with clothes, because if it is something you stand up and run, it is necessary- Psychologist, Guanajuato Shelter.

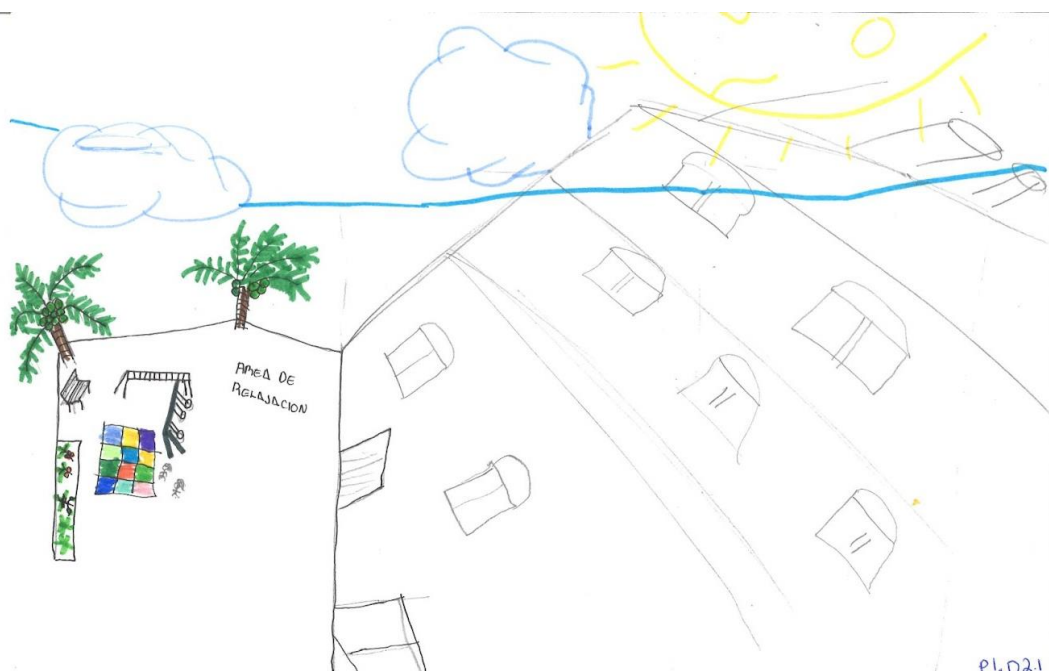
Of course, I attend the women, because if they send them to me, then we continue to attend them. We continue to serve women externally, but we can no longer shelter them.-Director, Veracruz Shelter.

The first statement depicts how a shelter worker might work given the high-risk situation in which the women they work with live. In the second statement, due to the lack of governmental economic support, they closed the shelter but continue giving support to women through legal and psychological assistance.

5.2.2 Patriarchal bargain: Bargaining with institutions.

In the interactions between staff and institutions and users and institutions, women demonstrate different ways to navigate the system to get, if not all they deserve and are looking for, some benefits for themselves and/or the women they support.

Shelters can be perceived as institutions of their own, that although are not part of the government¹⁸, have an organized structure with a determined purpose and specific rules. Women living in the shelters depict how they negotiate the rules imposed within the shelters as part of their support process:



Lulú, Nayarit.

Figure 14. Patriarchal Bargain.

¹⁸ Some shelters are originated and administered by the government, but the shelters that I had access to form part of civil associations.

When asked about her favorite activity to do in the Shelter, Lulú drew the 'recreational area' where women usually go to chat, walk or play with their children. She put a lot of emphasis on relaxation and seeing her stay in the shelter as a vacation while facing economic violence outside the shelter. In opposition she draws the Shelter building in perspective like a massive thing watching them, pushing the sun. This can mean the hope, desires, and motivations are there but the process in the shelter is hard and clouds these positive feelings. Thus, one can infer that she bargains her feelings of being observed and controlled for her feelings of relaxation.



Lulú, Nayarit.

Figure 15. Patriarchal bargain 2.

In another drawing, Lulú emphasized the value she puts on the workshops by putting at the center the lawyer of the shelter speaking about violence against

women. However, in the upper right corner, she drew the signs of a schedule and rules. One can draw a line between what she enjoys and the constant reminder of her feelings towards being controlled and observed, and sometimes caged (repeating the patterns of violence she was escaping from). She bargains her access to this knowledge by giving up a part of her comfort, or lifestyle.

The staff at the same time by measuring the risk context of each woman bargains for their access to the shelter.

It is almost always about aggressors who are not so dangerous. Let's talk about why they don't have as much connection with drug trafficking, with other situations, or criminal situations. I do not minimize the degree of danger, but they do not handle weapons, there is not as much risk, so to speak, for them and they have the opportunity to leave with a family member that they see as a support network, who is the last one to support you, but you do not return and from that point on they begin to have these limits with the aggressors.-Psychologist, Guanajuato Shelter.

The psychologist emphasized the fact that Mexico is a very dangerous country for women, thus, giving space for women with a high risk of violence is imperative, even if it means denying the option of the shelter to women at lower risk (this doesn't mean refuse them any support at all).

5.2.3 Politics of the public: Institutional resistance.

Even though there wasn't a clear demonstration or declaration of aiming for a political and collective movement (by the participants), through their stories women showed a transit from infra-politics to publicly resist the violence perpetrated against them. However, the incursion into politics of the public doesn't mean that infra-politics stop or are finished.

In the process of consciousness-raising, women embrace the resignifications to themselves reflected in the value they give to their body and their experiences, this leads to different interactions with the institutions:

You can also set your limits and say hey, no, don't talk to me like that, or I don't like it, don't let it affect you. You also have if it is not appearing to you as it is talking to you, you do not have to remain silent or tolerate the fact that there is an authority, that it is an authority, it is a person and you are a person and you deserve to be treated as a dignified person.-Lawyer, Nayarit Shelter.

To defend oneself in front of negligent acts, such as re-victimization, question, doubting, shaming, etc. part of the process of the self and collective consciousness inside a public institution (the public space) is a confrontation with negligent acts carried out by the institution, thus a clear act of resistance of the public.

Moreover, the awareness and understanding of women's experiences in contexts of high violence facing the State's lack of responsibility, leads also to different forms of organization, answer:

We break rules. We broke the rules since we did not have the protocol to set up a shelter, what we had was a very great need to safeguard the life and safety of women. And since there were no shelters in the state of Veracruz, what we did was that we talked about it and said we were going to set it up ourselves in the same workspace, because we are supposed to be an external care center, which we continue to do.-Director, Veracruz Shelter.

To answer to the actual needs of women despite the structure imposed by the institutions means to resist institutions' inflexible rules. It is resisting through creating new spatialities, visible to women and society.

Finally, the distribution of information plays an important role when resisting oppressive systems:

I believe that in Mexico when you want a matter to work, then make it public. Yes, make it public so that it works. You know that the media, now the social networks, and all that work more with this. If the issue has already been

made public, then they work it quickly. Why? Because you say, 'the press is all over me, I have the social networks with their eyes very alert', then that happens and even more so here in Guanajuato capital, we are a small space.-Lawyer, Guanajuato.

This statement reflects a way to resist impunity and enforce States' accountability for their acts, by making public the way the institutions work setting women's experiences in the public field.

6 Conclusions

Mexican governmental institutions contribute to the continuation of femicidal violence by working within the logic of the coloniality of gender and patriarchal junction, that is, through the reproduction of the potentiated heterosexual hierarchy where women are at the bottom, also by strengthening the hegemonic ideas of women's inferiority, subjectifying them as not humans. This is demonstrated in their lack of interest and responsibility to safeguard women's integrity characterized by negligence, corruption, and lack of accountability. In addition, the administrative organization of the institutions and focus on statistics established only to serve the purpose of improving the image of the ruling party in turn (political violence) stood out as a crucial factor in the femicidal violence scaffolding worthy of further research. The result is the usage of women's experiences, lives, and bodies at the government's convenience, and at the same time a disregard for them by their interpretation of what an abused woman should be and look like (the perfect 'abused woman'), in connection to their lack of sensitization leading to neglecting women during all their justice-seeking process through malpractice, revictimization and the homogenization of women and their experiences.

By subjectifying and classifying women, the imaginary of them being passive subjects is also deployed. However, women act as active subjects despite, and as an answer to the context of femicidal violence in Mexico by changing the hegemonic ideas that made them subordinate/passive subjects to self-significations that lead them to creatively resist and move within power structures, that is, through infra-politics and patriarchal bargains. Their resistance can be cataloged as infra-politics, in which, consciousness awareness, change of individual and collective perception of the I/we change, generate opposition to

hegemonic subjectification of women as a group. Furthermore, women politicize their experiences by acknowledging them as a source to help other women. Also, they politicize 'the private' allowing them to transit from infra-politics to publicly resist the violence perpetrated against them. In this sense, women's infra-politics contribute to the denormalization of violence against them by disrupting their subjectification under power structures giving themselves a meaning related to strength, unity, love, and support.

6.1.1.1. Legal Process and Follow-up

As well, several inconsistencies were pointed out during the legal process (usually when women were staying in the shelter or separated from their partners) women undertake regarding their protection, divorce, child support, and criminal prosecution of the attacker.

What we have been seeing is that no, they do not attend to the legal cases of the women that they brought to us several times, not only did they not bring them, but they also left them and went away and never followed up on them. -

Director, Veracruz Shelter

Overall, participants' answers pointed out institutions' detachment from women's process once they enter the shelter. It became a one-sided work when it is designed to be held in collaboration. Regarding this topic the social worker in Nayarit said:

I have come across this type of situation. I need this document corrected and I know that you can do it because it is close to you (the office)... And you can do it, it is easier for you legally speaking. I am three hours away from here. Well, the document was either misplaced or they did not give it the proper follow-up, or they gave it to me as it was not, not as I had requested it. And really, I mean, processes that could be carried out in a week, for them it has already been three months and my time here is already gone. My time is really gone...-Social worker, Nayarit Shelter.

The social worker expressed frustration and despair due to the lack of response and commitment of the channeling institutions. Becoming a one-sided job it's been implemented as teamwork with co-responsibilities.

In addition, there are contradictions in actions in the way institutions conduct the cases:

Also, within the protection measures established by the authorities. They do it wrong because they first separate the woman from the home, they send her with us to the shelter and establish a protection measure, of surveillance at her home. So, who are you going to watch over? Who are you going to protect? [...] It would seem that the one they are watching over is the aggressor. This is a very constant problem. -Lawyer, Nayarit Shelter

These people from the DIF commit brutalities. This girl Rebeca, who was the last one who was with us, who was with us for two years, the man is an extremely violent guy, extremely. The DIF gave him the address of where she was, because 'he had the right to see his children. Then the guy started spying on the house (the shelter), screamed, and attacked us, and she did not go out and neither did the children. This is the only case in which the aggressor has come because the DIF sent him. -Director, Veracruz Shelter.

The situations stated by the participants depict an illogical set of institutional decisions that end up affecting women's processes. More importantly, it shows a certain notion of help given to the aggressors, which follows the patriarchal junction with the heterosexual hierarchization of men above women, being the latter disposable.

6.1.2 Lack of Transversality

Another big part of institutional violence is the lack of knowledge institutions have about the matter and about the right instances to approach. Thus, they can't give correct information to women looking for help, or worse, they interfere with legal processes that favor women. Moni stated that

[...] in the Prosecutor's office is where they help you more than elsewhere'-
Moni, Nayarit Shelter.

She offers this answer because she previously went to police stations and DIF. Thus, it can be assumed she acquired this knowledge by going to different institutions and comparing the support they offer. Not because she was properly informed where to go to receive direct support. In this regard, the lawyer in Nayarit points out:

The information must be in all the spaces, even if you are not the appropriate institution. But you have the way to inform her where she can go and the suggestion: "within the DIF we do not take care of this, of these situations, but I do know that the Justice Center, you can go to the Justice Center and there they will do this for you", that is, to have the information also as institutions of the places where she can go, depending on the woman's problem. -Lawyer, Nayarit Shelter.

Besides the lack of knowledge about the government structure, its institutions, and their functions, there's a lack of communication among institutions:

The INPI¹⁹ had a program to benefit indigenous people who were incarcerated, but for lack of money to pay bail for minor offenses they paid their bail, and they were going to pay him (the aggressor). So, we went to

¹⁹ National Institute of Indigenous Peoples.

talk to them and that is what prevented them from paying his bail. That is why I am telling you about the lack of knowledge, the lack of coordination, the issue that they do not know, and that they do not really have the transversality. -Director, Veracruz Shelter.

6.1.3 Corruption

Corruption is another characteristic of institutional violence, the statements showed the several occasions where irregular processes took place and the public positions about it. Lizeth describes how the aggressors can negotiate with the authorities in order not to get fined or even be prosecuted.

Not even like that (women bleeding), because if the husband arrives and negotiates with them (the police officers), it no longer works. - Lizeth, Veracruz Shelter.

As well, in fatal cases, when a femicide occurred, there are inconsistencies and irregularities in the process to find the responsible person for the crime. A participant explicitly stated to be aware of the corruption of the authorities:

I only have one case of femicide in which they are in collusion with the authorities, I don't know if it is also with organized crime, but with the authorities, yes. The body was handed over to them after many days. They had been told that they had to do other studies because they could not define the cause of death. At the Semefo they said no that they never sent any organs, they never sent anything. Everything, everything was very bad. Besides, the judge in charge of the case went on vacation and never came back, which makes me think that the mastermind is in collusion with the authorities. - Neighbor part of the communitarian association, Mexican State

In this regard, another participant statement talks about a conversation between the Veracruz Women Institute's Director and an institute's former worker:

She was very brave, she stood up to the director and started telling her about all the Prosecutor's Office irregularities, and she said 'are you crazy? Why did you come to tell me that? How do you think I'm going to do that? It's as if you were shooting yourself in the foot, don't you understand that we are the same?' And the worker came out disappointed. -Lawyer, Veracruz Shelter.

The statements related to corruption so far demonstrate the support that the institutions give to men, although factors such as class and race influence the negotiations between men and institutions. Moreover, the government's aim of gender quotas to make 50%-50% men and women public servants, doesn't mean that women working in these positions have an actual commitment towards women, as was stated before, feminism and gender perspective is not a course one passes and that's it, it is a way of seeing life.

6.1.4 Lack of accountability

In connection there are traces of corruption even in the ways statistics are presented to benefit the public image of the government in turn:

What they (the Prosecutor's Office) did was to make up the statistics and they are reclassifying them, now they are making public that feminicides are down, but there is another item that says, 'intentional homicide of women', so they are feminicides, but they are reclassifying them so that the figures decrease. A woman dies and they try in every way possible not to classify it as a feminicide to reduce the statistics, but even with that, they have not succeeded.-Lawyer, Veracruz Shelter.

This shows the political violence due to the purpose of benefiting the government despite women's safety. Moreover, it means a corrupted way of government accountability, thinking there's accountability at all. The manipulation of legal classifications constitutes a big limitation for women's justice. The participants mentioned this situation linking their feelings towards their perceptions about what should be done and the State's responsibility. Furthermore, the participants underscored the emphasis the government puts on showing numbers and statistics with no explanation on how they got them, and what are the women's process status:

Just numbers, how many of them they attend and how many of them they gave legal advice, how many of them psychology, how many of the social work, where they analyzed them. But one also must ask them to show their demands. What stage do they reach, at least so that they (new personnel) know where they left off and when the programs return, at least take up those issues again. But they do not justify their actions, nothing!- Lawyer, Veracruz.

Furthermore, focusing only on numbers and statistics means losing the sense of women's humanity for the State and the public servants. The Veracruz Shelter Director indicates:

But what kind of help are you giving that woman? Because you are supposed to give her a comprehensive orientation, comprehensive help, fulfilling the necessities of each woman's case [...] it is not possible, we are not talking about numbers, about things, we are talking about people and life processes.
-Director, Veracruz Shelter.

6.1.5 Maldistribution

The last problem to be addressed under institutional violence is the way the government establishes and keeps control of the budget granted to women's

shelters or associations that support them. The Veracruz Director exposes an overall picture of the current situation:

I feel that we are going backward in terms of women's human rights because they are canceling programs, they are canceling the instances that were places where women could find refuge and the State is not complying with its responsibility to safeguard women's lives and safety.- Director, Veracruz Shelter.

Starting from the institutions at the top of the governmental structure, the distribution of economic resources has been cut down reaching the lower organisms, shelters, and associations. For that reason, the middle-level institutions establish harder requirements and guidelines to obtain money from the State, at the same time, the number of months where the economic support was given, was reduced:

There are a series of guidelines as to what can be purchased and what cannot be purchased and the amount, they (INDESOL²⁰) also determine the execution is also determined by them. How much goes to each of the items in which the resources are used for the operation of the shelter. However, you cannot base the budget, which is determined by many situations, on just the number of women, because for example, in 2020 we talked about it with the professionals. The cases were much simpler. In 2021 they had a large majority of women with these psychiatric medication needs. - Director, Nayarit Shelter.

That is very complex because they are supporting 10 months. But well, what happens during the other two months? I mean, as you saw, there are families, they eat, they clothe, they have needs. But the truth is that there is also rent and electricity, water and gas; food and salaries are left floating.

²⁰ National Institute for Social Development.

The truth is that you can prepare for a month, but working for three months without a salary, without anything, is very complex and it is also quite violent. Institutionally, it's like "you don't have to pay", so you don't have to work. And you see who stays to work, it is because there is a vocation.-
Director, Guanajuato Shelter.

Both statements indicate the disconnection between the administrative budget management and the reality of operating a shelter. In the second quote, it is interesting to notice the focus on violence against the staff by not considering enough budget for salaries. Not thinking of the complexities surrounding a space aimed to help women, on the one hand, contributes to the exploitation of staff members of these shelters, and on the other limits women's healing process, replying and continuing violent actions.

6.2 Women as active subjects: infra-politics and patriarchal bargain facing institutional violence.

We (women) are strong, we are great, we are brave, we are always better united.-
Lizeth, Veracruz.

The analysis of this section works towards answering the research question: *How do women as active subjects in contexts of feminicidal violence navigate and resist institutional violence?* Thus, it includes women's actions in front of the particular ways of institutional violence stated above and also the ways they resist and navigate feminicidal violence in general. The data indicated resisting politics mainly in the realm of infra-politics through actions such as consciousness awareness, economic resistance, professional vocation, and women's support networks; in addition, it indicated women's strategies represented through negotiations with two violent figures: the institutions and the aggressors. Likewise, it was possible to identify the small references to the women's movement to the politics of the public, part of the process of resisting acts. The underlying factor among women's actions is the formation of self-significance (individually and collectively), which boosts their actions in different ways concerning hegemonic presuppositions and structures.

6.2.1 Women's Infra-politics

The acts of resistance carried out by the users were constantly depicted in their drawings and interviews, most of them as part of infra-politics practice, that is in the realm of the collectively and individually inwards:

Because he saw what I was doing. That I was aiming at bigger things, I didn't keep quiet anymore, I had to raise my voice and say enough is enough. Then he saw that I was serious, and as I said, I received psychological help. Then I became stronger and stronger for my children because I have two children. - Ana, Veracruz.

Ana indicates the tension between the significations bestowed on her and the 'minimum sense of agency' (Lugones) that makes her an active subject, that is, by not believing in her word and her actions her (ex) husband position her into an imaginary of weaknesses, fear, and suppression, whereas Anna breaks this imaginary boosted by the feelings and commitment to her kids, revealing the significance of herself, showing her voice, defending herself, unveiling her strength.

The previous statement speaks about the disruptive moment when women create and display their significance while facing the context of violence. However, some participants also indicate a desire for a future style life based on the significations of themselves and women as a group:

Yes, I would like to continue exercising and doing yoga. I would like to finish my degree and I would also like to write a book, I would like to visit exotic places, travel, do extreme sports like scuba diving, eat exotic dishes too, spend time with my daughter and also travel and go on a cruise to Europe, I also want my house and I also see and visualize myself being a successful woman and inspiring women... -Vero, Guanajuato

By expressing the different desires, she wishes to accomplish in the future, Vero breaks with the idea of living next to a man, and also with the 'perfect abused woman' as a mark of her identity that will follow her forever. In the end, she

connects her success as a way to help women, putting value to her story and experience to influence women's life²¹, that is, on the one hand, politicizing her experience by giving it value to herself and to others (as a way to help others); and on the other becoming an active subject by changing the narratives and significance of herself influencing her intentions.

6.2.1.1. Consciousness-raising

Concerning violence, women (both staff and users) declared the acknowledgment of their normalization of violence, which led women to render invisible the different ways violence is exercised, focusing only on physical violence.

As the days went by, I began to feel happier, and more secure, because where I was, now was no longer living. After all, I was living with my children's very aggressive father.- Gema, Veracruz.

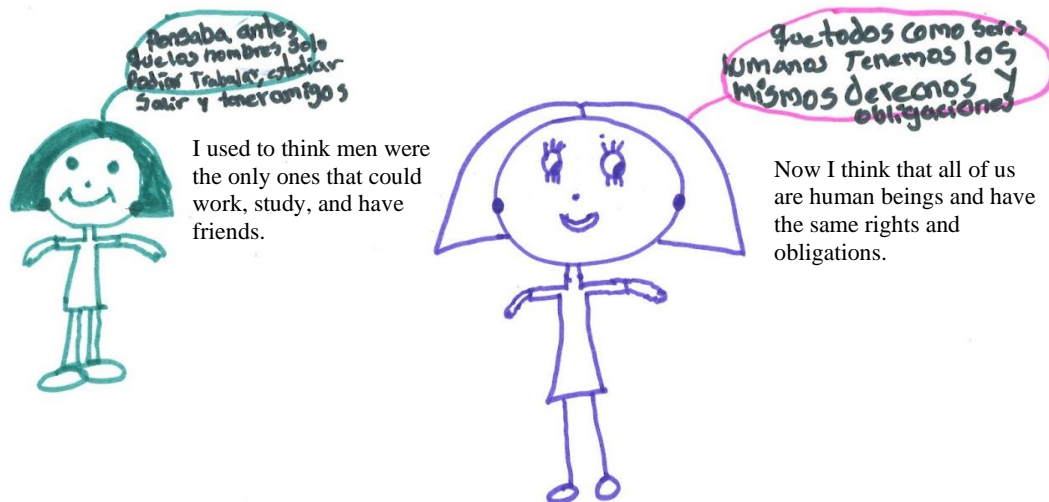
The reason was that, as I said again, I was suffering physical and verbal violence, and now also because of my children. So I decided to denounce it because the truth is that it is not a good life, to live like this as an aggressor who was yelling at you, humiliating you, and humiliating you. -Ana, Veracruz.

The active subjectivity of both participants appears by recognizing a life full of violence as no life, contrary to the hegemonic idea of love about holding on, forgiveness, and loyalty (reproduced by some institutions as indicated above), and acting upon this new understanding of life. They break with this hegemonic idea and mobilize looking for their safety and at the same time denormalizing violence.

Moreover, some participants focused on changes they experienced by seeking support or entering a woman support network:

²¹ This can also be part of the creation of women's networks which will be addressed later in the text.

Lo que antes Pensaba, Lo que hoy Pienso



Caro, Guanajuato.

Figure 16. Consciousness-raising

Caro, when speaking about the changes she experienced in her healing process made two representations of herself, focusing on the things she used to think and what she thinks now. Even though the figures are both her, the one on the left is smaller in comparison to the one on the right side. This depicts a sense of growing and/or of major importance to what she thinks now. Accordingly, there's a distinction between the facial expressions, the left one shows a closed smile with dots as eyes, whereas the right shows an open smile and open eyes. This, in connection to the growth she experienced, shows the change of perspective, receptiveness, and happiness she experiences.

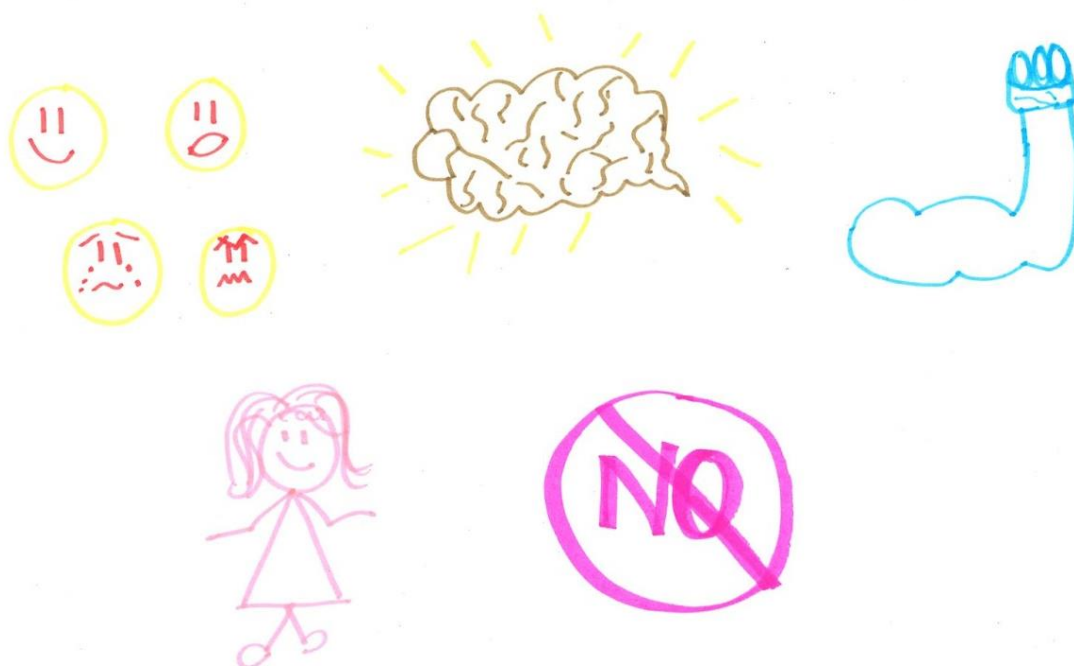
Her drawing also indicates a reflection upon women as a group overall acknowledging herself as part of this group. Moreover, she in writing expresses the fact that we are all humans, showing that in the past she was made to feel like a non-human for the fact of being a woman. She acquires the consciousness of women being human beings creaking with the notions of coloniality of gender. In relation, Gema claims:

We have to be strong... Not only men as men, that they realize that we as women can also be more and we are worth more too... -Gema, Veracruz.

Both statements break with the visible face of coloniality of gender. Caro emphasizes women's quality as humans whereas Gema breaks with the heterosexual hierarchization narrative.

5.1.1.4. Collective and self-image

A crucial part of consciousness-raising, and also the resistance to hegemonic significations of women is the discovery and acknowledgment of one's value, skills, feelings and even looks. The first drawing shows the individual change of perception of a woman that experienced violence, whereas the second focuses more on the collective experience of violence, speaking to a broader audience.



Vero, Guanajuato.

Figure 17. Collective and self-image

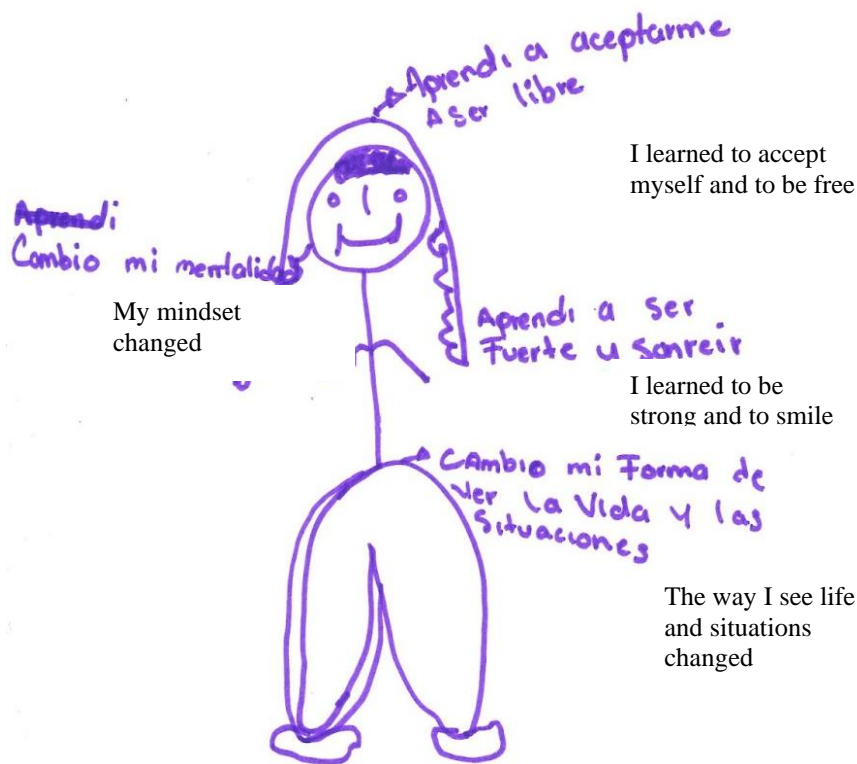
Vero draws 5 figures depicting, what appears as a chain of events of what she describes as her metamorphosis. She starts with a set of faces representing her emotions, she stated the importance of managing her emotions. However, it also

shows the acknowledgment of her feelings, that is, the self-permission to feel. Very important is that she follows her feelings with her brain being the knowledge she gathered from her experience and the courses offered in the shelter. She indicated the sensation of being stronger mentally and emotionally. The source of her strength, thus, could be the combination of the value and acknowledgment of her feelings linked with her knowledge and thoughts. Following that chain, the result is the capacity to say no, to set boundaries. She emphasized the importance of leaving at the first sign of mistreatment. And finally, depicting her current situation, she draws a figure representing herself, in a happy mood.

Lizeth, however, explicitly talks about what her feelings and thoughts were before her healing process and consciousness-raising:

I learned to accept myself, I learned to be free. Before, I was traumatized by my weight, with everything, because my self-esteem was a disaster. I was depressive, I tried to commit suicide twice. I learned that things, no matter how bad they are, must get better at some point and that I have to smile even if the world falls. - Lizeth, Veracruz

She emphasizes the action of learning throughout her process, also associating her thoughts with her feelings: learn to be free. Learning for Lizeth was a liberating experience. She was constructed as a subject with negative characteristics by her partner, thus, one can say that she had to unlearn the significations forced upon herself and by making use of learning as a liberatory action, create new significations for herself.



Lizeth, Veracruz.

Figure 18. Collective and self-image 2

Lizeth's experiences are remarkably characterized by the impact on body issues and image. Her drawing shows in detail her head, hair, and legs; at the top, she writes 'learning to accept me' which goes down to her change of mind about life and situations, this last part is written next to her legs (the legs have an important significance since her husband insulted her weight and her legs particularly), she draws thick legs changing the narrative of ugly for strong leading her to happiness.

Furthermore, Moni dedicates a drawing/letter to abused women as a group as also a message to women as a broader audience. She speaks both of her processes and about the collective experience of abused women:

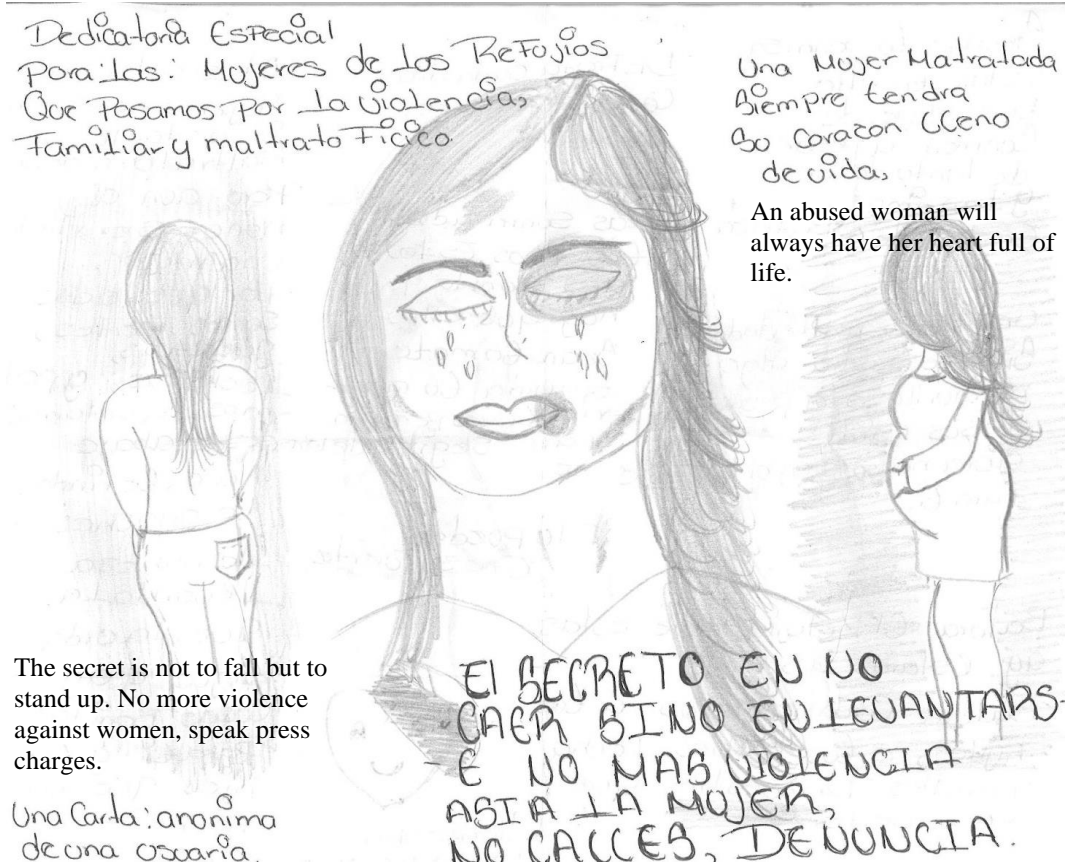


Figure 19. Collective and individual image 3

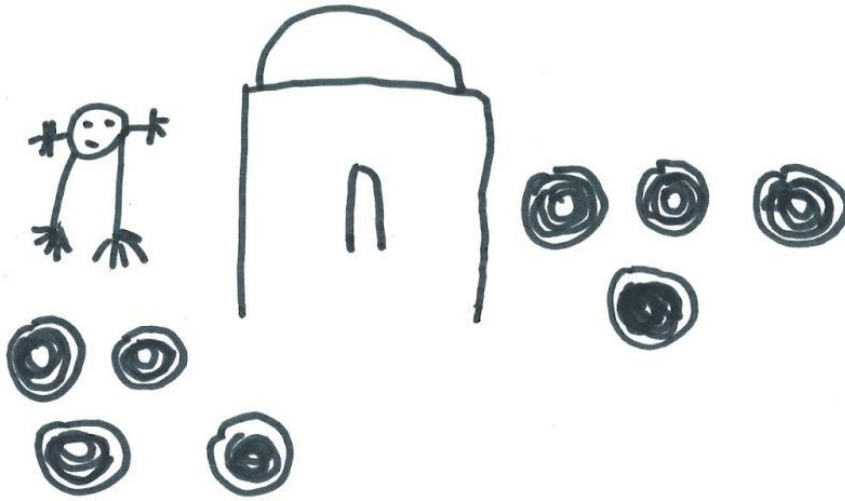
She draws three figures, two hiding their faces and one facing the audience. It is important to highlight that she usually draws women covering their faces or drawing their backs, which might correspond to feelings of shame. Thus, the drawing in the middle has a particular intention: to demonstrate that it is not an isolated case, and those women are not alone in this, a lot of women have suffered and can share their experiences. She breaks with the idea that women must be ashamed of what happened to them, that is not their fault. Moreover, she writes a message where she changes the narrative about abused women, they haven't given up, they have lived inside them and it'll always be like that. She also writes this above about a pregnant woman. This can be a relation of literally growing life inside them and can be linked to the future references that she makes of children being women's motor.

6.2.1.2. Economic resistance

The global context of capitalist power is characterized by an intrinsically violent structure towards women. Participants expressed several ways in which they are systematically excluded or diminished in the assignment of resources or acknowledgment of their work. On the one hand, users talked about their economical vulnerability; on the other hand, as exposed before, the shelter or organization's lack of resources and shortages represent a violent act for them as workers and for the women living in the shelter. As part of infra-politics, women discover their desires and the value of their work and also come up with creative ways to face the structural disadvantage in which they are placed.

With what we worked, we bought the rest, the daily tortillas, the food, and the rent we paid for ourselves. I lived with the women here for fifteen years. Because we didn't have money to pay people to take care of it [...] we kept the money, from what we worked, we contributed it. -Director, Veracruz Shelter.

Overall, the staff was in charge to make savings or handling the shortages in different ways. Of all the Shelters, the one in Veracruz was the one with fewer economic resources. Facing the lack of governmental economic support, women (both staff and users) organize to get food and basic products in different ways. Gema underscored how women living in the shelter had always a plate of food on the table:



Gema, Veracruz.

Figure 20. Economic Resistance

In the picture, Gema draws herself next to a building representing the shelter and 8 circles that represent plates with food. She might've drawn 8 for each kid she has. The fact that only she drew herself could represent the responsibility she feels upon herself, at the same time, it could show the success of protecting her kids (from physical and economical violence). Food security within the shelter was achieved by women's active organizations. Still living by stretching the small number of resources one has means living in a violent context, thus, it is necessary to analyze this matter without romanticizing it.

The other side of women's economic resistance is by discovering, acknowledging, and strengthening their skills.

you get there all defeated and then you realize that you have the skills and abilities to get ahead and that you don't necessarily need to be with that person to... because you lost confidence.- Vero, Guanajuato.

Vero indicates a change in her views about the necessity of being dependent on someone, particularly on the aggressor. The economic resistance women develop

starts by acknowledging their capacities attached to the fact that women as a group can work and that their work is valuable.



Lulú, Nayarit.

Figure 21. Economis Resistance 2

Lulú makes a drawing of two figures representing herself. The complexity of the drawing is reflected in the excitement and load of work she has in mind which, contrary to stress, gives her tranquility. The right-side figure is surrounded by ideas and feelings towards goals, projects, and dreams (she draws a car referencing the difficulties she had working with a motorcycle but also meaning the desire to have a comfortable and safer life). This is her inner-self whereas the out-self is drawn under a sun looking at her and labeled 'tranquility'. The sun at the same time means her 'hope for life'.

Accordingly, the desires women develop or impulse in their process of consciousness-raising materialize, individually or together:

Two users when being out there, met again, got together, and decided to create this self-employment project. They started first with desserts, but later they had the opportunity to rent a hamburger and hot dog stand, and so they decided to start their own business. -Social Worker, Nayarit.

Become aware of one's skills and values and acknowledge one's goals as possible and valid lead women to materialize their projects. Women's skills then are now understood as potential sites of paid labor opening the possibility of making a living by themselves.

6.2.1.3. Women support networks

Women's relationships in contexts of violence appeared to be an essential factor for women to survive and resist. Starting by helping other women by giving information, temporary shelter, emotional comfort, listening to each other, and promoting women's rights and protection. They de-normalize the violence by speaking up and giving support, thus, they are deployed as active subjects within these violent contexts.

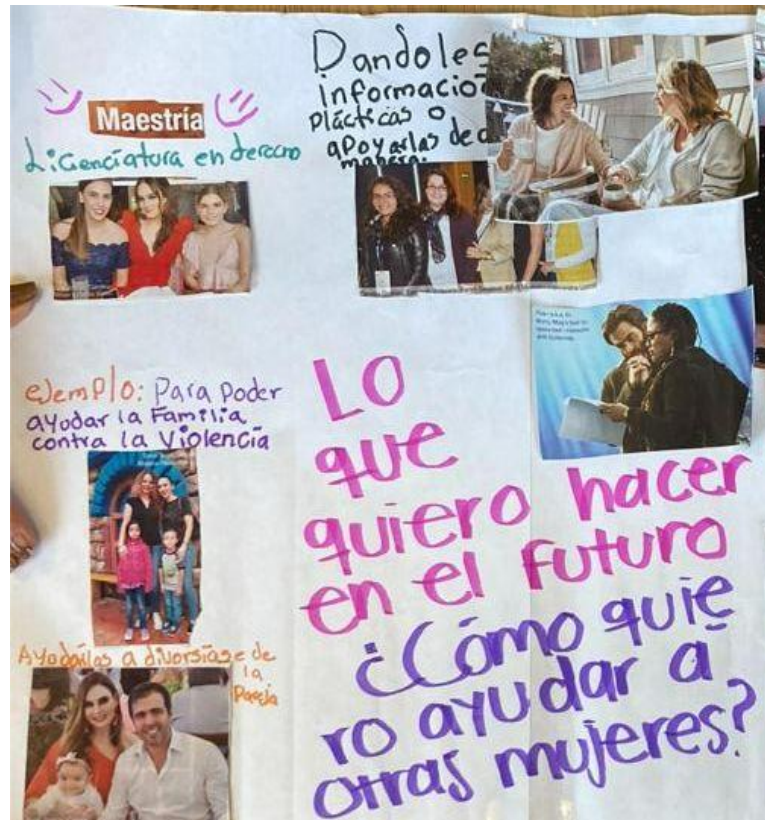


Figure 22. Women support networks.

Ana's drawing depicts three figures, a woman labeled as her cousin, her house (as the place of violence), and her aggressor. The cousin shows how Ana could have felt supported and guided; Ana even writes that the cousin used the noun 'we' (must do something) instead of 'you' alone. Moreover, it shows the

denormalization of violence, due to the cousin's indignation and motivations to pursue justice. She is drawn as a big figure in comparison to the house and the aggressor, showing the place she holds for the user, strength.

In addition, users showed through a *collage*, actions they would like to carry out to support women.



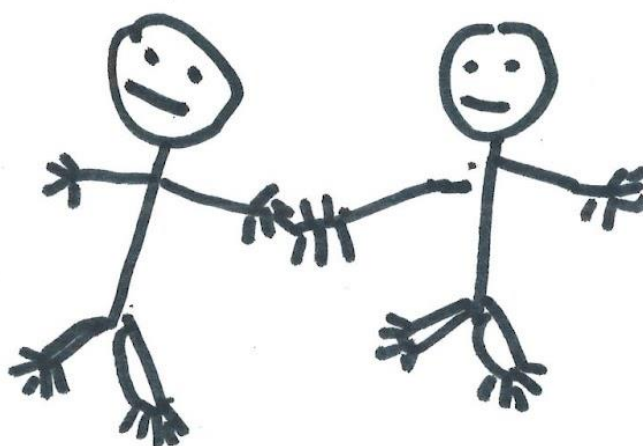
Caro and Vero, Guanajuato.

Figure 23. Women support networks 2.

In the first image, Caro (Guanajuato) started by showing her desire to keep studying to get a law degree. Even though the motivation to study can mean a change for economic improvement, she didn't make any suggestions that she wanted to study to earn money. Following the images she used from the top-down of the left side of the collage, she exemplifies using images of families to help them if they experience violence and also for women to get divorced (she just used one image with a man on it, the other one was from the other participant). Thus, it is possible to notice that her motivations are aligned with helping women through her life experience and academic knowledge, that is, the participants

ourselves as a group marked and differentiated by our bodies, history, and experiences, and I'll add resistance.

In a dedicated drawing for all the women in the world, Gema reinforces the idea of women's unity by making the figures hold hands. She also draws thicker legs in comparison with the other body parts of the figures. This can be related to strength and also the motivation of moving forward together.



Gema, Veracruz.

Figure 25. Women support networks 4.

By reflecting upon women in their lives, and particularly in their process of getting out of violent contexts, women users conclude the necessity of sticking together. Their collective intentions come from the fact of understanding women on their own terms (as women), with the explicit aim of facing femicidal violence, but at the same time impacting the heterosexual and hierarchical notions of what women are.

6.2.1.4. Women's commitment and vocation.

Also, as part of women's support network, there's women's commitment to each other, as women and within professional labor. So far, the users have indicated their desire to help other women in several ways and also how other women have

helped them at some point in their lives. I connect this idea with the perception the staff has of themselves as professionals concerning the women they work for.

We are nothing and we are a lot because we are not, we do not have a career in law or psychology, we are simply women who are trained to be able to help and accompany other women.-Neighbor parts of the communitarian association, Mexican State

This statement on the one hand makes a differentiation between women that have a degree and 'simple' women (referring to housewives, or women with no higher education). On the other hand, sheds light on the potential of all women to support each other, the willingness and the necessity of it. Very importantly, she breaks the idea of a degree as a requirement to help other women. She, then, politicizes her existence as a woman through the potential of her experiences inhabiting a particular body in a particular context.

Furthermore, women working in an organization and with academic credentials also emphasize the need for commitment to supporting women in contexts of violence.

Yes, very tired, yes, also, because you also get to be in a point as an employed worker who is professional, of hypervigilance, of this, is not an emergency and go, there are moments in which due to the situations, due to the cases we have, we have arrived just like that, sleep with clothes, because if it is something you stand up and run, it is necessary- Psychologist, Guanajuato Shelter.

Of course, I attend the women, because if they send them to me, then we continue to attend them. We continue to serve women externally, but we can no longer shelter them.-Director, Veracruz Shelter.

The first statement depicts how a shelter worker might work given the high-risk situation in which the women they work with live. In the second statement, due to the lack of governmental economic support, they closed the shelter but continue giving support to women through legal and psychological assistance.

6.2.2 Patriarchal bargain: Bargaining with institutions.

In the interactions between staff and institutions and users and institutions, women demonstrate different ways to navigate the system to get, if not all they deserve and are looking for, some benefits for themselves and/or the women they support.

Shelters can be perceived as institutions of their own, that although are not part of the government²², have an organized structure with a determined purpose and specific rules. Women living in the shelters depict how they negotiate the rules imposed within the shelters as part of their support process:



Lulú, Nayarit.

Figure 26. Patriarchal Bargain.

²² Some shelters are originated and administered by the government, but the shelters that I had access to form part of civil associations.

When asked about her favorite activity to do in the Shelter, Lulú drew the 'recreational area' where women usually go to chat, walk or play with their children. She put a lot of emphasis on relaxation and seeing her stay in the shelter as a vacation while facing economic violence outside the shelter. In opposition she draws the Shelter building in perspective like a massive thing watching them, pushing the sun. This can mean the hope, desires, and motivations are there but the process in the shelter is hard and clouds these positive feelings. Thus, one can infer that she bargains her feelings of being observed and controlled for her feelings of relaxation.



Lulú, Nayarit.

Figure 27. Patriarchal bargain 2.

In another drawing, Lulú emphasized the value she puts on the workshops by putting at the center the lawyer of the shelter speaking about violence against

women. However, in the upper right corner, she drew the signs of a schedule and rules. One can draw a line between what she enjoys and the constant reminder of her feelings towards being controlled and observed, and sometimes caged (repeating the patterns of violence she was escaping from). She bargains her access to this knowledge by giving up a part of her comfort, or lifestyle.

The staff at the same time by measuring the risk context of each woman bargains for their access to the shelter.

It is almost always about aggressors who are not so dangerous. Let's talk about why they don't have as much connection with drug trafficking, with other situations, or criminal situations. I do not minimize the degree of danger, but they do not handle weapons, there is not as much risk, so to speak, for them and they have the opportunity to leave with a family member that they see as a support network, who is the last one to support you, but you do not return and from that point on they begin to have these limits with the aggressors.-Psychologist, Guanajuato Shelter.

The psychologist emphasized the fact that Mexico is a very dangerous country for women, thus, giving space for women with a high risk of violence is imperative, even if it means denying the option of the shelter to women at lower risk (this doesn't mean refuse them any support at all).

6.2.3 Politics of the public: Institutional resistance.

Even though there wasn't a clear demonstration or declaration of aiming for a political and collective movement (by the participants), through their stories women showed a transit from infra-politics to publicly resist the violence perpetrated against them. However, the incursion into politics of the public doesn't mean that infra-politics stop or are finished.

In the process of consciousness-raising, women embrace the resignifications to themselves reflected in the value they give to their body and their experiences, this leads to different interactions with the institutions:

You can also set your limits and say hey, no, don't talk to me like that, or I don't like it, don't let it affect you. You also have if it is not appearing to you as it is talking to you, you do not have to remain silent or tolerate the fact that there is an authority, that it is an authority, it is a person and you are a person and you deserve to be treated as a dignified person.-Lawyer, Nayarit Shelter.

To defend oneself in front of negligent acts, such as re-victimization, question, doubting, shaming, etc. part of the process of the self and collective consciousness inside a public institution (the public space) is a confrontation with negligent acts carried out by the institution, thus a clear act of resistance of the public.

Moreover, the awareness and understanding of women's experiences in contexts of high violence facing the State's lack of responsibility, leads also to different forms of organization, answer:

We break rules. We broke the rules since we did not have the protocol to set up a shelter, what we had was a very great need to safeguard the life and safety of women. And since there were no shelters in the state of Veracruz, what we did was that we talked about it and said we were going to set it up ourselves in the same workspace, because we are supposed to be an external care center, which we continue to do.-Director, Veracruz Shelter.

To answer to the actual needs of women despite the structure imposed by the institutions means to resist institutions' inflexible rules. It is resisting through creating new spatialities, visible to women and society.

Finally, the distribution of information plays an important role when resisting oppressive systems:

I believe that in Mexico when you want a matter to work, then make it public. Yes, make it public so that it works. You know that the media, now the social networks, and all that work more with this. If the issue has already been

made public, then they work it quickly. Why? Because you say, 'the press is all over me, I have the social networks with their eyes very alert', then that happens and even more so here in Guanajuato capital, we are a small space.-Lawyer, Guanajuato.

This statement reflects a way to resist impunity and enforce States' accountability for their acts, by making public the way the institutions work setting women's experiences in the public field.

7 Conclusions

Mexican governmental institutions contribute to the continuation of femicidal violence by working within the logic of the coloniality of gender and patriarchal junction, that is, through the reproduction of the potentiated heterosexual hierarchy where women are at the bottom, also by strengthening the hegemonic ideas of women's inferiority, subjectifying them as not humans. This is demonstrated in their lack of interest and responsibility to safeguard women's integrity characterized by negligence, corruption, and lack of accountability. In addition, the administrative organization of the institutions and focus on statistics established only to serve the purpose of improving the image of the ruling party in turn (political violence) stood out as a crucial factor in the femicidal violence scaffolding worthy of further research. The result is the usage of women's experiences, lives, and bodies at the government's convenience, and at the same time a disregard for them by their interpretation of what an abused woman should be and look like (the perfect 'abused woman'), in connection to their lack of sensitization leading to neglecting women during all their justice-seeking process through malpractice, revictimization and the homogenization of women and their experiences.

By subjectifying and classifying women, the imaginary of them being passive subjects is also deployed. However, women act as active subjects despite, and as an answer to the context of femicidal violence in Mexico by changing the hegemonic ideas that made them subordinate/passive subjects to self-significations that lead them to creatively resist and move within power structures, that is, through infra-politics and patriarchal bargains. Their resistance can be cataloged as infra-politics, in which, consciousness awareness, change of individual and collective perception of the I/we change, generate opposition to

hegemonic subjectification of women as a group. Furthermore, women politicize their experiences by acknowledging them as a source to help other women. Also, they politicize 'the private' allowing them to transit from infra-politics to publicly resist the violence perpetrated against them. In this sense, women's infra-politics contribute to the denormalization of violence against them by disrupting their subjectification under power structures giving themselves a meaning related to strength, unity, love, and support.

8 Appendix

8.1 Appendix 1. Code Book

Feeling-thinking	References to the connection of feelings within the chain of motives, perspectives and actions.
Femicidal violence	Every aspect where violence of women is stated which includes, sexual, psychological, physical, economic and communitarian violence. I excluded institutional violence because that's a node of itself.
Normalization of violence	References to women's, family or social actions that normalize violence
Political violence	Includes all the structures to achieve political goals despite women's affectations, i.e. Thinking about statistics, changing the name of the felony, firing qualified people to introduce unqualified people because they are from different parties
Romantic love	The heterosexual and sexist notions about love, including holding on, jealousy, control, lies and inequalities in the name of love.
Violence between women	Violence perpetrated among women living in the Shelter
Infra-politics	All the re-significations the participants give to themselves as a contraposition to the hegemonic significations established on them. Small or big actions to face femicidal violence
Consciousness raising	Demonstration of the acknowledgement of violence and it's types. Acceptance of their self image and the collective position they have.
Economic resistance	Actions to counteract the systemic economic violence and the partner economic violence.
Professional drive	The actions that the staff conducted liking their professional values and what the correctness of the process in which they work, involving ethics and commitment to the users.
Institutionalization of affection	Actions made by the staff that demonstrate affection and the notion of care about the participants but restricting themselves to institutionalized

	processes.
Proper institutional process	The correct application to the process regarding law, or shelter process.
Resistance to Institutions	Small actions to face diverse type of institutions, particularly governmental institutions, or social institutions.
Women support networks	Actions made by women reflecting about women union, desires to help other women, advice, recommendations, motivation words.
Institutional Violence	
Corruption	References to the link between the governmental institutions and the aggressors that results in impunity
Lack accountability	References of governmental lack of transparency, malpractice showing statistics
Maldistribution	References to budget assignation and struggles of the shelters in relation to the lack of economic support of the State.
Negligence	Every part of the justice process that is work wrongly willingly or unwillingly.
Revictimization	Public serves verbal attacks against women, shaming them or blaming them for the violent acts they lived.
Rules attention model	The violent approaches of the model of attention that operates to help women living in the shelter.
Staff violence	Violent acts perpetrated by the women working in the shelters or associations in relation or accordance to the institutions.
Transversality	The lack of communication between institutional instances in order to help women.
Victim figure creation	The conception of what an abused women should look like (physically-body and clothes, mentally, economically, etc.) that governmental institutions create
Patriarchal bargain	Negotiation between women that suffered or experience violence with violent insitutions or people in order to get something in exchange (to survive, get access, etc.)

8.2 Appendix 2. Participation and Informed Consent.

Thesis research for the master's degree in Social Gender Studies. Lund, Sweden.

Researcher: Rosa Isela Gonzalez Mondragon.

Title (tentative): Potential of Women's Networks to denormalize feminicidal violence.

Aim: To analyze the conformation and functioning of networks among women who have experienced feminicidal violence.

I, as researcher:

1. I will maintain the confidentiality of the participants. I will change places, dates, names in order not to reveal any details that could put the participants at risk.
2. I commit myself to respect the experiences and not to harm the participants in any way.
3. I will make recordings of the discussions, which will be duly safeguarded and after modified transcription, deleted.

The participants:

1. Are invited to ask any questions about the research (at any time).
2. Are invited to make suggestions and give comments on the exercises and discussions.
3. Have the right to withdraw from the research/exercises at any time they wish.

	Yes	No
I wish to participate		

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