

STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN BOLIVIA: LEGISLATIVE, CULTURAL, AND SOCIAL CHALLENGES¹

*Violência estrutural contra as mulheres na bolívia: desafios legislativos,
culturais e sociais*

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ABSTRACT

Bolivia faces significant challenges in eradicating gender-based violence, a phenomenon deeply rooted in patriarchal cultural and social structures. Despite legislative advancements such as Law 348 (2013), the implementation of the regulatory framework continues to exhibit structural deficiencies that perpetuate impunity and exacerbate women's vulnerability. This article critically analyses the limitations of Law 348, identifying obstacles in its application, failures in judicial responses, and cultural resistance that hinder its effectiveness. For this analysis, the concept of rape culture is examined as a structural phenomenon that normalises sexual violence and contributes to the lack of access to justice for women. Through a multidimensional approach, contributions from recent studies, as well as historical and theoretical analyses based on the thought of Rita Segato and other key authors, are integrated. Finally, strategies are proposed to address the deficiencies of the legal framework and promote a comprehensive transformation from legal, social, and cultural perspectives, emphasising the need for structural reforms and a preventive approach based on education and awareness.

Keywords: Femicide. Bolivia. Law 348. Human rights. Rape culture. Gender-based violence.

RESUMO

A Bolívia enfrenta desafios significativos na erradicação da violência de gênero, fenômeno profundamente enraizado em estruturas culturais e sociais patriarcais. Apesar dos avanços legislativos, como a Lei 348 (2013), a implementação do marco regulatório continua apresentando deficiências estruturais que perpetuam a impunidade e agravam a vulnerabilidade das mulheres. Este artigo analisa criticamente as limitações da Lei 348, identificando obstáculos em sua aplicação, falhas nas respostas judiciais e resistências culturais que dificultam sua eficácia. Para essa análise, o conceito de *cultura do estupro* é examinado como um fenômeno estrutural que normaliza a violência sexual e contribui para a falta de acesso das mulheres à justiça. Por meio de uma abordagem multidimensional, integram-se contribuições de estudos recentes, bem como análises históricas e teóricas baseadas no pensamento de Rita Segato e de outros autores fundamentais. Por fim, são propostas estratégias para enfrentar as deficiências do marco jurídico e promover uma transformação abrangente sob as perspectivas legal, social e cultural, enfatizando a

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necessidade de reformas estruturais e de uma abordagem preventiva baseada na educação e na conscientização.

Palavras-chave: Feminicídio. Bolívia. Lei 348. Direitos humanos. Cultura do estupro. Violência de gênero.

JEL: K38, K42.

1 INTRODUCTION

Bolivia has one of the highest rates of gender-based violence in Latin America and the highest rate of impunity. According to data from the Gender Observatory of the Coordinadora de la Mujer (a national network of women's organisations in Bolivia), as of October 2024, there were 74 femicides and 9,363 reports of sexual violence, representing 23% of the 40,239 cases registered under Law 348 (Qamasa, 2024). This alarming situation highlights not only shortcomings in the legal framework but also the profound impact of structural and cultural factors.

This issue is not exclusive to Bolivia but forms part of a global reality: rape culture. This phenomenon, widely analysed in feminist studies, manifests in the normalisation of sexual violence, victim-blaming, and impunity for perpetrators. Globally, rape culture is reflected in the lack of access to justice, gender stereotypes that justify violence, and the hypersexualisation of women in the media. In armed conflict contexts, sexual violence is used as a weapon of war, perpetuating impunity and the suffering of victims.

An example of this reality can be found in the work of Nobel Prize-winning author Svetlana Alexievich, who, through women's testimonies, has documented the atrocities suffered during the Second World War. Her work makes visible sexual violence in war contexts and shows how many of these aggressions remain unpunished (Alexievich, 2016). These narratives not only give voice to those who have been silenced but also contribute to reflection and denunciation of rape culture in different societies.

From a critical and multidimensional perspective, this article seeks to analyse the legislative and cultural challenges that prevent the eradication of gender-based violence in Bolivia, incorporating theoretical, historical, and empirical elements that allow for a deeper understanding of this problem.

2 CRITICISM OF LAW 348 AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN BOLIVIA: AN INCOMPLETE EFFORT AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Law 348, enacted in Bolivia in 2013, was designed as a strong response to gender-based violence, particularly in the face of machismo and femicide. This law aims to prevent, sanction, and eradicate violence against women, incorporating key measures such as the classification of femicide as an autonomous crime and the creation of comprehensive protection protocols for victims (Requena, 2017). However, its implementation has faced a series of significant obstacles that have limited its effectiveness.

a) Structural Deficiencies in Implementation

Although Law 348 establishes fundamental principles in the fight against gender-based violence, its implementation has been insufficient due to a lack of resources, inadequate training of justice system operators, and insufficient funding for the permanent hiring of professionals in mental health, law, and social work. Reporting centres lack permanent staff, experiencing extreme precariousness that hinders the enforcement of the law. The same applies to the infrastructure of shelters and the provision of legal and psychological assistance to women experiencing violence, both in capital cities and rural areas, where support and implementation of these centres fail to materialise.

These challenges have rendered the protection mechanisms for victims largely inaccessible, weakening the law's real impact. As Requena (2017) highlights, despite its good intentions, the law has failed to meet expectations due to deficiencies in its execution, leading to inefficient justice, impunity for aggressors, and the perpetuation of violence.

Gender-based violence in Bolivia remains an alarming issue, demonstrating the inadequacy of laws intended to protect women. Despite the enactment of Law 348 in 2013, which seeks to guarantee women a life free from violence, daily reality reflects persistent vulnerability (BBC News Mundo, 2019). The streets have become sites of aggression, and terror is a constant factor in both public and private spheres.

The statistics are stark. In 2019, Bolivia recorded more than 70 femicides, equating to the murder of a woman every two to three days (BBC News Mundo, 2019). According to data from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

(ECLAC, 2023), Bolivia had a rate of two femicides per 100,000 women, making it the country with the highest rate in South America that year. These figures reflect a worrying trend and a lack of effectiveness in the measures implemented to combat this problem.

Impunity further exacerbates the situation. Numerous cases of femicide and gender-based violence remain unresolved due to corruption and failures in Bolivia's judicial system. A particularly emblematic case is that of Richard Choque Flores, who, despite being sentenced to 30 years in prison without parole for the murder of a young woman in 2013, was released in 2019 under house arrest through a questionable judicial ruling. During his time outside prison, Choque Flores murdered at least two women and committed multiple rapes, sparking widespread protests in January 2022, where women in various Bolivian cities demanded action against judicial corruption (El País, 2022).

The weakening or elimination of institutions dedicated to protecting women also contributes to their vulnerability. The lack of resources and support for these entities prevents an effective response to gender-based violence, leaving many women without options for help or refuge (BBC News Mundo, 2019).

In this context, community media and grassroots communicators have emerged as key actors in the fight against gender-based violence. Toribia Flores and Gladys Bolívar, community promoters and popular communicators in Bolivia, dedicate their work to informing and assisting women facing violence through radio broadcasts. Trained under Law 348, they use their work in radio to provide support and guidance to victims, highlighting the importance of media in making gender-based violence visible and denouncing it. Bolívar emphasises: "I have personally noticed how difficult it is to report violence, which is why I know how important the media is" (El Salto Diario, 2022). However, these initiatives face significant challenges due to a lack of resources and the prevailing context of impunity.

Despite the increased visibility of gender-based violence in social media and news outlets in recent years, this exposure has not led to a decrease in cases or ensured effective protection for women. The persistence of high impunity rates and the lack of effective convictions underscore the need for stronger and more committed actions from both the state and the international community to eradicate this problem.

b) Gender Violence as a Result of Historical Inequalities

Gender violence in Bolivia is not an isolated phenomenon but rather a manifestation of historical power imbalances between men and women. Statistics on femicide and domestic violence indicate that these inequalities remain a daily reality for many women in the country. The UN General Assembly has recognised gender violence as a human rights violation and has urged governments to adopt more effective measures for its eradication (UN, 2023).

However, in Bolivia, the implementation of these recommendations has been limited, as patriarchal structures continue to dominate both society and the state. Moreover, many public officials perpetrate such crimes with impunity and, in some cases, retaliate against women who report them in their workplaces.

An example of this is the case of Maykol Negrete, a municipal councillor in Santa Cruz de la Sierra. In November 2024, his former partner and mother of his five-year-old daughter accused him of domestic violence. The complainant stated that during a conversation about child support, Negrete physically assaulted her, resulting in a forensic examination certifying seven days of medical leave due to injuries (eju.tv, 2025). Despite the severity of the accusations, the judicial process has faced delays. In November 2024, Negrete appeared at the Prosecutor's Office without a lawyer, causing the hearing to be suspended (El Deber, 2024a). Additionally, the complainant was dismissed from her job, which she perceives as retaliation for initiating the legal process (El Deber, 2024b). This situation was confirmed in an interview with Dr Suárez (2025), a lawyer and advocate for women's and girls' rights, who monitors this and other cases of violence.

Another high-profile case involves former President Evo Morales, who has been accused of sexually abusing underage girls. In October 2024, a complaint was filed in Argentina alleging crimes of human trafficking for sexual exploitation and child abuse during his asylum in that country (Noticias Fides, 2024). Additionally, in Bolivia, he has been accused of having a relationship with a 15-year-old girl in 2015, who was part of his "Youth Guard" (Noticias Fides, 2024). In January 2025, a Bolivian judge issued an arrest warrant for Morales on these charges, but he failed to appear in court, citing health reasons, and has denied the allegations, calling them political persecution (AP News, 2025).

These cases illustrate how power structures and gender inequalities in Bolivia enable public officials accused of gender violence to evade justice. The lack of progress in judicial processes and retaliation against complainants highlight the urgent need for profound reforms in the justice system and society to ensure the effective protection of women's rights.

c) Cases of Violence and Feminist Resistance

Organisations such as "Ni Una Menos Tarija" (Not One Woman Less, a feminist movement in Bolivia) have played a crucial role in making gender violence visible through public protests and media engagement. These feminist collectives have held the state accountable for its lack of response and the impunity surrounding femicide cases. Despite existing legal measures, the authorities' ineffective response has led to growing distrust in the judicial system and the institutions responsible for protecting women (Rodríguez, 2019).

A clear example of the inefficacy of Law 348 is the case of Juana Hilda Antezana, who was a victim of femicide in 2017 in Tarija, despite having previously reported violence by her partner. This case, among others, underscores the gap between legislation and the effective protection of victims. The impunity surrounding femicide cases reflects a lack of political will and a judicial system that remains ineffective in ensuring justice (Mendoza, 2020).

d) Labour Inequalities and the Precarisation of Women

Despite Bolivia's government promoting de-patriarchalisation as a central policy focus over the past 19 years, the reality is that, instead of achieving significant advancements in women's labour rights, job insecurity and the invisibility of their work have increased. The feminisation of poverty, particularly in rural and Indigenous areas, exacerbates women's vulnerability. The absence of effective public policies has perpetuated these inequalities, reflected in the high rates of violence against women.

During the commemoration of International Women's Day on 8 March 2018 in Tarija, activists denounced the state's inaction in addressing gender-based violence and highlighted the prevailing impunity in cases of femicide. Despite efforts by social movements, patriarchal structures remain deeply entrenched in both Bolivian society

and state institutions, hindering a comprehensive response to gender violence (Morales, 2018).

The actions of feminist collectives have been crucial in raising awareness of this issue. However, the challenges remain immense, and a more serious and effective commitment from the state is necessary to ensure the protection of women's rights.

3 STRUCTURAL FAILURES IN REASONING AND SEXIST LANGUAGE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF JUDICIAL RESPONSES

One of the critical issues in the judicial response to gender-based violence is the ambiguity in the definition and classification of crimes. Conceptual imprecisions regarding what constitutes gender violence and femicide hinder the process of legal classification, resulting in inconsistent judicial rulings and slow proceedings that perpetuate impunity.

As noted by Requena (2017) and Suárez (2024), regulatory fragmentation and the coexistence of multiple policies without effective coordination create legal loopholes that negatively impact both victims and the authorities responsible for enforcing the law. In this regard, the lack of legislative harmonisation allows for the arbitrary application of the law, to the detriment of women's rights.

Moreover, the judicial system faces significant limitations in terms of training and awareness among its personnel. The absence of specialised gender-based training for police officers, prosecutors, and judges leads to the reproduction of sexist practices within judicial procedures. Studies by Lagarde (2012) and Segato (2016) have documented how the legal system tends to minimise gender-based violence, shifting the burden of responsibility onto the victim and implicitly justifying the impunity of aggressors.

The use of patriarchal language within judicial spaces also reflects the dominant mindset within the justice system. As Suárez (2024) points out, many victims are subjected to aggressive and re-traumatising interrogations in which they must repeatedly recount their experiences of violence, often facing scepticism and disdain from the authorities responsible for investigating their complaints. This phenomenon aligns with what Seleme (2024) describes as "institutional harassment," a situation in which complainants become psychologically exhausted by the very system that should

be protecting them. As one survivor interviewed by *El País* (2023) stated, “I felt like the judge was blaming me more than my aggressor.”

Additionally, the lack of cultural sensitivity regarding sexist violence results in inadequate or delayed judicial responses, exacerbating the vulnerability of those who come forward. According to UN Women (2023), the lack of resources for case follow-ups and the absence of effective protective measures increase the risk of femicide in situations of extreme violence. This issue is further compounded by the persistence of gender stereotypes in judicial decisions. A Human Rights Watch (2022) report documents rulings that reduced aggressors’ sentences under the pretext of so-called “crimes of passion.”

The structural failures of the judicial system in addressing gender-based violence stem not only from legal deficiencies but also from the persistence of patriarchal reasoning that obstructs access to justice. Gender-sensitive training, the elimination of re-victimising discourse, and the implementation of effective protocols are fundamental steps to ensuring a judicial response that aligns with principles of equity and human rights.

4 RITA SEGATO AND HER PERSPECTIVE ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Rita Segato, a feminist anthropologist, has developed a fundamental theory for understanding gender-based violence from a structural perspective. According to Segato, violence against women is neither an isolated phenomenon nor exclusive to individuals with pathological conditions; rather, it stems from a mandate of masculinity imposed by the patriarchal system. In this sense, violence functions as a disciplinary mechanism that reaffirms male power over women and reinforces the hierarchical structure of society.

Segato (2024) proposes that gender-based violence should be analysed in terms of elemental structures—that is, social configurations that transcend the individual and are embedded in the symbolic order of communities. In her studies, she highlights that violence has an expressive rather than an instrumental character: it does not merely seek to harm the victim but serves as a message to society about male control. Within this framework, femicide and other forms of violence are not irrational acts but strategies for maintaining the patriarchal order.

Another key concept in her thinking is the "counter-pedagogy of cruelty," which describes how patriarchal societies teach and reproduce gender-based violence through normalised practices. This pedagogy imposes on men the necessity to demonstrate their power through acts of violence, which serve as a lesson for other men and women. Thus, violence becomes a socially understood and accepted language in certain contexts.

Building on these ideas, Segato argues that punitive policies, while necessary, are insufficient for eradicating gender-based violence. It is essential to dismantle the symbolic and cultural structures that sustain it. In this regard, she advocates for a community- and education-based approach that challenges the mandate of masculinity and fosters new forms of relationships based on equality and respect.

Segato's perspective is essential for understanding the limitations of Law 348 and similar legal frameworks. As long as the structural foundations of violence remain unchanged, its eradication will remain a challenge. Social mobilisation, awareness-raising, and education are key tools for progressing towards a society free from gender-based violence.

5 CHALLENGES FOR A COMPREHENSIVE TRANSFORMATION OF LAW 348 IN BOLIVIA

To overcome the limitations of Law 348 and advance the eradication of gender-based violence in Bolivia, it is imperative to adopt a comprehensive approach that encompasses both the legal and sociocultural spheres. The main challenges include:

a) **Clarification and Harmonisation of Legal Norms:** It is necessary to review and refine the concepts of gender-based violence and femicide, aligning Law 348 with other existing public policies. This effort would close legal loopholes and prevent regulatory overlaps that weaken the state's response.

b) **Training and Awareness-Raising of Key Actors:** Continuous training for judicial and law enforcement officials is crucial for effective recognition and action in cases of violence. This requires not only technical training but also a cultural paradigm shift within state institutions.

c) **Preventive and Participatory Approach:** Inspired by readings that engage with literary traditions on gender-based violence transformation (e.g., the literary traditions of India and Pakistan), it is vital to foster the participation of civil society and

local communities. Early prevention through educational programmes and awareness campaigns is key to dismantling deeply rooted misogynistic attitudes.

d) **Comprehensive Protection for Victims:** Strengthening and expanding comprehensive care centres that provide psychological, legal, and social support is essential, ensuring protection protocols that minimise re-victimisation during legal proceedings.

6 INTERSECTIONALITY AND A TRANSDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO RAPE CULTURE

Gender-based violence requires a transdisciplinary approach that enables analysis from multiple theoretical and methodological perspectives. The intersection of psychoanalysis, literature, and social critique facilitates a deeper understanding of rape culture, which not only perpetuates sexual violence but also justifies and normalises it within the social imagination.

From a psychoanalytic perspective, rape is not understood solely as sexual aggression but as an act of domination and control within the patriarchal structure. Sigmund Freud (1933) explored the relationship between desire, repression, and violence in his theory of human sexuality, while scholars such as Jean Laplanche (1992) emphasised the traumatic dimension of sexual aggression in subject formation.

Diana Cantis-Carlino (2018) analyses the persistence of cultural myths that justify or downplay such acts, contributing to the re-victimisation of survivors. In this vein, from a critical perspective, Vaca (2023) stresses the need to move beyond a purely punitive response to gender-based violence and advocates for cultural transformation and a review of myths, practices, and cultural transfers that normalise and legitimise violence against women and girls. In her philological study of language and gender-based violence, Vaca (2023) highlights how everyday discourse reinforces patriarchal structures and shapes perceptions of sexual aggression. In this regard, literature and critical thought provide fundamental elements for dismantling misogyny and its extreme manifestations, such as femicide.

Works such as *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood (1985) and *Men Explain Things to Me* by Rebecca Solnit (2014) reveal how gender-based violence is a structural practice sustained by narratives of power and domination. In Bolivia, the writer Giovanna Rivero explores gender-based violence in her collection *Para comerte*

mejor (To Eat You Better, 2015), which blends realism with elements of fantasy and horror, offering a feminist critique of rape culture.

One central aspect in the analysis of violence against women is its cultural normalisation. Rita Segato's (2016) research shows that rape is not an act of sexual desire but an expression of power reinforcing control over women's bodies. Interviews with convicted rapists in Bolivia reveal that many offenders lack critical reflection on their actions, reinforcing violent patterns as a form of male reaffirmation (Vaca, 2023).

Segato (2013) also emphasises that violence against women is a "pedagogy of violence" learned within the family and social environment from childhood, laying the groundwork for other forms of domination in society. This perspective complements psychoanalytic and critical approaches, demonstrating how cultural constructions of masculinity contribute to the perpetuation of gender-based violence.

Understanding gender violence from a transdisciplinary perspective is key to generating effective prevention and eradication strategies. The articulation between psychoanalysis, literature, pedagogy, and critical thought helps to expose the mechanisms that sustain violence and promote a cultural shift to dismantle the patriarchal structures that support it.

7 RAPE CULTURE IN BOLIVIA

Rape culture in Bolivia manifests through the normalisation and tolerance of sexual violence against women, perpetuated by sociocultural practices and deficiencies in the justice system. This issue is evidenced by various cases and studies demonstrating how sexual violence is minimised or normalised in Bolivian society.

A significant example is the case of Evo Morales, former president of Bolivia, accused of "aggravated statutory rape and human trafficking" for allegedly fathering a child with a minor under 15 years old in 2016. Morales and his supporters denounced political persecution and threatened insurrection if he were detained, illustrating how accusations of sexual violence can be politicised and dismissed in the public sphere (González, 2024).

Additionally, in rural areas of Bolivia, sexual violence is often sanctioned with minimal fines or light physical punishments, comparable to penalties for minor offences such as cattle theft. This practice underscores the devaluation of girls' dignity and

sexual integrity, reflecting a widespread normalisation of sexual violence (Beltrán, 2015).

The culture of incest is also a significant factor in the normalisation of sexual violence in Bolivia. The case of Brisa de Angulo, who was raped by her cousin as a teenager, illustrates how women themselves, influenced by a patriarchal culture, may silence victims to maintain family cohesion. This silencing perpetuates impunity and the recurrence of such assaults (De Angulo, 2022).

Sexual violence in Bolivia has increased by 51% in the past five years, with sexual abuse being the most reported crime. The primary victims are girls and adolescents, and in many cases, the perpetrators are direct family members or people close to the family circle. Fear, shame, and impunity serve as significant barriers preventing victims from filing complaints, contributing to the perpetuation of sexual violence in the country (Vargas, 2022).

These cases and data reflect a culture of normalised rape in Bolivia, where sexual violence is minimised, victims are silenced, and perpetrators go unpunished. It is crucial to address this issue from a comprehensive perspective, including societal awareness, training for authorities, and the effective implementation of public policies that ensure victim protection and the prosecution of offenders.

8 DISCUSSION

The persistence of gender-based violence in Bolivia, despite the existence of Law 348, underscores the complexity of addressing systemic issues rooted in cultural, legal, and institutional frameworks. While the law represents a legal milestone, its effectiveness is hindered by structural deficiencies, judicial inefficiency, and the normalization of violence through rape culture. This discussion highlights the key obstacles in the fight against gender-based violence and the necessary measures to foster meaningful change.

a) The Gap Between Legislation and Implementation

One of the primary issues identified in this study is the stark contrast between legal frameworks and their real-world application. Law 348, while comprehensive in its objectives, lacks the institutional support, funding, and political commitment required for effective enforcement. Judicial corruption, insufficient training among law

enforcement officials, and limited resources for victim support centers exacerbate the problem, leaving many survivors without access to justice (Requena, 2017).

Additionally, the legal system often re-traumatizes victims through bureaucratic hurdles, victim-blaming attitudes, and leniency toward perpetrators. The case of Richard Choque Flores, a convicted murderer and rapist released due to judicial corruption, exemplifies the dangers of a flawed justice system that prioritizes aggressors over victims (El País, 2022). Cases like this reinforce public distrust in institutions and highlight the urgent need for systemic reforms.

b) The Role of Rape Culture in Perpetuating Impunity

Beyond legal shortcomings, the cultural normalization of sexual violence plays a critical role in sustaining gender-based violence. As Rita Segato (2016) argues, rape culture is embedded in patriarchal structures that condition men to assert dominance through violence. The media, judicial institutions, and political figures contribute to this normalization by minimizing or dismissing cases of sexual violence. Allegations against former president Evo Morales, for instance, were met with political justifications rather than legal consequences, reflecting how power structures shield perpetrators from accountability (Noticias Fides, 2024).

Furthermore, the media often portrays gender-based violence through sensationalism rather than as a systemic issue requiring urgent policy responses. The hypersexualization of women and the reinforcement of gender stereotypes further entrench societal attitudes that tolerate violence. Legal measures alone are insufficient; cultural shifts are necessary to dismantle the deeply rooted misogyny that enables violence to persist.

c) The Role of Feminist Movements and Social Resistance

Despite these challenges, feminist collectives and grassroots movements have played a crucial role in demanding justice and visibility for gender-based violence victims. Organizations like *Ni Una Menos Tarija* have mobilized protests, raised awareness, and pressured the government to take action. Their efforts have been instrumental in exposing judicial failures and advocating for structural changes (Rodríguez, 2019).

However, these movements face significant resistance, both from the state and conservative sectors that perceive gender equality initiatives as threats to traditional power dynamics. The dismissal of women who report gender-based violence, as seen in the case of the medical professional who accused a city councilman of assault (El Deber, 2024b), exemplifies the institutional backlash against survivors and activists.

d) Towards a Comprehensive Solution

Addressing gender-based violence requires a multidimensional strategy that extends beyond punitive measures. Drawing from Segato's (2013) concept of the *pedagogy of cruelty*, it is clear that violence is a learned behavior reinforced by social and cultural institutions. Breaking this cycle demands investments in education, legal reform, and public awareness campaigns.

Key recommendations include:

- a) Judicial and Law Enforcement Reform – Specialized training for police officers, judges, and prosecutors to handle cases with a survivor-centered approach.
- b) Stronger Legal Accountability – Eliminating legal loopholes and ensuring that perpetrators face consequences, regardless of status.
- c) Educational Initiatives – Introducing gender studies in school curricula to challenge harmful norms from an early age.
- d) Media Responsibility – Encouraging ethical reporting on gender violence that avoids victim-blaming narratives.
- e) Comprehensive Victim Support – Expanding access to shelters, psychological assistance, and legal aid.

While Law 348 provides a foundation for tackling gender-based violence, its impact remains limited without broader institutional and cultural change. A holistic approach integrating legal, social, and educational strategies is essential. Only through state accountability, feminist activism, and collective action can Bolivia move toward eradicating gender-based violence and ensuring justice for all.

9 CONCLUSIONS

While Law 348 marked a crucial step in addressing gender-based violence in Bolivia, its limitations in implementation, judicial response, and cultural impact reveal the persistent structural barriers that sustain impunity and gender inequalities. The

critical analyses by scholars such as Requena (2017), Seleme (2023), and Suárez (2024) emphasize that legislative reforms alone are insufficient; a comprehensive, multidimensional approach is required to dismantle the deeply embedded rape culture and patriarchal structures that perpetuate violence.

As Rita Segato (2024) argues, gender-based violence is not an anomaly but a reflection of entrenched power dynamics, reinforced through systemic impunity, institutional inefficiency, and cultural narratives that normalize aggression against women. Addressing these issues demands a radical transformation that goes beyond punitive measures, integrating education, public policy, and community engagement to shift the social paradigm.

Ultimately, eradicating rape culture requires a commitment to structural change at all levels—legal, social, and cultural. Strengthening judicial mechanisms, ensuring access to justice, promoting gender-sensitive education, and challenging patriarchal discourses are essential steps toward building a society where women's rights and dignity are fully safeguarded. Only through a collective and sustained effort can Bolivia move toward a future free from gender-based violence, ensuring justice and equity for all.

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