

DIGITAL VICARIOUS VIOLENCE: ANOTHER FORM OF TECHNOLOGY- FACILITATED GENDER VIOLENCE

CONTEXT

In 2023, as NGO Amaranta, we conducted a digital safety workshop aimed at single-parent families. In this space, the activists and mothers attending the workshop talked about the different ways in which they are violated by their ex-partners in the digital space, with attacks that are not only directed towards them, but also towards the way in which they exercise their motherhood and their own children.

As a result of this, as an NGO Amaranta we made visible a new form of digital violence that we named as **digital vicarious violence** and we decided to investigate it.

VICARIOUS VIOLENCE?



This concept, coined by clinical psychologist Sonia Vaccaro, describes this type of gender-based violence in which **abuse and violence against women is exercised against another significant person for them**, such as their children, daughters or pets.

This can manifest itself as psychological, physical, sexual, economic, neglectful care, bonding and even judicial violence.



Implemented by the Amaranta NGO team, with funding and support from the Derechos Digitales Fund.

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88

WOMEN

requested to participate in the study because they were suffering from this violence.

ONLY 10

WOMEN

were able to be interviewed, due to their care overload.

53

CODES

of digital vicarious violence were recorded in the study.

The main research question was: is there a new form of technology-facilitated gender-based violence, located at the intersection between vicarious violence and digital violence? And after finding 53 codes with experiences, it was established that digital vicarious violence exists.

CHARACTERIZATION

Among the forms that this violence can take are:

- **Hyper-surveillance of the survivor of violence**, her life and everything she does through various technologies.
- **Use of technologies -some ordered by the courts themselves- to harass, violate and control**: Especially, mandatory video calls, followed by defined emails to coordinate visits.
- **Use of technologies to obtain evidence that they are “bad mothers”** and thus continue the over-judicialization.
- **Isolated appearances in the children’s lives through technologies**, only to later cut off contact again.
- **Use of social networks to change and take control of the narrative in their favor.**



THE REPORT



DONATE

