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# Between local historiography and gender issues: the municipality of Jaboatão dos Guararapes-PE and the contamination of the female population (covid-19)

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## Abstract

Context: The Covid-19 pandemic, which started in 2020, reached all spheres that structure living in society on a global scale. With regard to those most affected by the problems caused by Covid-19, regional-population studies, together with gender issues related to females in the municipality of Jaboatão dos Guararapes, become one of the ways to measure the difficulties brought by the pandemic in regional scale. Method: a discussion was held between the following social issues: population studies, gender issues on a regional scale (municipality of Jaboatão dos Guararapes) linked to the issue of the Covid 19 pandemic. Results: The agents who sought to mitigate the socio-economic impacts brought by the pandemic and possibly understand the ways in which the virus has largely reached the female population in this region and, finally, demarcate the measures taken by the municipal management to contain the pandemic in 2020 until the present day, as well as point out which are the interfaces of this socioeconomic system that maintains the various problems facing women and how with the arrival of the pandemic they put them in another position of social vulnerability (Covid -19).

## Keywords

Regional study, Jaboatão dos Guararapes, gender issues., Covid 19.

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## **Introduction**

The region as a functional representation of space has its own historiography and needs to be studied. Therefore, for the present analysis, the municipality of Jaboatão dos Guararapes was chosen due to its history of territorial formation based on bloodlines or the centralization of land power among some families. This reality or way of managing the geographic space had repercussions in several areas of Brazil and, as a perpetuation of these powers (land - industry) in the 16th century, the processes of monoculture and sugar exportation began, with the territorial construction of coastal municipalities and the Zona da Mata of the state of Pernambuco, and the need for slave labor. In view of this, the first people clusters appear with the emergence of villages and later cities. The municipality of Jaboatão dos Guararapes, arises on May 4, 1593 from two regional events: the sale of the mill called São João Batista, sold to Bento Luiz de Figueirôa and the need for space for the occupation of people who migrated in job search (V, Avós, & Recife, 1982).

Even in the face of these regional events, the socioeconomic development of this municipality maintained the forms of spatial domination. In the past, dominations under land and its productivity were common, now it is due to commercial domination coming from those same families that already owned commercial establishments and also started to manage a large part of the movement of capital in the municipality. Currently, there are some symbolic marks left throughout the history of economic and territorial formation of the municipality. They are perceptible through the naming of streets, schools, squares and avenues with the names of large landowners and commercial and industrial establishments. In addition, they are noticeable through the marks left by the Covid-19 pandemic, which began in Brazil in February/March 2020 and has repercussions until the present day, bringing severe problems to all humanity, however, each country, state or municipality, had their particular forms of actions to face the pandemic.

With regard to the pandemic and those most affected by it, gender issues refer to social realities that have repercussions as a series of vulnerabilities. Women, in turn, are part of groups that go through various social difficulties. In this sense, this article seeks to discuss how the pandemic intensified gender issues, more precisely the issues faced by the female gender. Discussions on the contamination of women (Covid-19) will be addressed, seeking to measure the impacts of Covid-19 in the municipality of Jaboatão dos Guararapes (2020 - 2021). Also, an investigation will be carried out on how the municipality of Jaboatão dos Guararapes developed initiatives so that families, and especially women were being assisted.

Finally, an analysis will be carried out on the amount of population death by neighborhoods in view of the various forms of occupations developed in the municipality of Jaboatão dos Guararapes, as well as the measures taken by municipal management to contain the advance of the disease, thus emphasizing, population studies to measure the social impacts and calamities potentiated by the arrival of Covid-19 and other social events. It was also sought to contribute to the studies developed by Health Geography, understanding the most recurrent vulnerabilities in the neighborhoods of Jaboatão dos Guararapes (JOURNALS, 2018).

## Methodology

### *Location of the study area*

The municipality of Jaboatão dos Guararapes, located in the southern zone of the Metropolitan Region of Recife (MRR) (Figure 1) currently occupies a territorial space of 257.3 km<sup>2</sup>, with 23.6 km<sup>2</sup> comprising the urban area and the remaining 233.7 km<sup>2</sup> forming the countryside. It is estimated that the urban population represents 98% of the total population. Thus, it is visible that the population is concentrated in a small area of the municipality and the western portion has a more rarefied occupation with land still dominated by the cultivation of sugarcane. On the hills, some communities advance with spontaneous occupations, emerging areas of environmental risks and deficient infrastructure. It is considered the 6th municipality with a population residing in risk areas, with 29.2% of the total population based on 2010 census data (IBGE, 2018). Its population was estimated for 2018 (IBGE) at 697,636 inhabitants, therefore, it is the second most populous municipality in the state of Pernambuco.

According to GDP data (IBGE, 2013), the total wealth produced by the municipality is 13,217,350,000.00 reais (the second largest in the state) and the city's GDP per capita is R\$ 19,410.36, being the eighth largest in the state. It has a Human Development Index (HDI) considered high, 0.717. However, there is a significant concentration of income and structural problems with significant deficiencies in infrastructure and access to piped water and basic sanitation on the part of a less favored and socially vulnerable portion of the population, in almost the entire municipality (Figure 1). The Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) for the municipality of Jaboatão was 0.414, considered high, since the range from 0.400 to 0.500 is considered high and the closer to 1 represents the worst condition. This index corresponds to the weighted arithmetic mean of two normalized indices of three dimensions: SVI Urban Infrastructure (0.491); SVI Human Capital (0.366) and SVI Income and Work (0.389) (COSTA, 2015).

The 2 neighborhoods with the highest values of average monthly income of people responsible for the household, which exceed R\$ 1,000 are the neighborhoods of Piedade and Candeias, mainly in the buildings located on the edge of the municipality. The municipalities of Barra de Jangada, Curado, Engenho Velho, Prazeres, Vargem Fria follow in sequence, with average incomes below R\$ 800.00 in 2010. Incomes below R\$ 500.00 can be identified in the neighborhoods of Santana, Muribequinha, Comportas and Dois Carneiros (Figure 1). Therefore, it is necessary that the investigations carried out by the IBGE and IPEA are constant to demarcate the demographic dynamics at different scales and in different historical periods (OLIVEIRA E SIMÕES, 2005).

Source: Prepared by the authors. Data source: IBGE (Territorial Limits, 2020) and Demographic Census 2010.

### *Cabinet and interview stage:*

During the research carried out in the cabinet, it was sought to understand the regional qualifications of the municipality of Jaboatão dos Guararapes, as well as the reading of authors who address the themes of population studies along with gender and Covid-19 issues. As it was also sought to produce a bibliographic analysis through works already produced with this segment and consultations to the Epidemiological Bulletins of the municipality of Jaboatão present on the website of the city hall of this municipality to investigate the daily contamination rates of the female population in the months of March 2020 and April 2021 in order to monitor the results of contamination both between the neighborhoods of the municipality and also between the female and male population. It was also sought for demographic

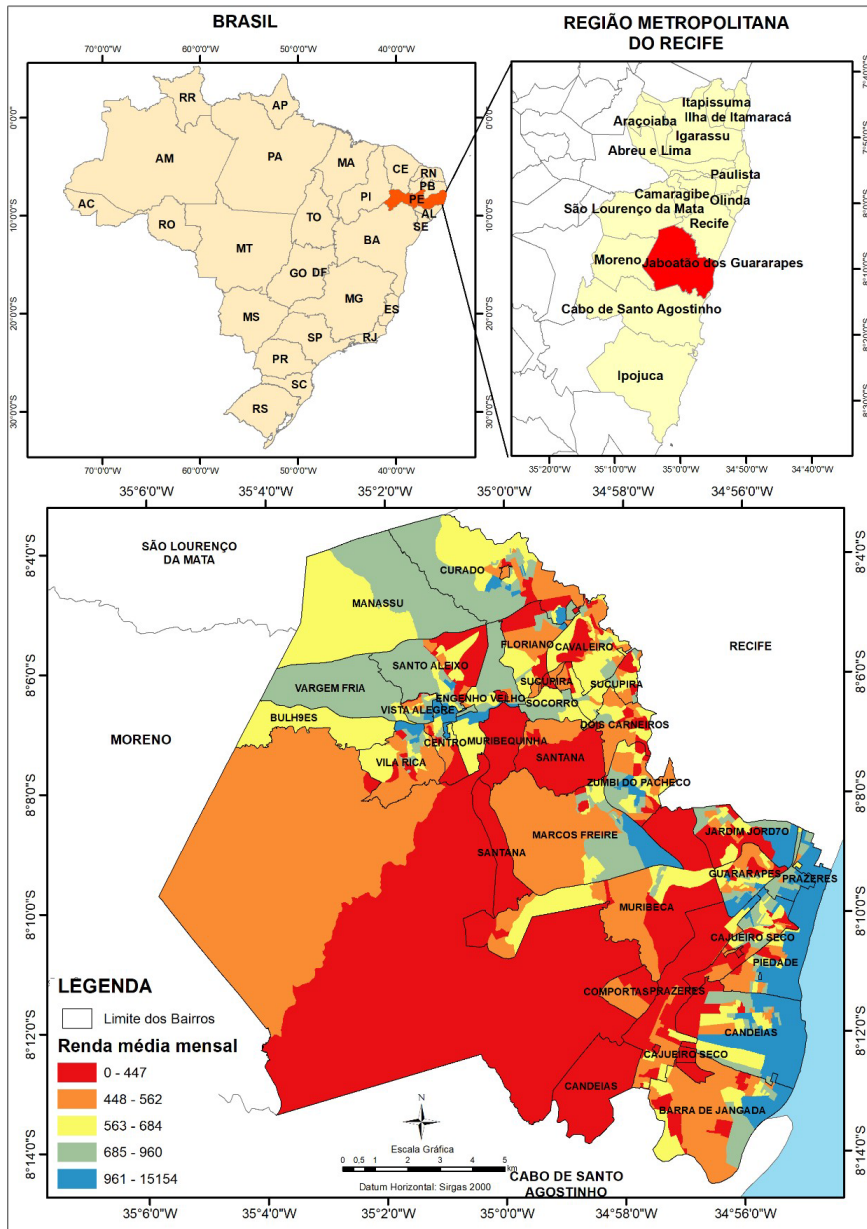


Figure 1. Location map of the municipality of Jaboatão dos Guararapes and distribution of average monthly income by census sector

data aggregated by census sectors and later by neighborhoods, such as: total population, number of men and women per household, race/ethnicity and average income, based on the 2010 Demographic Census Information Base: Results of the universe by sector IBGE census.

The interviews were carried out remotely via the WhatsApp App with women living in the municipality of Jaboaão dos Guararapes to understand how the Covid-19 pandemic affected their daily lives (2020 and 2021), in view of the problems of functional gender representation already existing in society. The interviews were produced in the following ways: two women living in the municipality of Jaboaão dos Guararapes were interviewed with a structured interview and applied through messages via WhatsApp App, the question produced and answered by these women were the following: "How did you feel in 2020 through the Covid-19 pandemic in view of your daily responsibilities?" and "How do you deal with the pandemic today and with your daily obligations in 2021?" so that it was possible to build a parallel between the realities experienced from the beginning of the pandemic to the present day and how this implies in daily life

## Results and discussion

The arrival of the new coronavirus through population studies made it possible to measure the difficulties brought to the world, either in terms of controlling the virus or in relation to population density, which before the arrival of Covid-19 already presented risks to the population, and, during the pandemic, it is emphasized as another factor that puts the socially disadvantaged in vulnerability and an example of these impacts is the aggravation of gender issues linked to women and their various social responsibilities beyond their professional attributions.

As a result of the interviews produced remotely, a woman resident of the municipality of Jaboaão dos Guararapes made available the report of her reality in 2020 with the arrival of Covid -19: "Well, as I was a babysitter in 2020, I needed to use public transport to get around Jaboaão, the pandemic was horrible and made everything difficult, I started to work as a babysitter to help with the household expenses. My son stayed at home alone, the municipality did not provide any specific support for the mothers of the family. The fear of catching Covid-19 was and is constant for taking a crowded bus every day, the isolations that the city hall decreed were not so monitored on a daily basis, a number of people stayed at home and the others had to go outside to don't go hungry at all. As a woman, I often felt weak and alone, the fear of contaminating myself with this disease only grows every day." (Inhabitant of the Municipality of Jaboaão dos Guararapes, resident of the Padre Roma neighborhood, 2020).

Monitoring the evolution of the disease and its social impacts made it possible for the city hall of the municipality of Jaboaão dos Guararapes to take several measures in order to follow the protocols of the World Health Organization (WHO) and reduce the impacts caused by Covid-19 in the municipality. Throughout 2020 to the present day, some decrees were created to prevent the spread of the new coronavirus, some decrees were created to prevent the spread of the new coronavirus. Following a chronological order of the worsening and the measures taken by the municipality's management of the pandemic, we can observe some changes in the behavior of the population through contingency measures through municipal decrees.

In March 2020, the city hall decreed a state of public calamity with the closure of most services offered in the municipality and launched some virus contingency decrees: it prohibited any type of crowded environment and the policy of cleaning spaces began. Classes in public and private schools

were suspended, gyms and establishments that did not offer essential services were closed. At first, all measures were adopted by the population, but with the social inequalities existing in the municipality of Jaboatão, the population, as of April, began to neglect the necessary care to avoid contagion by Covid-19. The relaxation of the measures subsequently caused an increase in the contamination of Covid-19.

Based on the evolution of the spread of the disease and the release of decrees by the city hall, an analysis of table 1 shows a greater number of confirmed cases in the female population in the neighborhoods of Curado and Prazeres located to the Southeast in the municipality of Jaboatão dos Guararapes considering the socioeconomic conditions of social vulnerability of women living in these neighborhoods. On the other hand, the neighborhood of Prazeres, considered middle class, located to the Northwest near the coast, was also reported a similar amount to the neighborhoods considered to be less favored in the municipality

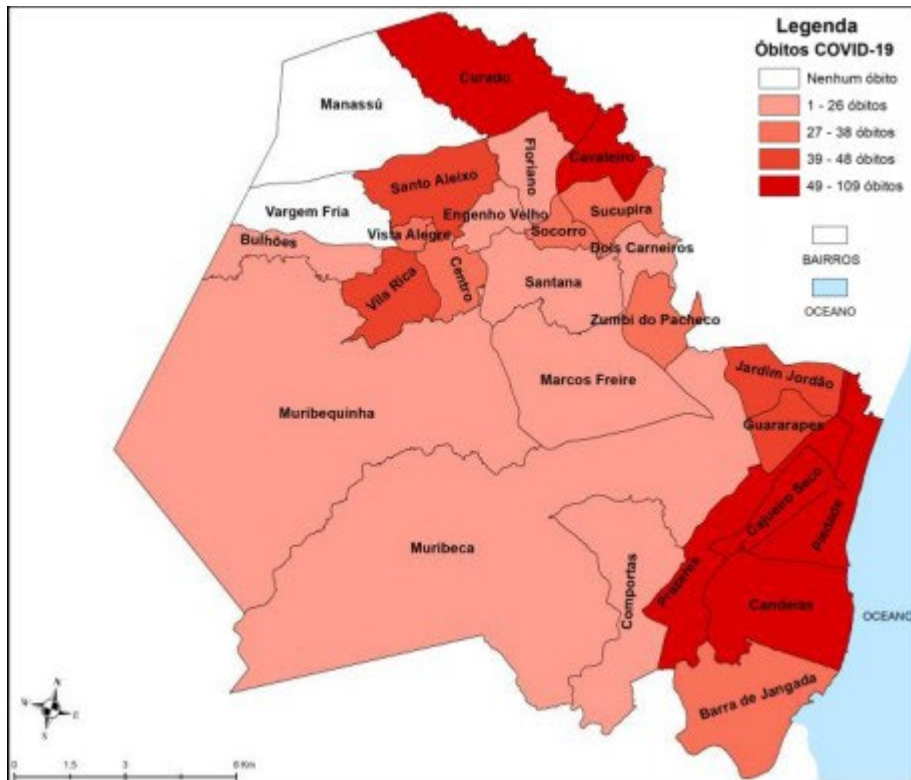
As of May, the city hall launched some new decrees (May - Nov 2020): it reinforced protective measures and decreed that all establishments that were authorized to operate follow all WHO protocols, there was a relaxation of protective measures, being released several outdoor activities and finally (2020) the release of services and events with a capacity of up to 300 people. As a result of these new measures, in 2020, Jaboatão dos Guararapes recorded 322 deaths and 3,302 confirmed cases (REAL, 2020).

In 2021, the city hall in January publishes the only decree produced to date in Jaboatão dos Guararapes, where it reaffirms the state of public calamity still experienced by the population of the municipality, and as a result of this, the level of contagion of the population by Covid -19 grew between males and females through the relaxation of contingency measures produced by municipal management and the daily demands of the population. The Figures represents the spatial distribution of the numbers of cases (Figure 3) and deaths (Figure 2) accumulated on April 4, 2021.

Source: Epidemiological Bulletin of the municipality of Jaboatão dos Guararapes on 04/01/2021

The neighborhoods of Candeias and Bulhões stand out for being opposites: Candeias concentrates more than 10% of the Jaboatonense population, on the other hand, in Bulhões they are only 0.02%. The differences also stand out in terms of the percentage of gender and income, the number of women in Candeias is greater than the number in Bulhões and the glaring difference of more than one thousand reais in basic income (Table 1). Candeias is located on the coast and Bulhões in the rural area, they exercise different lifestyles, it is known that in the rural area they exercise a rough work style and the location far from urban centers compromises the access to information and health of its inhabitants and this may explain the percentage of deaths per thousand inhabitants of Bulhões, which is 320.51 while Candeias is 16.75.

It is clear that all the weaknesses that existed before the pandemic were strengthened with it (health, unequal income distribution, urban mobility, etc.), with regard to those most affected by the problems caused by Covid-19, gender issues, with emphasis in the female population, from the functions of these subjects in society, are wide open. As a reaffirmation of this unequal reality, a resident of the municipality of Jaboatão dos Guararapes reported how her daily life in 2021 with the permanence of Covid-19: “The coexistence with Covid 19 is currently absurd, every week I go downtown, specifically in Praça do Rosario and walking around there it seems that the virus no longer exists. There is no social distancing, the population is literally at the mercy and exposed to Covid 19. As a woman I feel overwhelmed, doing not only my chores, but also those of my grandparents to prevent them from exposing themselves when going out on the street.” (Inhabitant of the Municipality of Jaboatão dos Guararapes, Padre Roma Jaboatão Centro neighborhood, 2021)”.

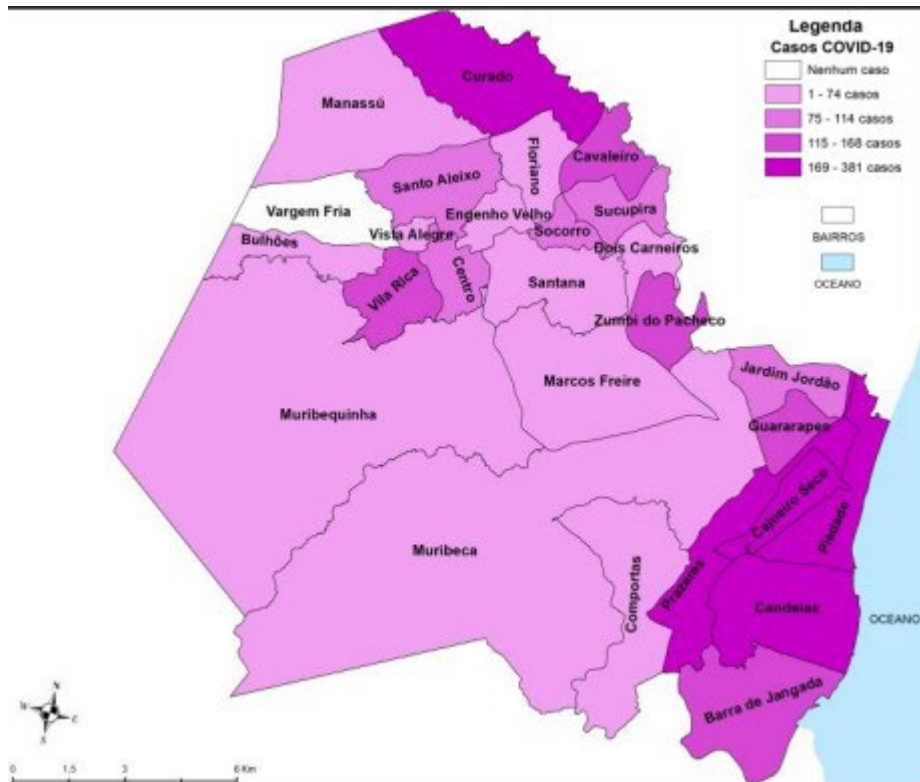


**Figure 2.** Spatial distribution of the numbers of death accumulated on April 04/01/2021 in the municipality of Jabotão dos Guararapes.

“Hunger, unemployment, uncertainties, anguish, one runs here and another there to get some buck. This is how women heads of families, most of them black and single mothers, from the outskirts of Jabotão dos Guararapes, in the Recife Metropolitan Region, in Pernambuco, have faced the coronavirus pandemic. Considered the second largest city in Pernambuco, with 702,000 inhabitants, and one of the first to report cases of contamination in the state, talking about isolation and social distancing where many of the families were already crowded before the pandemic in one-room houses, seems like a guideline difficult to follow.” (RIBEIRO,2020)

In order to mitigate the socioeconomic impacts brought by the pandemic to living in the municipality of Jabotão dos Guararapes, an 'Intersectoral Action of the NASF-AB team' was formed and this activity was developed as follows:

“The NASF-AB team managed to develop several activities such as the distribution of masks and gel alcohol; guidance on Emergency Aid; advance of the Continuous Cash Benefit Programme (BPC) for applicants awaiting the expertise; guidelines on prevention, social isolation, services for assistance in situations of domestic violence against women, children, adolescents, the elderly; communication



**Figure 3.** Spatial distribution of the number of cases accumulated for 04/01/2021 in the municipality of Jabotão dos Guararapes.

activities through the preparation of booklets; incentive to create online groups for therapeutic listening and for users with mental health demands.”(APSREDES,2020).

Mothers, family caregivers, heads of families, health professionals, teachers, self-employed, women caregivers of the elderly, women domestic workers, homeless people, residents of the periphery, women who suffer domestic violence, among many other appointments that dimension the characteristics of all women living in the municipality of Jabotão dos Guararapes account for 339,770 (52.71%) female inhabitants in the municipality of Jabotão dos Guararapes, according to the 2010 census (IBGE, 2010). Even with lower rates compared to the percentages of male contamination in most neighborhoods by Covid-19 (2020 - 2021), women with the arrival of the pandemic had their realities changed and the female population of Jabotão dos Guararapes experience another challenge living in society.



**Table 1.** Population, gender, race and income data by neighborhood in the municipality of Jaboatão dos Guararapes

<b>NEIGHBORHOODS</b>	<b>% POPULATION</b>	<b>DEATH/10 THOUSAND INHB</b>	<b>% MEN</b>	<b>% WOMEN</b>	<b>% WHITE</b>	<b>% BLACK</b>	<b>AVERAGE INCOME</b>
CANDEIAS	10.02	16.75	46.40	53.60	49.94	48.50	2065.27
PIEDADE	9.97	18.54	46.79	53.21	46.82	51.83	2363.88
CAJUEIRO SECO	8.16	19.24	47.04	52.96	32.87	65.98	620.01
CURADO	7.19	17.92	46.93	53.07	38.85	59.76	757.91
GUARARAPES	6.06	12.57	46.95	53.05	34.42	64.44	643.50
CAV-ALEIRO	6.00	20.71	47.16	52.84	34.74	64.28	575.51
BARRA DE JANGADA	5.62	12.99	47.85	52.15	32.89	65.83	785.22
PRAZERES	5.52	26.16	47.45	52.55	33.00	65.49	735.32
VILA RICA	4.61	17.84	47.34	52.66	33.96	64.49	643.56
ZUMBI DO PACHECO	4.37	11.39	46.91	51.94	33.38	65.31	620.57
JARDIM JORDÃO	4.19	21.49	48.11	51.89	31.69	67.45	563.41
MURIBECA	4.06	11.48	47.74	52.26	33.49	65.17	583.01
SUCUPIRA	4.03	14.25	46.57	52.12	33.90	65.24	572.33
SANTO ALEIXO	3.42	21.36	47.40	52.60	34.34	64.21	646.86
MARCOS FREIRE	3.22	9.17	47.15	52.85	36.76	61.20	690.12
DOIS CARNEIROS	3.05	14.77	48.50	51.50	29.36	69.89	488.09
CENTRO	1.94	34.36	47.03	52.97	35.70	62.95	687.54
VISTA ALEGRE	1.68	33.23	46.62	53.38	35.40	63.45	647.86
FLORIANO	1.67	2.80	48.81	51.19	33.05	65.67	641.93
RURAL	1.12	0.00	50.21	49.79	24.66	74.63	393.39
ENGENHO VELHO	1.11	33.47	47.29	52.71	35.29	63.93	743.38
SANTANA	0.92	6.75	47.46	52.54	29.11	69.28	412.63
SOCORRO	0.89	57.37	48.38	51.62	34.26	63.86	695.12
COMPORTAS	0.45	6.97	48.03	51.97	27.26	70.30	484.18
MURIBEQUINHÃO	0.40	10.25	48.72	51.28	13.82	84.95	415.34
MANASSU	0.26	0.00	48.52	51.48	28.54	70.28	648.70
VARGEM FRIA	0.12	0.00	48.44	51.56	34.67	64.71	707.57
BOA VISTA	0.02	320.51	51.92	48.08	28.21	71.79	588.33

Data source: Epidemiological Bulletin (04/01/2021), Health Department of Jaboatão dos Guararapes; Demographic Census 2010 (IBGE)

## Final considerations:

This article expresses itself with the role of opening paths for further investigations on the female issue in the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, it was sought to portray how the daily lives of women were affected by the changes brought about by the new coronavirus in the municipality of Jabotão dos Guararapes. From the study on screen, we emphasize the importance of geographic studies linked to the health geography, since the various attributions that geographic studies have, such as mapping, spatial and statistical analyzes, for example, are still being essential for the development of mechanisms for disease control at national, state and municipal scales. Based on the results presented in this work, it is noted that covid-19 produced higher rates of mortality and contagion in the male population of the municipality of Jabotão dos Guararapes. But given the structural aspects (gender and sexist) of society, women, for the most part, because they are historically neglected, will be impacted by the various unfoldings of the pandemic and will suffer longer than men. With the arrival of the new coronavirus, new situations of social abandonment proved to be another way of measuring which gender issues still exist and how the various functional gender inequalities are represented in society.

Faced with these historical difficulties of the female gender, it is noticeable that some nuances of the first issues addressed in population studies of gender are still perpetuated and the social division of labor is a faithful portrait of these situations (spaces formulated so that the participation of women exists in their majority, such as also spaces that exclude them). The municipality of Jabotão dos Guararapes in the year 2020 did not consider these difficulties and the women who needed to work were neglected due to the lack of assistance from the municipality and some of these had to abandon their jobs (no daycares, no schools, no income). It is apparent that the overload of these existing issues prior to the pandemic were potentiated with it and the municipality of Jabotão dos Guararapes placed them in one more position of gender vulnerability.

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