

# São Paulo/Brazil case of assessment of victimization and perceived safety among college students: focus on women's transit safety

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## **Abstract** (120 palavras)\*

Este artigo pretende apresentar os resultados obtidos em uma pesquisa comparativa internacional que analisa a segurança na mobilidade de estudantes, com enfoque em gênero. Observa cerca de 557 questionários respondidos on-line, entre abril e maio de 2018, por estudantes de diferentes universidades de São Paulo, Brasil. Os resultados mostram que grande parte das mulheres que são assediadas, tanto dentro dos vagões de trem e ônibus, quanto no espaço público, não fazem queixas formais do ocorrido. Em pauta, estão principalmente as agendas de vagão exclusivo e de sistemas de vigilância e qualificação de espaços públicos. Apresenta especificidades relativas à configuração socioterritorial; organização dos sistemas de mobilidade; aspectos abstratos da cultura da insegurança; e marcadores da diferença, onde a distinção de gênero, raça e classe estão incluídas e compõe a herança histórica colonial escravocrata expressa no medo e insegurança.

*This paper presents the results of an international comparative study that investigates transit safety of university students, focusing on gender. It shows the outcomes of an online survey carried out between April-May 2018 of about 590 answers by students from different universities of São Paulo, Brazil. Preliminary results show that the biggest share of women that have been sexually harassed while in transit don't report it, as well as point out the different nature of harassment according to the place it happens (eg. inside vs. outside of metro cars and buses). The possible solutions range from "pink" train cars to vigilance systems, and also includes the qualification of public spaces. The paper also consider São Paulo's socio-spatial configuration, the organization of its urban mobility, aspects of its culture of fear, as well as the so-called "social markers of difference", debating how gender, race and class distinctions are part of Brazilian colonial and heritage of slavery that expresses itself until present days through fear and insecurity.*

# São Paulo/Brazil case of assessment of victimization and perceived safety among college students: focus on women's transit safety

## 1. Introduction

This paper presents the results of the survey administered in the Metropolitan Region of São Paulo (MRSP) as part of an international study aimed at assessing the safety of students from universities with a gender perspective<sup>1</sup>. The data collection involved the administration of an online survey with 50 questions, announced in several universities in São Paulo during April and May of 2018. There were a total of 557 valid questionnaires answered by undergraduate and graduate students<sup>2</sup>.

In comparison to other cities that were part of the international research, São Paulo has several particularities. To understand the socio-territorial configuration and organization of the metropolitan mobility systems of the city, one must consider (i) the automobile-oriented culture, that has been vastly stimulated since the 1950; (ii) the low quality of public transit system; (iii) the abstract aspects of feeling (in)secure and the "culture of fear"; and (iv) the current conditions of

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is part of a joint research involving six continents and 13 case studies, entitled "An international assessment of victimization and perceived safety among college students: focus on women's transit safety", coordinated by the professors Vania Ceccato, from the KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden and Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris, from UCLA, USA. The research involves partners from Nairobi/Kenya, Pretoria/South Africa, Brisbane/Australia, Tóquio/Japan, Milan/Italy, Paris/France, Stockholm/Sweden, Leicester/United Kingdom, Los Angeles/USA, San Salvador/El Salvador, Rio Claro/Brazil, Bogotá/Colombia, Mexico City/Mexico. The application in São Paulo is coordinated by professor Paula Freire Santoro, PhD candidate Letícia Lindenberg Lemos e MSc Marina Kohler Harkot, researchers in LabCidade FAUUSP (Laboratory for Public Space and the Right to the City within the Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning of the University of São Paulo), and with collaboration of the FAUUSP undergraduate student Isabela Leite Valentim.

<sup>2</sup> The survey was supported by professors and students in each university. The professors that supported the survey were: Sivana Zioni, from the bachelor's program in Territorial Planning and of the Environmental Engineering at UABC; Mariana Gianotti, from polytechnic school at USP; Rosa Ester Rossini, from the Geography department of the Faculty of Philosophy, Language and Human Sciences at USP (FFLCH-USP); Edvania Comitre, from the School of Architecture at UNICID, Taubaté; Carolina Heldt, from the Architecture course in the Faculty São Judas Tadeu; Eva Blay, from the department of Political Science at FFLCH-USP and coordinator of USP Mulheres (USP Women); Angélica Alvim e Ana Gabriela Godinho Lima, from the School of Architecture at Mackenzie University; Rita Cannutti, from the Architecture course at SENAC; Thiago Allis, from the Leisure and Tourism course at School of Arts, Sciences and Humanities at USP (EACH-USP); Simone Gatti, from the School of Architecture at Anhanguera University, Santo André. The students that supported the survey were: Isabela (FAUUSP) that collaborated with tabulation and data analysis; Julia Garcia, PhD candidate in Human Geography (FFLCH-USP); Marcelo Sant'Anna and students that are member of the SAJU Cidade group in the Faculty of Law at USP; Cássia Menezes, from the Academic Center XI de Agosto in the Law School at USP.

urban debate that pursues to visualize the markers of difference and of intersectionality, that seeks to include not only gender distinctions, but also class, race and others.

## 2. Background on São Paulo

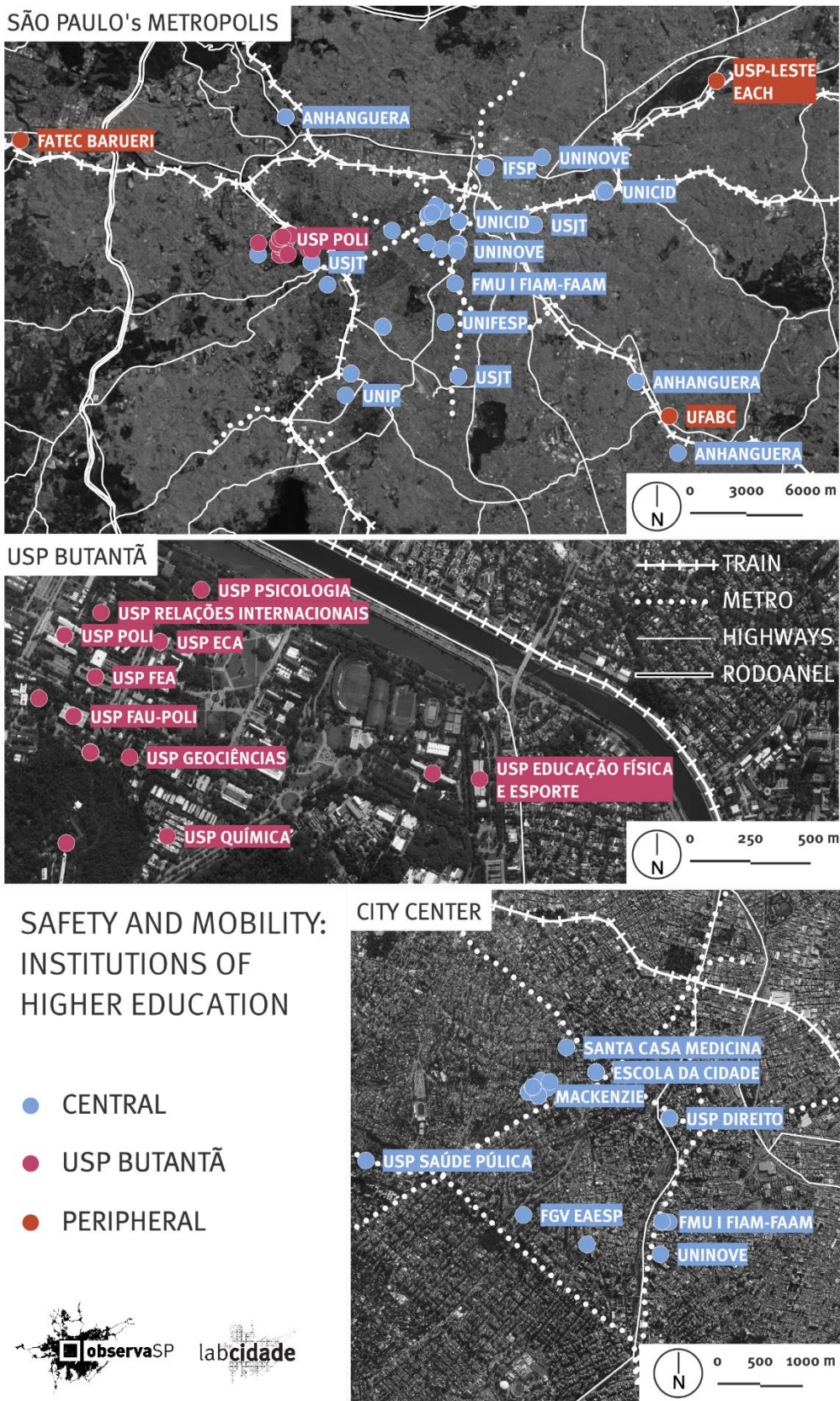
The population in Brazil has been historically concentrated within the five largest Brazilian metropolises<sup>3</sup>, which are the economic centers and are home to up to a quarter of the country's population. São Paulo is the largest Brazilian metropolis, a conurbation of 39 municipalities with a total of more than 20 million inhabitants spread across an area of 8 thousand km<sup>2</sup> (IBGE apud EMPLASA, 2018). The metropolitan territory is largely unequal and exclusionary. In general terms, the southeast region of the city of São Paulo has better urban conditions, is fully urbanized and has a good offer of public facilities and services, as well as the highest concentration of jobs and better housing conditions (Villaça, 1998). Nevertheless, the southeastern area is surrounded by "Peripheral occupation patterns"<sup>4</sup>, that see the worst urban and housing conditions, bad conditions of public facilities and services, as well as the lowest rates of job offers. These structural conditions results in a massive commute patterns that mean displacement of millions of workers each day. And because of this, the transportation systems have a fundamental role in the MRSP, despite the unequal offer and poor conditions of service across the metropolis (Villaça e Zioni, 2005; Nigriello e Oliveira, 2013).

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<sup>3</sup> São Paulo/SP, Rio de Janeiro/RJ, Belo Horizonte/MG, Porto Alegre/RS and Recife/PE.

<sup>4</sup> The expressions "periphery" and "peripheral" don't refer only to a geographic location, but as a concept that was coined from the 1970s onward for areas on the outskirts of the city, further from the center, and occupied by informal and precarious settlements, with self-constructed houses based on the model of private ownership rather than rentership. The expression "urban spoliation" helped shape and make sense of the urban problems from the 1970s. This was the time when the periphery was being built as a concept under a system of accumulation based on the over-exploitation of the workforce in industrial capitalism, and found spatial forms of spoliation that reflected the urban condition of existence to which the working class was subjected (Kowarick, 1980).

Image 1. High and medium capacity transit system in the MRSP and the education institutions that participated in the survey



Source: Martim Ferraz, LabCidade FAUUSP, 2018.

The bus system in the MRSP<sup>5</sup> is the most extensive and is the most capillary in nature, having lines that run across the territory and into the neighborhoods. Nevertheless, the service quality is regarded as bad, with high waiting times, overloaded vehicles during rush hours, long and unpredictable travel times, and is thus a system with low reliability for users. In the municipality of São Paulo and in the ABCD Region<sup>6</sup> there are bus lines that ride on dedicated lanes<sup>7</sup> and on large avenues, which serve as a structural network and which usually have better quality and higher average speeds. But there are also lines that serve the inner parts of neighborhoods, with routes that have more capillarity, but frequently with smaller or older buses, providing worse quality and lower level of service.

The rail transit system, on the other hand, is structured with two kinds of service: the subway and trains. The subway network is rather small, with only six lines adding up to 78 km highly concentrated on the central area of the city, and transports 4.4 million passengers daily. Only when the subway network connects to the train system does the rail system reach other municipalities of the MRSP beyond the central areas. The train system, run by CPTM (São Paulo Company of Metropolitan Trains), adds up to 260 km and transports 2.8 million passengers daily. Even though there has been some improvement within the last decades, the system is older, and users face long wait times frequent and service interruptions due to malfunctions. This system reaches the areas furthest from the urban center, which are home to the lowest income populations with greater populations of brown and black residents, and faces the longest commutes.

The privatization of the construction and operation of some of the subway lines in São Paulo has resulted in competition for funding with other modes of transportation in the public transit system, and currently the private companies contracted to operate metro lines under public-private partnerships receive fixed payments, regardless of the number of passengers transported. In addition, the payment structure for each of the different transportation modalities in the public transit system prioritizes the payment of private contractors before public providers. In other words, the first contractor to get paid is the private operator of the subway line that is run under a public-private partnership, followed by the public concessionaries of the other subway lines and the bus system, which is privately run under a concession, and at last is the train system. Also, the private operator of the subway lines are paid the full amount per passengers, regardless of

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<sup>5</sup> São Paulo and other Brazilian metropolitan regions face a common issue: the conurbation of municipalities create artificial borders for the administration, budgeting and construction of infrastructure. Because of this, each of the 39 municipalities in the MRSP run their own bus system, which are not integrated with the intermunicipal system, which is run by another operator - the Metropolitan Company of Urban Transportation (EMTU).

<sup>6</sup> The ABCD region, to the south and southeast of the city of São Paulo, is formed by the cities of Santo André, São Bernardo do Campo, São Caetano and Diadema, municipalities where the industries of metallurgy, chemistry and automobile manufacturing were prevalent during the 1950s. During the 1980s, there was an industrial restructuring of the metropolis and several industrial plants from this region moved out, leaving the territory in a process of deep urban transformation until the present day.

<sup>7</sup> Even though they are indicated as "bus-only lanes", their use is not exclusive for buses: taxis with passengers are allowed to drive in these lanes. This option increases the traffic flow on the lanes and, hence, lower the buses speed and fluidity.

the transit fare discounts established by Law for some users (students, elderly, and the handicapped). Thus, if the Government doesn't put enough subsidy into the system to compensate for the discounts, there is not enough money left for the operation and needed improvements of the train system, worsening its conditions (De Paula, 2016).

The situation is even more complex, considering that the mobility policies have historically privileged private individual vehicular travel for the higher-income groups and a largely bus-dependent public transit system for the lower income group (Lemos et al., 2017; Marques e Bichir, 2001; Vasconcellos, 1999). Such investments are reflected in the modal share measured by the Origin-Destination Survey, carried out every ten years by the Subway (Metrô) Company of the State of São Paulo. As can be observed on the table below, the modal share of public transit has been more or less stable, not attracting car passengers to the system.

**Table 1. Modal share of daily trips in the MRSP**

Type	Mode	Year			
		1977	1987	1997	2007
Active	On foot	28%	36.2%	34.4%	33.1%
	Bicycle	0.3%	0.4%	0.5%	0.8%
Public transit	Subway	2.5%	5%	5.4%	5.8%
	Bus	40.1%	27.6%	25.9%	28.5%
	Train	2.3%	3%	2.1%	2.1%
Motorized private	Motorcycle	0.2%	0.6%	0.5%	1.9%
	Auto	23.9%	26.2%	30.7%	27.3%
Taxi		2.4%	0.4%	0.3%	0.2%
Other		0.2%	0.6%	0.3%	0.2%
<b>Total</b>		<b>21,304,180</b>	<b>29,399,601</b>	<b>31,432,205</b>	<b>38,094,385</b>

Source: Database Origin-Destination Survey from 1977, 1987, 1997 and 2007, and Mobility Survey from 2012 by Metrô-SP. Preparation: authors, 2018.

However, when analyzing the data collected on mobility of university students in the MRSP, the diversity socio-territorial conditions in the region must be considered, particularly considering that the surveys were completed by students from several institutions who likely circulate in distinct places of the metropolis and who utilize different modes of transportation<sup>8</sup>. It is possible to presume that the respondents use the modes that are available closest to their education institutions. For example, the respondents from institutions in the downtown area or in the USP Butantã Campus, which are close to subway stations, might use the subway more frequently, and that the train would be used more by those studying in more peripheral institutions. Nevertheless, with the information obtained with the questionnaire, it is not possible to determine whether the

<sup>8</sup> Aiming at reaching a more diverse group of university students, the survey was done in collaboration with other universities and faculties. Institutions that have collaborated with the survey: UFABC - Campus São Bernardo; polytechnic school at USP; Faculty of Philosophy, Language and Human Sciences at USP (FFLCH-USP); UNICID - Campus Tatuapé; Faculty São Judas Tadeu; Mackenzie University; SENAC; School of Arts, Sciences and Humanities at USP, Anhanguera University - Campus Santo André; Law School at USP.

respondents referred to their experiences in the train and/or metro, or to the bus systems in the city of São Paulo, the MRSP, or to the EMTU bus system; thus the analyses about the specific modes used will always be based on conjecture.

Concerning safety issues, the results indicate that there has been an increasing feeling that the public space is unsafe, particularly for mobility purposes. This perception has been stimulated by what could be called the "security industry", which provides solutions to overcome the unsafe conditions and which is one of the industries that had the highest growth in the last decade, reaching 230% in ten years (Fenavist, 2014). The solutions offered include surveillance and monitoring systems, associated with private patrolling (Graham, 2011), largely oriented to property and assets security in central regions, or where wealthier and middle-income families live in the southeastern portion of the city with better urban conditions (Caldeira, 2003).

Not to be overlooked is the relation between the police and the population in Brazil. Differently from other countries, police presence is not associated with a feeling of safety in light of the abuse of human rights and the violent actions of police authorities. This situation affects particularly the low-income and black populations, and above all the black youth. Gomes (2017) points out that non-police perpetrated homicides among black young people are higher than the general population and growing, as can be observed on the Map of Violence from 2012 and on the Index of Black Victimization from 2010. For each white person that is victim of a homicide, there are 2.3 black victims. But there is also a racial bias by the police force that is into practice through the concept of "reasonable suspicion" (Sinhoretto et al., 2014 *apud* Gomes, 2017). This police bias results not only in more frequent police approaches on black citizens, but also a higher fatality rate for this group. According to Gomes, data from 2011 indicate that there were 1.4 per 100 thousand blacks murdered by the police, while for white individuals, the rate is only 0.5 per 100 thousand. Thus, for this black population, which sums up to 50% of Brazilians and 35% of inhabitants of the State of São Paulo in which the MRSP is located, the presence of the police force doesn't bring a feeling of safety, but rather frequently brings the opposite feeling.

In Brazil, gender violence is recognized and punished by an important Law, which was drafted and passed after a long and intense effort from the feminist movement: the 2006 Maria da Penha Law (n. 11.340)<sup>9</sup>. The Maria da Penha Law is used in cases of domestic violence against women. In little over a decade after the law's passage there was some progress achieved, including: (i) the creation of specialized services for women; (ii) a higher awareness in society concerning domestic violence and the need to treat this through specific public policies; (iii) punishment of violence, but also the prevention, and decrease of tolerance, of recurring events of domestic abuse (Pasinato, 2017).

Nevertheless, even though this legislation was important for the recognition of some forms of violence against women and girls, consideration of the multiple forms of expression of gender violence are far from being incorporated cross-sectorally to the public policies that are proposed and implemented in Brazil<sup>10</sup>. In relation to the subject matter of this paper of this paper - gender

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<sup>9</sup> The name of the Law - Maria da Penha - pays homage to Maria da Penha Maia Fernandes, a woman who suffered domestic violence by her then husband for years and fought for his condemnation. As of this day, she has a leading role in the women's rights movements and in the activism against domestic violence.

<sup>10</sup> The cross-sectoral incorporation of gender issues in public policies is known as "gender mainstreaming." Greed (2005) defines this concept as "the process whereby gender issues, relations, power differentials and



violence committed while moving in the city, either on public transit or using active transportation modes, such as on-foot trips<sup>11</sup> –, the debate has been focused on, according to Caffaro e Nunes (2018), the definition of “street harassment” (Vera-Gray, 2016) and on the description of this phenomenon and the related impacts.

Caffaro e Nunes (2018) give an overview of the proposals from the State concerning gender violence in Brazil. The authors point out to a need of reviewing the legislation and for an analysis about the need to punish the aggressors, as well as further studies about best ways of imposing punishment, in order to avoid recidivism. In the meanwhile, policies to address this issue have focused on implementing the (controversial) “pink cars” in urban trains and the subway and, more recently, on municipal legislation that allow women and the elderly to get off buses anywhere (not just at designated stops) after 10 P.M.<sup>12</sup>.

However, in the Brazilian context, gender inequalities are not the only relevant aspect of identity to this study. Moutinho (2014) discusses the “social markers of difference” particularly using inequalities between races, nationality, sexuality and gender. Considering the context of Brazilian cities, where there is deep racial segregation, it is critical to consider intersectionality between gender and race, thus illuminating the particular experience in space of women from all different women: black, white, indigenous and Asian. According to the Atlas of Violence of 2018 (Ipea/FBSP, 2018), there is a 71% difference in the homicide index between black and non-black women: homicide is higher among black women (5.3 per 100 thousand black women) than non-black (3.1 per 100 thousand non-black). Also, during the ten year period of the data series analysed by the researchers, the rate of homicide for black women increased by 15.4%, but decreased by 8% for non-black. In view of these rates, it is important to consider that racial issues are also relevant for women.

This being considered, the research presented in this paper brings tools to analyze the nuances of different ways through which violence arises and materializes in relation to mobility, particularly gendered violence.

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identities are taken into account within all stages and aspects of the plan-making process.” (Greed, 2005, p.720).

<sup>11</sup> It is important to remember that on-foot trips are not only those done exclusively on-foot - from the origin until the destination -, but also the segment of the trip to access public transit when is done on-foot.

<sup>12</sup> Women and the elderly can chose the safest and more accessible place to get off buses between 10 P.M. and 5 A.M., except on dedicated bus corridors, according to the Municipal Law n. 16.490/2015 and Municipal Decree n. 57.399/2016, and Municipal Decree n. 35.411/1995, concerning the elderly. A survey carried out by the Feminist Network of Jurists showed that 80% of women didn't know that they could step off the busses elsewhere that the bus stops. The law is also unknown for more than half of the bus drivers. Among the women that did know about this legislation, several indicated to be afraid to ask and suffer from the response of the driver, and only 20% actually asked to get off outside the bus stop, but only 43% of these had their request granted (SPara Mulheres campaign, 2018).



### 3. Methodological Observations

The questionnaire that was developed by the international partnership was translated to Portuguese and administered using the Google Forms online platform. The survey and link to the form were disseminated through the communication services of only the participating faculties from the University of São Paulo (USP) that are located in the municipality of São Paulo, and were also disseminated through personal contact between professors and students from academic departments at USP and other institutions that collaborate with LabCidade at FAUUSP (see image 1). The only exception to the online form were roughly 20 questionnaires that were answered on a printed form that were answered in class, on the request of a professor who wanted to bring the theme to her class to promote a debate about it. Because the option was to broaden the application to other institutions, one extra question was included in the questionnaire to indicate which education institution the respondent attends, allowing for an analysis of the responses by geography.

Because the survey is part of an international study, some adjustments were made on the questionnaire when it was translated to Portuguese in order to reflect the local context. Among the adaptations is the translation of the expression "victimization" that was used on questions about having suffered harassment or sexual abuse on the spaces of mobility. The literal translation would be "*vitimização*", but the common use in Brazil has a highly negative connotation, referring to someone putting him- or herself in the place of a victim. Particularly when referring to violence against women, the expression "*vitimização*" is normally used, for example, to delegitimize accusations of harassment or sexual violence or to delegitimize concerns about inequality between men and women, indirectly indicating that the violence didn't happen, or that the inequality doesn't exist. For this reason, the expression was translated to Portuguese as "to be a victim of a crime" ("*ser vítima de crime*").

There was additionally a challenge regarding the section in the questionnaire about the frequency and experience when using the rail system. As mentioned above, São Paulo has two different networks for rail transit system: the subway and the train. These systems are run by different public companies and the characteristic of their networks is directly related to the public funds dedicated to each one of them. These conditions results in differences on several aspects, such as the kind of the cars used, the quality of the service provided, on the design of the stations, waiting time at stations, overcrowding of cars, staff training - including the protocol to be followed in cases of harassment or sexual abuse. However, to keep the questionnaire short, the issue was approached in relation to the rail system in general, without distinction between subway or train, even though these networks are remarkably different on their distribution on the territory and their reach.

Furthermore, the questionnaire didn't define abuse, harassment and crime. An analysis comparing the answers from the multiple choice questions and those for the open questions about the same issue indicate that there were different interpretation of the respondents regarding these concepts. Also, the Brazilian Criminal Code classifies the sexual violence crimes that are listed in the questionnaire as "rape" (and the variations, like "sexual violation by means of

deception" and "rape of vulnerable individual", for example) and "sexual harassment"<sup>13</sup> - contributing to a decreased understanding about the concepts in the questionnaire. On top of this, the notion of "crime" is also abstract, complex and difficult to define, depending on the conception of each country's Criminal Code.

Finally, the solutions to oppose or suppress the feeling of insecurity or such crimes, presented in the multiple-choice questions, are largely related to surveillance, monitoring, and police presence. As already briefly discussed in this paper, in the Brazilian context, the presence of police force has different meanings for each group with different racial and social characteristic. This issue is debated within the literature that discusses violence from police, which is the authors consider to be "racial profiling". Thus, it is crucial to analyze carefully the answers about what could make trips safer.

## 4. Results

The survey achieved 557 valid responses and, as expected, women were the largest group who responded to the questionnaire – comprising about two thirds (2/3) of all the responses. The other third of the responses came from surveys answered by those who identify themselves as male (32,1%) and only 7 students - a bit over 1% of all the interviewees - identify themselves as non-binary or preferred not to share their gender identity. The questionnaire was considered too long by some respondents, what resulted in incomplete questionnaires that have not been fully answered and were discarded on the first round of data analysis.

About 56% of the survey forms were answered by students of the University of São Paulo (USP), and 36% of them study in the main USP's campus of the city, which is located in the *Cidade Universitária* Campus in the Butantã neighbourhood. Another 10% of respondents from USP respondents attend the USP Law School - the *Faculdade de Direito* - which is located in Downtown São Paulo, close to the Sé Subway station, where two of the most important subway lines cross and people can change to the North-South Line and the East-West Line. The remaining 9% USP respondents left go to the School of Arts, Sciences and Humanities - the *Escola de Artes, Ciências e Humanidades* (EACH). It is the University of São Paulo's newest campus in the city of São Paulo, opened in 2005 and located in the East Zone of the city. One gets to the EACH campus by hopping off the USP-Leste station, located just across the street from the Campus and served by the Line 12 - *Safira* (Sapphire) of the CPTM.

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<sup>13</sup> According to the Brazilian Criminal Code, "rape" is defined by the Article 213 as "to force someone, through violence or major threat, to have carnal conjunction or to have or to allow a perpetrator to libidinous action". According to the Article 216-A "sexual harassment" is defined as "to force someone aiming at have sexual advantage or favor, the actor taking precedence of its hierarchical superior condition or origin inherent to the practice of a job, position or function".

**Table 2. Distribution of the students, by learning institution**

<b>Instituição de ensino</b>	<b>Alunos entrevistados</b>	
Anhanguera	19	3.4%
Anhembi Morumbi	5	0.9%
Escola da Cidade	7	1.3%
FATEC Barueri	1	0.2%
FESP	1	0.2%
FGV	1	0.2%
FMU I FIAM-FAAM	6	1.1%
IFSP	3	0.5%
Mackenzie	73	13.1%
Santa Casa	1	0.2%
SENAC	1	0.2%
UFABC	33	5.9%
UNICAMP	1	0.2%
UNICID	68	12.2%
Unifesp	2	0.4%
Unifesp/USP	1	0.2%
UNINOVE	2	0.4%
UNIP	1	0.2%
USJT	20	3.6%
USP	201	36.1%
USP-Direito	58	10.4%
USP-LESTE	52	9.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

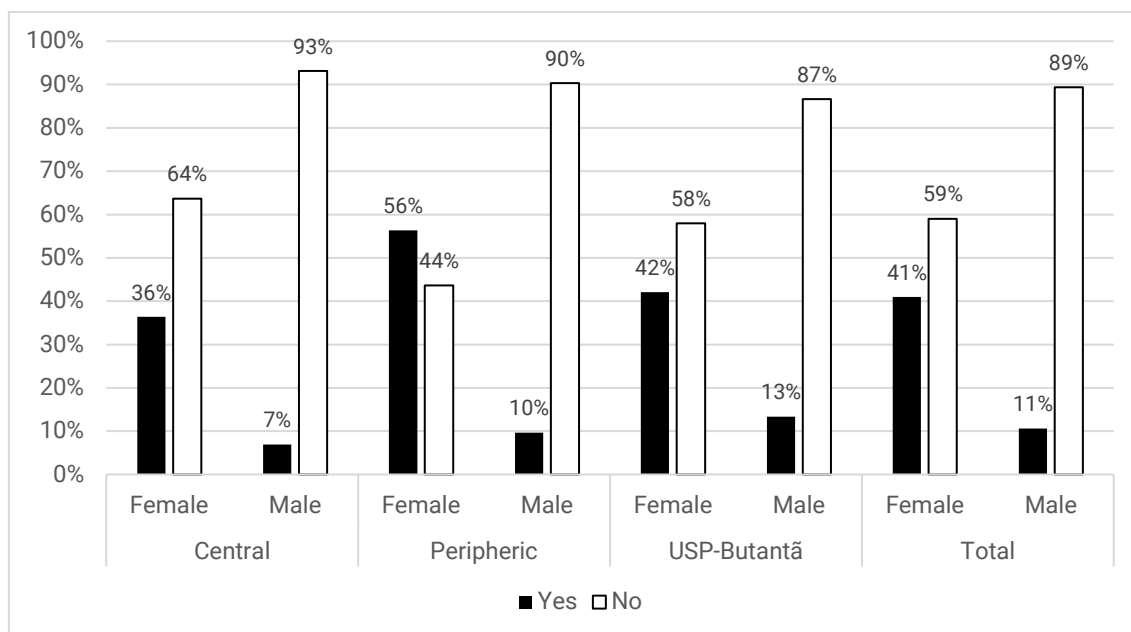
Source: Survey "Segurança na mobilidade de estudantes universitários em São Paulo". Preparation: authors, 2018.

A large share of the students said to be part of the LGBTQI Community. This group makes up to 22.6% of the respondents, while 2.2% preferred not to share this information and 75.2% said they were not part of the LGBTQI Community. The university students are mostly white - especially those who attend USP - 75% of the female and 68% of the male students self-identify themselves as white. Students who identify themselves as black, mixed race and/or indigenous are a larger share in the institutions that are part of the "Central" or "Peripheral" categories<sup>14</sup>. And 92% of the respondents are young, up to 29 years old.

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<sup>14</sup> The racial composition of the educational institutions, especially the one from USP, ratifies what is well-known in Brazil: (i) that race works as a proxy of social class and (ii) that USP is an institution that historically serves elites - in spite of being a public institution. That can be confirmed through the data concerning the race of the students who go to University of São Paulo's largest campus, the Butantã campus. According to the self-declaration of race by the survey participants - which allowed for more than one option to be selected - students who identified themselves as black, mixed race and/or indigenous make up to 31.6% of the students attending learning institutions considered geographically peripheral, 28.4% in the ones labeled as Central and only 16.7% of the USP Butantã campus' students.

**Chart 1. Students victims of sexual abuse or sexual harassment inside bus/subway/tram/train/monorail, on bus stop/on the platform, or while walking to/from the bus stop/train station**



Source: Survey "Segurança na mobilidade de estudantes universitários em São Paulo", question 24.  
Preparation: authors, 2018.

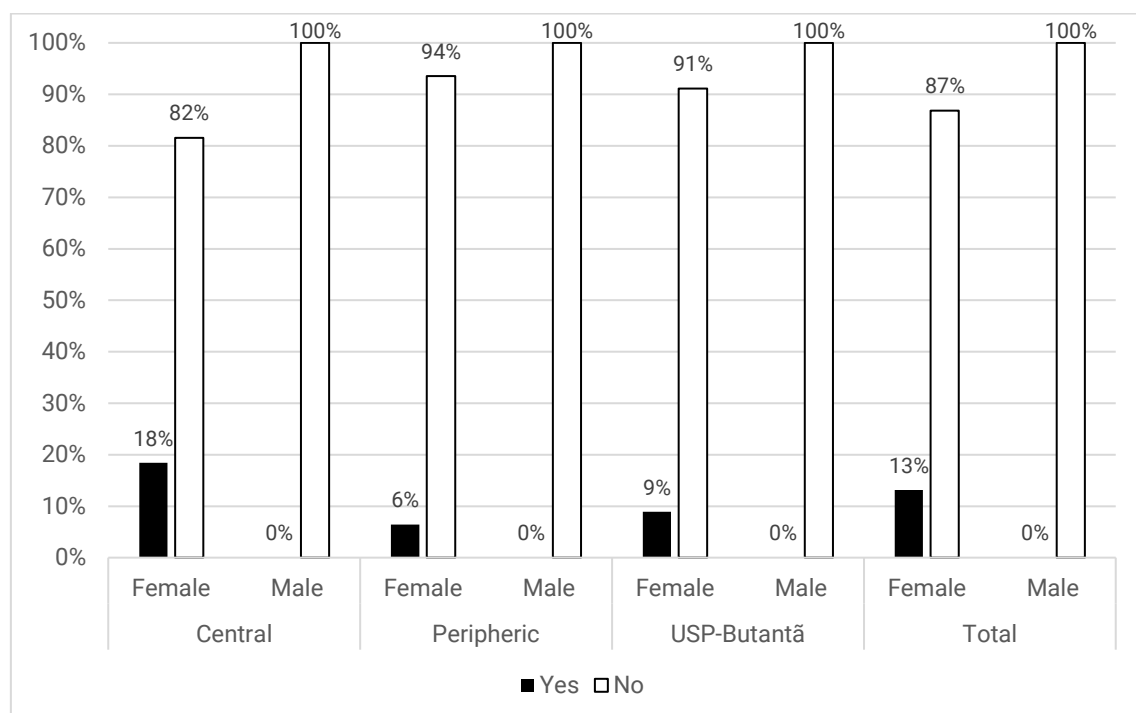
Around 41% of the female interviewees said they have suffered some kind of sexual harassment or sexual abuse inside the bus/subway/tram/train/monorail, on the bus stop/platform or on their way walking from/to the bus stop/train station. The same question answered by the male interviewees showed that only 11% of them have been through this kind of situation. The largest proportion of women victimized by sexual abuse or sexual harassment in these circumstances go to universities or institutions labeled as "Peripheral" by the researchers conducting the survey: 56% of them said they have been victims of crimes<sup>15</sup>. When one cross-references the information on the territory and the racial profile of the interviewees, the data show that black, mixed-race and indigenous women who go to the Peripheral educational institutions are much more frequently victimized by sexual harassment and sexual abuse: 81.3% of them have been victims, while among the white students at such educational institutions the percentage of those who have been victimized drops to 55.6%. One of the very few male interviewees who reported being a victim of sexually harassment was victimized by a man. In future studies, it might be worthwhile to include questions on the gender of the harasser.

<sup>15</sup> The collected data does not allow to identify if the violence situations reported happened more frequently in the subway (Metrô) or in urban trains (CPTM). Even so, when one considers the previous discussion on the spatial distribution of both the subway and the CPTM network across the city – the former being concentrated in the central areas of the city – it is possible to make questions that dig deeper on the relationship between the kind of transportation – subway, CPTM or bus – and the larger occurrence of episodes of sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

The data also show an important differentiation of the specific kinds of violence and the locations where they take place. The survey allows the researchers to determine if the cases of sexual abuse and sexual harassment took place (a) inside the bus, subway, or train or (b) on the CPTM or subway platform or on the bus stop or (c) on the way to the subway/train station or to the bus stop. Therefore, these spaces were labelled into two kinds: "enclosed spaces" (a) and "open spaces" (b and c). Among the kinds of violence that most frequently take place in the so-called "enclosed spaces" are those that involve physical contact and touches to the body, as being touched or groped, or cases of exhibitionism, such as someone inside the bus or train masturbating in public etc. On the other hand, the violence that takes place in open spaces occurs from afar and includes whistles, catcalling and/or unsolicited comments.

Among those who have been victimized, the rates of reporting are very low: no more than 13% of the female interviewees and no male interviewee reported their incidents of being sexually harassed or abused (see Chart 2).

**Chart 2. Students victims of sexual abuse or sexual harassment inside bus/subway/tram/train/monorail, on bus stop/on the platform, or while walking to/from the bus stop/train station that reported the event to anyone**

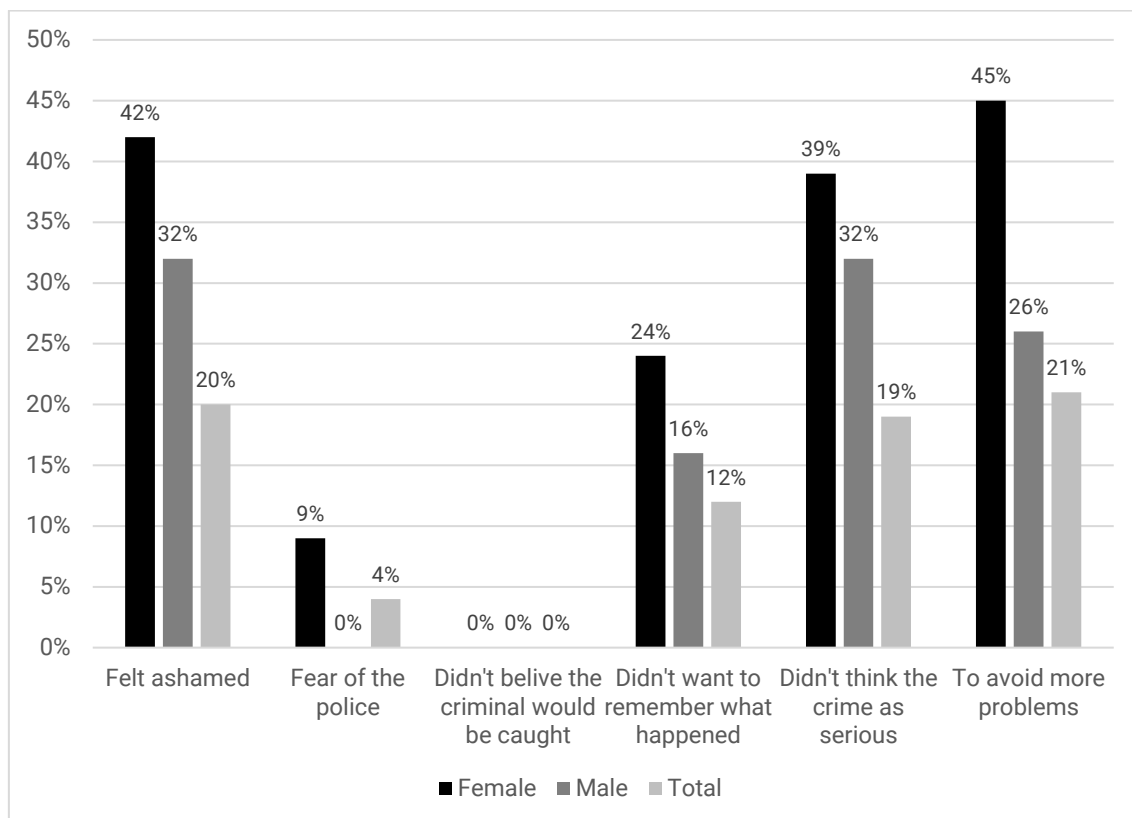


Source: Survey "Segurança na mobilidade de estudantes universitários em São Paulo", question 25.  
Preparation: authors, 2018.

In the cases where violence was reported, the recipients of the complaints were mostly the parents (15 answers), friends (14 answers), husband/wife (7 answers), other family members (6 answers), subway/train company (5 answers), bus drivers (3 answers) and bus company (1 answer). The cases are not reported due to many different reasons - the main reasons for not doing so, for the women interviewed, are "to avoid more problems", for shame or for thinking the

crime wasn't serious. The reasons for men not reporting the cases are the same, but in a different order - being ashamed is the most mentioned one. Among the women, the fear of the police and the belief the criminal won't be identified are the least mentioned motives for not reporting the abuse or harassment cases.

**Chart 3. Students victims of sexual abuse or sexual harassment inside bus/subway/tram/train/monorail, on bus stop/on the platform, or while walking to/from the bus stop/train station that didn't report the violence suffered, reasons for not reporting it (multiple-answers to be chosen)**

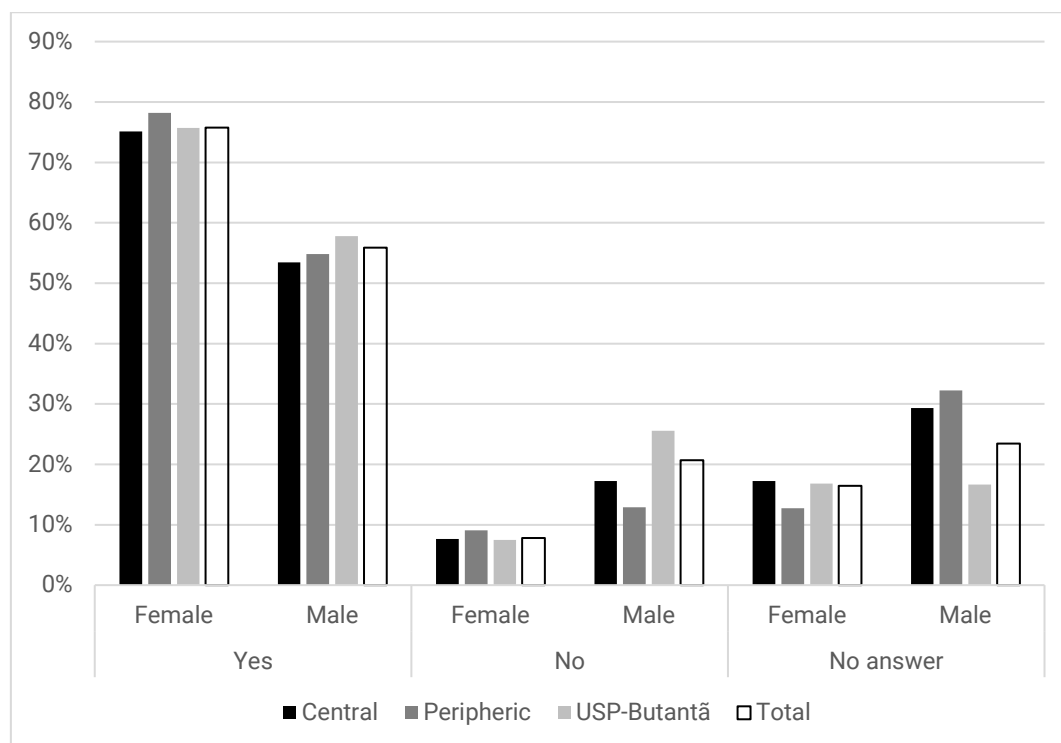


Source: Survey "Segurança na mobilidade de estudantes universitários em São Paulo", question 26.  
Preparation: authors, 2018.

It is worth noticing the behaviour of the people surrounding the victims, at the moment the violence happens: usually it means not interfering in the situation. This means that among those students interviewed that were victims of sexual harassment or abuse while in transit and who had people witnessing the violence they suffered, 40% of them said that people surrounding them "pretended not to see what was happening" and 30% of them "watched afar what was happening". It is among the female students from Peripheral institutions that the most action towards the issue is taken - meaning that people around just approaching them, approaching and talking to the victim or approaching the attacker. One way or another, the results show that most of the times the victims are alone, even if among the crowd that share with them the daily mobility spaces.

As a result of this witness behavior, the feeling of unsafety - both the one that is rooted on the fear of situations lived in past moments and the one which is result of the bourdieusian symbolic violence<sup>16</sup> - is translated into a decrease of women's mobility and their loss of autonomy. The answers to the questions that explore if the interviewed students feel the need to take precautions against crimes while they use public transit and which strategies they use in order to protect themselves show that (i) women feel a bigger need of taking precautions than men (see Chart 4 below) and (ii) the precautions taken by women result in restricting their mobility - not using some bus lines; avoiding certain routes and transit stations; preferring brighter routes; not going around in certain hours, especially by nighttime.

**Chart 4. Do you feel the need to take precautions against crimes when you ride public buses?**



Source: Survey "Segurança na mobilidade de estudantes universitários em São Paulo", question 10.  
Preparation: authors, 2018.

The responses show that the barriers to safety are not only found on those aspects that are traditionally related to gender issues - such as street lighting - and to a conception of safety that involves surveillance and policing. The results show that aspects related to the quality of the transit service such as train occupancy, long waiting times, and the unpredictability of bus schedules are the most mentioned problems.

Running counter to the solutions listed among the multiple-choice alternatives - such as increasing the policing and the surveillance apparatus, which as explained earlier have a very complicated meaning in what comes to perpetuating institutional racism - the survey results allow

<sup>16</sup> Symbolic violence is a subtle and hard to perceive violence. It is invisible even for the victims themselves and is structured around aspects such as "the communication and the knowledge or, most precisely, the lack of knowledge, the acknowledge or, in last resort, the feeling" (Bourdieu, 2000, apud Villagrán, 2012, p.148, translation by the authors).



to identify three groups of solutions: (i) those related to the quality of the transit system; (ii) those related to a women-only cars and trains policy; and (iii) those related to moral aspects and the hiding of the female body.

One can see that the most popular answer on possible solutions to the problems faced daily by the students while moving around are those related to improving the quality of the transit system, especially concerning the bus system. The most popular measure for both male and female student respondents was the implementation of a digital timetable in bus stops - the bus system in São Paulo is known for its low predictability and reliability. In relation to the trains and subway system, surveillance and policing measures seem to be the most popular ones, the most frequent measure being the policing on the platforms and stations, followed by the implementation of surveillance cameras and digital timetables on the platforms.

Approximately one third of the interviewed students (36% of the women and 25% of the men) consider the implementation of women-only train cars to a feasible solution. Among the female students of Peripheral institutions, 49% support such a measure. The data seems to support hypothesis that the violence suffered by women is worse in CPTM trains than in the subway, since this data cannot be disaggregated. However, the debate around women-only transportation ("pink" car trains or buses) brings up many discussions both in Brazil and abroad - and even inside the feminist movement, since there is no consensus on what measure should be adopted.

Furthermore, the answers to the survey also show what measures men and women take to avoid being victim of crimes are very different and gender-specific. When it comes to rail transportation, the most mentioned safety procedure taken by male students is avoiding to carry bags or wallets, followed by a minor proportion of the interviewees that say they avoid certain stations or lines. For women though the picture is radically different: the main safety procedure is avoiding certain stations (mentioned by 46% of the interviewees), followed by "dressing in a specific way" - this one is mentioned by 43% of the women, against 7% of the men.

With regard to the bus system, some physical features of the bus stops seem to be even more important to women than for the men. Among the strategies taken by women to avoid being victim of crime, avoiding specific bus stops is the only one that is more often mentioned both by women and men. Other safety procedures taken by men are focused on property security, including choosing not to carry bags or wallets. Women, on the other hand, focus on characteristics of the built space and how people inhabit it (waiting for the bus only in bright places and waiting for the bus only if there are people around - no dark or empty bus stops); followed by the way they choose to dress, choosing a seat close to the bus driver and taking the bus only during day-time.

The data show that while men are mostly concerned by property security and the fear of getting robbed, women face multiple dimension fears, appealing to tactics that secure they are being watched or surrounded by people - even if by unknown people; avoiding riding transit in specific hours or routes, having their mobility limited; or even taking actions linked to moral values, such as covering the body and dressing in a certain way when riding transit.

## 5. Conclusion

Even if there are some considerations to be made concerning the structure of the survey and its difficult translation to the Latin-American reality, its results allowed for many thoughts, which seem more to open up for future research questions than providing ultimate answers.

It is noteworthy that the feeling of (in)security in spaces related to urban mobility is felt differently not only because of the gender of the interviewed students, but also because of the places through they travel and commute – which possibly is related to the most-used kind of public transportation. In this sense, the results confirm what was a hypothesis from the beginning: women experience a lack of security completely differently than men do, showing that the fear and the violence experienced on public transit and on streets are highly gendered. The adopted strategies to deal with the personal safety are also gendered: for men, they usually involve avoiding one subway station or another, but their concerns are mainly focused on property violence and include not carrying bags or wallets, for example. On the other hand, women do not only adopt the same strategies as men, but other ones on top of those: avoid travelling or commuting in specific hours; think very well about the clothes they'll put on; choose one bus stop over another due to number of people present and the activities that take place around it; and even where they choose to sit inside the bus.

It has become clear that violence and fear are bigger in certain parts of the city and in certain transportation modes. The answers by female students from institutions labelled as “peripheral” are almost always worse across all questions in the survey, what causes us to hypothesize about whether the situations one faces in the subway (with a network concentrated in the central and richer areas of São Paulo) and in São Paulo's bus system are very different from what one faces in the CPTM (which network serves much more the Peripheral regions), in the EMTU, or even in the municipal bus systems of municipalities other than São Paulo. These issues can be deeper explored in future studies, through methodologies that allow for a greater data disaggregation.

Still, it was possible to see that the built space, the physical space - both on the subway and train platforms and on the surroundings of bus stops and on streets - is an important feature that increases or reduces the safety feeling of the interviewed students. Moreover, the measures taken to face the insecurity include specific aspects of the quality of the transit system and its reliability - in Brazil, to know what time the bus will stop in each bus stop is generally impossible. And even if policing is a very popular measure both in what concerns transit stations and inside buses and trains, the police are generally not sought after events of victimization in the transit system. Therefore, the relationship between the presence of the police, feeling safe, the trust in and treatment by the police force, and how these aspects are perceived in the minds of the population are also research agendas that deserve further examination.

At last, students participating in the study were given the option to share their contact information for future studies, which allows for specific further research of USP's Campus Butantã using a specific sample and the completion of in-depth interviews. Thus, the standing hypothesis of this work can be further explored in a perspective that looks at the other dimensions that may impact the feeling of safety, possibly towards planning and design guidelines that consider insecurity and violence - especially the gendered ones.

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