Experiences of LGBTphobia in Higher Education: A Systematic Review[1]

Health care in non-binary populations: exploratory study with non-binary gender identities

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ABSTRACT: This investigation aims to characterize and discuss studies that deal with the experiences of LGBTphobia in higher education from the perspective of LGBTQIAPN+ university students. A systematic review was carried out using five databases (PsycArticles, PsycInfo, LILACS, SciELO and PePSIC), in Portuguese, Spanish and English, based on 148 combinations of descriptors related to the topic. The search, carried out in November 2022, retrieved 1,272 complete empirical articles. After two filterings, 17 articles remained, published between 2017 and 2022. Most of the articles are from research carried out in the United States and have a qualitative design. The analysis extracted four thematic categories: 1) Violence suffered by LGBTQIAPN+ university students on campus; 2) Impacts of LGBTphobia on the lives of LGBTQIAPN+ university students; 3) LGBTphobia and intersections; and 4) Individual and institutional strategies for combating LGBTphobia. It is concluded that LGBTphobia is a reality present in the university environment that impacts the experiences and permanence of LGBTQIAPN+ students. However, there are many possibilities for coping that can and should be promoted by higher education institutions, to build academic environments that are safer, more inclusive and favorable to the well-being of LGBTQIAPN+ people. This study suggests that there is a complexity of experiences faced by students belonging to sexual and gender minorities in higher education, related to violence, discrimination, intersections between different forms of prejudice, and impacts on mental health. Institutional measures can be implemented to address LGBTphobia and build safer, more inclusive, and conducive academic environments for the well-being of all.

Keywords: Lgbtphobia; Higher education; Students; LGBTQIAPN+; Systematic review.

RESUMO: Esta investigação tem como objetivo caracterizar e discutir estudos que abordam as experiências de LGBTfobia no ensino superior sob a perspectiva de estudantes universitários LGBTQIAPN+. Foi realizada uma revisão sistemática utilizando cinco bases de dados (PsycArticles, PsycInfo, LILACS, SciELO e PePSIC), nos idiomas português, espanhol e inglês, a partir de 148 combinações de descritores relacionados ao tema. A busca, realizada em novembro de 2022, recuperou 1.272 artigos empíricos completos. Após duas filtragens, restaram 17 artigos, publicados entre 2017 e 2022. A maioria dos artigos é de pesquisas realizadas nos Estados Unidos e tem delineamento qualitativo. A análise extraiu quatro categorias temáticas: 1) Violência sofrida por estudantes universitários LGBTQIAPN+ no campus; 2) Impactos da LGBTfobia na vida de estudantes universitários LGBTQIAPN+; 3) LGBTfobia e intersecções; e 4) Estratégias individuais e institucionais de combate à LGBTfobia. Conclui-se que a LGBTfobia é uma realidade presente no ambiente universitário que impacta as vivências e a permanência de estudantes LGBTQIAPN+. No entanto, há muitas possibilidades de enfrentamento que podem e devem ser promovidas pelas instituições de ensino superior, para construir ambientes acadêmicos mais seguros, inclusivos e favoráveis ao bem-estar de pessoas LGBTQIAPN+. Este estudo sugere que há uma complexidade de experiências enfrentadas por estudantes pertencentes a minorias sexuais e de gênero no ensino superior, relacionadas à violência, discriminação, intersecções entre diferentes formas de preconceito e impactos na saúde mental. Medidas institucionais podem ser implementadas para enfrentar a LGBTfobia e construir ambientes acadêmicos mais seguros, inclusivos e propícios ao bem-estar de todos.

Palavras-chave: Lgbtfobia; Ensino superior; Estudantes; LGBTQIAPN+; Revisão sistemática.

Introduction

LGBTphobia or prejudice against sexual and gender diversity (Costa & Nardi, 2015) is a form of prejudice and discrimination directed at sexual and gender minorities. This group breaks with heterocisnormativity (Warner, 1993) by experiencing their gender identity and/or sexual orientation in a non-hegemonic (cisheterosexual) way. Sexual and gender minorities also identify themselves as belonging to the acronym LGBTQIAPN+,

being respectively: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Transvestite, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, Pansexual, Non-Binary and "+" indicating the other multiple possibilities of identification (Moreira, 2022).

The LGBTQIAPN+ public is susceptible to physical, psychological, symbolic and sexual violence (Cordeiro & Auad, 2021; Martin-Storey, Paquette, Bergeron, Castonguay-Khounsombath & Prévost, 2022; Salerno, Gattamorta & Williams, 2022; Viana, Delgado, Rosa, Neves & Siqueira, 2022). Especially in Brazil, this violence manifests itself in a brutal way, resulting in the loss of an LGBTQIAPN+ life every 29 hours due to violent death through firearms, weapons with blades, beatings, and strangulations (Oliveira & Mott, 2022). These characteristics mean that these crimes are classified as hate crimes.

The different contexts of exclusion experienced by the LGBTQIAPN+ group are intersected and implicated in their existence and quality of life (Murchison, Boyd & Pachankis, 2017). Within the family, it is common for LGBTQIAPN+ people, when expressing their sexuality, even in adolescence, to be expelled from home and left without a support network (Maia & Lopes, 2022), and consequently, need to resort to non-governmental institutions such as shelters (Silva, Vitorino & Pissango, 2022). In the school context, homophobia manifests itself in a hostile way, through verbal victimization, through malicious comments related to sexual and gender diversity, as well as through social isolation due to this diversity. In a subtle way, when schools do not address discrimination and use textbooks that present sexuality from an exclusively heterosexual and binary point of view, they contribute to the perpetuation of homophobic violence (Santos & Midlej, 2019). Due to a low level of education, which is a result of exclusion in the educational environment, this population is faced with precarious working conditions (Silva, Pires & Pereira, 2019). For example, 90% of Brazilian

transvestites and transsexual women have prostitution as their primary source of income (Benevides & Nogueira, 2021), making it impossible for them to purposely choose to work in another service. Furthermore, within the labor market, the LGBTQIAPN+ population experiences discrimination from managers and employees (Silva, Luppi & Veras, 2020).

Given this reality, few LGBTQIAPN+ people are able to access higher education. LGBTphobia has thus prevented the university from acting as an instrument of social transformation in the lives of some people, denying them the right to this space (Santos, Costa & Santos, 2021). Faced with these barriers, those who manage to access higher education, despite all the difficulties, face institutional and individual forms of LGBTphobia (Marzetti, 2018). In this way, experiencing conditions of vulnerability and violence in the university context affects the development of the LGBTQIAPN+ public.

The effective participation of LGBTQIAPN+ students at university is fraught with challenges. LGBTQIAPN+ students still feel alone and underrepresented (Santos, Dornelas, Silva, Lima & Kameo, 2020; Viana *et al*., 2022), are harassed and sexually assaulted (Coulter *et al*., 2017; Martin-Storey *et al*., 2022; Murchison *et al*., 2017), are discriminated against (Cordeiro & Auad, 2021; Ehlinger, Folger & Cronce, 2022; Marzetti, 2018), experience minority stress (Edwards *et al*., 2021; Martin-Storey *et al*., 2022; Marzetti, 2018; Murchison *et al*., 2017; Salerno *et al*., 2022), and present low quality of life rates (Santos *et al*., 2020). Therefore, it is necessary to more deeply investigate in the literature the experiences and impact of LGBTphobia that these students experience in higher education, as well as the coping strategies used in this context and how institutions deal with this issue. Exploring how LGBTphobia presents itself in the university environment is an important tool for social advancement and combating inequality. Therefore, this study aimed, through a systematic review, to characterize and

discuss studies that deal with the experiences of LGBTphobia in higher education from the perspective of LGBTQIAPN+ university students.

Method

A systematic review of the literature was carried out in order to characterize scientific productions that deal with the experiences of LGBTphobia in higher education from the perspective of LGBTQIAPN+ university students. The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) checklist guided the steps for the review (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, Altman & PRISMA Group, 2009).

As a source of analysis, we used empirical articles available in full, published in any year, in the languages of Portuguese, English and Spanish. The search was carried out in November 2022, in the databases PsycArticles and PsycINFO (both indexed in the American Psychological Association [APA]), Latin American and Caribbean Literature in Health Sciences (Lilacs), Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO), and Electronic Journals of Psychology (PePSIC).

The search was carried out using 148 combinations of two or three descriptors, subdivided into Portuguese (n = 56), English (n = 46) and Spanish (n = 46). The need for a large number of combinations arose after several exploratory attempts with the main descriptors. It was therefore decided to expand the variability of combinations in order to reach a greater number of studies. The combination of two descriptors was established based on a descriptor that represented the social minorities in this study and a descriptor that represented the context of higher education, using the following terminologies: "Homofobia/Homophobia/Homofobia" OR "Transfobia/Transphobia/Transfobia " OR "Lesbicas/Lesbians/Lesbianas" OR "Gays/Gays/Gays" OR "Bisexuais/Bisexuals/Bisexuales" OR "Transexuais/Transsexuals/Transexuales" OR "LGBT/LGBT/LGBT" AND "Ensino Superior/Higher education/Educación superior"

OR "Universidade/University/Universidad" OR "Estudantes universitarios/University Students/Estudiantes universitarios" OR "Instituições de Ensino Superior/Higher Education Institutions/Instituciones de enseñanza superior" OR "Educação superior/Higher education/Educación superior". The combination of three descriptors was composed of a descriptor focused on the social minority, a descriptor focused on the process of social exclusion suffered by this public and a descriptor focused on the university context. The search with three descriptors was composed of the following terms: "Minorias Sexuais/Sexual Minorities/Minorías Sexuales" AND "preconceito/prejudice/prejuicio" OR "permanência/permanence/permanencia" OR "evasão/dropouts/evasión" OR "inclusão/inclusion /inclusión" AND other descriptors related to higher education, also used in combinations with 2 descriptors.

The search found 1,272 articles. In a first filtering, duplicate articles, published outside the specific scope of this study and articles with a theoretical outline or that proposed the development of a scale were excluded, resulting in 251 articles. In a second filtering, taking into account the feasibility and objectives of the research, only articles published between 2017 and 2022 that addressed LGBTQIAPN+ students in higher education were considered. Thus, the final analysis database consisted of 17 articles (see Figure 1).

For data analysis, a table was created in the Excel spreadsheet program, with the aim of characterizing and extracting the main information from the selected articles, namely: journal, authors, year of publication, objective, research design, language, sample (quantity, gender, sexual identity, profile and location), instruments and their application, application modality, data collection procedure, and main results. The in-depth analysis and interpretation of the results were conducted through the application of the content analysis technique (Bardin, 2016), following a process composed of three

distinct stages, these being: carrying out a thorough reading of the chosen articles; preparation of an in-depth analysis of the thematic contents present in the studies based on their objectives, results and discussions; and checking, by three expert researchers in the field of LGBTphobia, the results of this analysis.

Figure 1.

Flowchart of inclusion and exclusion criteria
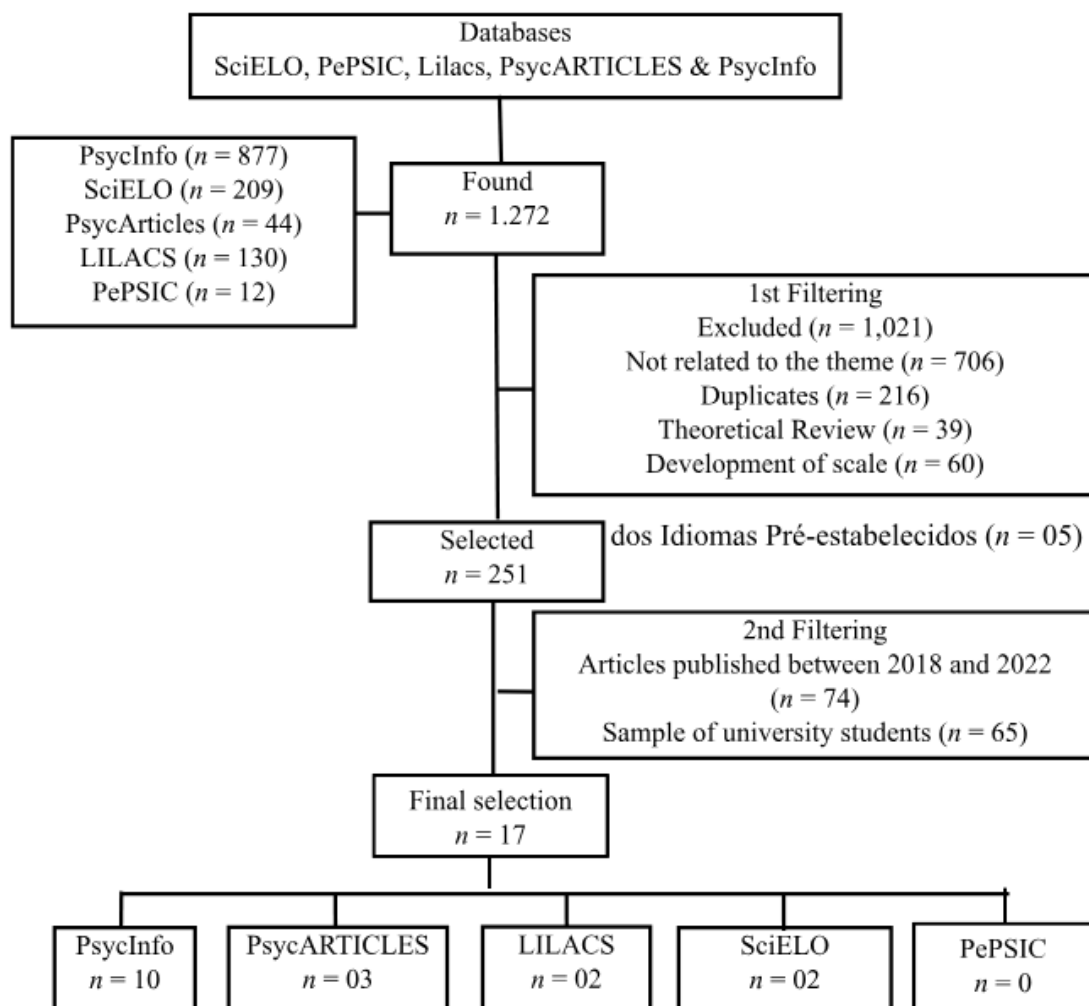
Resultados

Firstly, the profile of the 17 selected articles are presented, and subsequently, there is an in-depth analysis of the themes addressed in these studies.

Profile of selected articles

The year 2022 stood out with five publications (see Table 1). The majority of articles were published in English (n = 13) and the others in Portuguese (n = 4). Regarding scientific journals, the Prevention Science journal and Journal of Homosexuality had the largest number of articles with two publications. Authors Amy Wax and Andrea Hopmeyer had the highest number of publications (n = 2). Data Collections were carried out at colleges or universities or postgraduate institutions, public and private. The application regions were distributed among the United States (n = 9), Brazil (n = 4), United Kingdom (n = 3), Canada (n = 1), Puerto Rico (n = 1) and other unidentified countries (n = 1). The sum of the countries exceeds the number of articles selected, as the article by Gonzales, Mola, Gavulic, McKay & Purcell (2020) carried out data collection in the USA and Puerto Rico, and Murchison et al. (2017) collected data in the USA and other countries without declaring specifically which ones.

Regarding the type of design, it was identified that nine articles used the qualitative approach, seven used the quantitative approach and only one adopted characteristics of a mixed approach. Regarding collection instruments, 31 instruments were used, varying between the following tools: questionnaire (n = 10), interview (n = 7), scale (n = 7), focus group (n = 3), inventory (n = 2), field diary (n = 1), mind map (n = 1), and conceptual mapping (n = 1). The College Peer Crowd Questionnaire (CPCQ) was highlighted, as it was used in two studies (see Blankenau, Wax, Auerbach, Schuman & Hopmeyer, 2022; Morse, Wax, Malmquist & Hopmeyer, 2021).

With regard to the samples, the number varied between 4 and 71,421 participants, all of whom were people who identified as LGBTQIAPN+. The majority of studies were carried out exclusively with university students (n = 16) and only one study with students and teachers. The majority of studies (n = 15) reported with which gender identity(ies)

and/or sexual orientation(s) the person participating in the research identifies and two articles generalized the different experiences by naming them as gender and sexual minorities (Martin-Storey et al., 2022; Salerno et al., 2022). Overall, nine gender identities were identified: cis woman, cis man, genderqueer, transgender woman, transgender man, agender, nonbinary, genderfluid, and gender nonconforming. Regarding sexual orientations, 19 were identified, namely: gay, lesbian, bisexual, homosexual, queer, asexual, heterosexual, pansexual, same-gender attraction, homoaffective person, asexual, demisexual, panromantic, attraction to non-binary people, attraction for women and attraction for men, uncertain, aromantic, demiromantic, and questioning.

Thematic analysis of included articles

From the analysis of the articles, four thematic categories were extracted, which were coded from 1 to 4, these being: 1) Violence suffered by LGBTQIAPN+ university students on the university campus; 2) Impacts of LGBTphobia on the lives of LGBTQIAPN+ university students; 3) LGBTphobia and intersections; and 4) Strategies for confronting and combating LGBTphobia at an individual and institutional level (see Table 1).

Table 1.

Description of article characteristics

Author/ Year	Journal	Location of data collection	Sample profile	Category
Falconer and Taylor (2017)	British Journal of Sociology of Education	Three locations in the UK: Newcastle, Manchester e Londres	N = 38 Female (19), Male (15), Gender Queer (2), Gender Queer and Transgender (1) and Transgender Male (1). Gay (15), Lesbian (13), Bisexual (5), Queer (4) and Asexual (1).	2
Martin-Storey et al. (2022)	Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity	6 universities in Quebec, Canada	N = 223 Gender minorities (21). Sexual minorities (217).	1 & 2
McMahon et al. (2020)	Prevention Science	3 public university campuses	N = 101 Female (79), Male (19), Transgender (13), Agender (6), Non-binary (19), Genderfluid (4), Genderqueer (10) and not informed (1).	3 & 4

		located in the Mid-Atlantic	Asexual (6), Bisexual (43), Gay (9), Straight (45), Lesbian (4), Pansexual (14), Queer (27), Same-Gender Attraction (4), Identity Not Listed (2), and not informed (3).	
Marzetti (2018)	Teaching In Higher Education	University in UK	N = 7 Lesbian Woman (3), Trans Homoaffective Person (1), Pansexual Woman (2) and Bisexual Woman (1).	1, 2, 3 & 4
White et al. (2018)	British Educational Research Journal	College of Further Education in South East England	N = 15 Man (8), Woman (7). Gay or Lesbian (10), Bisexual (2) and Heterosexual (3).	4
Murchison et al. (2017)	Sex Roles	Public and private colleges and universities in the USA and other countries	N = 763 Man (418), Woman (267) and another gender category (80). Gay (346), Bisexual (149), Lesbian (97), Queer (105), Pansexual (39) and Asexual or similar identity (30).	1 & 2
Ehlinger et al. (2022)	Psychology of Addictive Behaviors	University of Oregon (USA)	N = 16 Female (5), Male (5), Genderfluid (2), Non-binary (5), Agender (1). Bisexual (6), Heterosexual (2), Demisexual (1), Gay (3), Panromantic (2), Pansexual (2), Lesbian (1), Queer (1), Asexual (1), Non-sexual attraction binaries (2), Attraction to women (1) and Attraction to men (1).	1, 2, 3 & 4
Coulter et al. (2017)	Prevention Science	Public and private colleges, universities, and graduate institutions in the United States	N = 71.421 Cis Male (22,936), Cis Female (48,308) and Trans Person (177). Heterosexual (65,245), Gay or Lesbian (1,834), Bisexual (2,785) and Uncertain (1,557).	1, 3 & 4
Blankenau et al. (2022)	Journal of Homosexuality	College of Liberal Arts in Southern California	N = 692 Cis Woman (69.8%), Cis Man (26.6%), and Transgender or Non-Binary (3.5%). Heterosexual (60.6%), Gay or Lesbian (7.2%), Bisexual (15.8%), and other sexual minority (16.1%).	2
Morse et. al (2021)	Journal of Homosexuality	College of Liberal Arts in Southern California	N = 234 Female (70.51%), Male (18.38%), Transgender, Gender Queer or some other gender variant identity (11.11%). Bisexual/Pansexual (40.60%), Lesbian (10.68%), Queer (10.68%), Gay (8.55%) Multiple sexual identities and Transgender (6.41%), Asexual/Aromantic/Demisexual / Demiromantic (3.85%), Multiple Sexual Identities and Cisgender (3.85%), Transgender/Non-Binary/Gender Nonconforming/Gender Fluid (2.56%), Heterosexual (2.56%) and did not respond/gave a vague answer (10.26%).	2
Gonzales et al. (2020)	Journal of Adolescent Health	254 Colleges and Universities in 47 US states and Puerto Rico	N = 477 Cis Male (74), Cis Female (202), Transgender (43), Gender Nonconforming (120) and Other (38).	2

			Gay or Lesbian (99), Bisexual (91), Queer (104), Pansexual (66), Asexual (51), Questioning (33) and other (33).	
Salerno et al. (2022)	Psychological trauma: theory, research, practice, and policy	US Colleges and Universities	N = 200 Sexual and gender minorities (200).	2 & 3
Edwards et al. (2021)	Psychology of violence	20 US higher education institutions	N = 1221 Female (885), Male (175), Gender Queer, Gender Non-Conforming or Non-Binary (119), Transgender (32), Other (4), and Undisclosed (6). Bisexual (634), Pansexual (149), Asexual (129), Lesbian (114), Gay (83), Queer (76), Questioning (12), Demisexual (9) and other (15).	1, 2 & 4
Silva (2020)	Revista de Psicologia	Federal University of Paraíba, Brazil	N = 4 Homosexuals (4)	1 & 4
Santos et al. (2020)	Bioscience Journal	Federal University of the Brazilian Northeast	N = 65 Woman (22), Man (43). Cisgender (57), gender fluid (3), did not know how to answer (4) and did not declare (1). Sexual orientation not informed.	1, 2 & 4
Cordeiro e Auad (2021)	Revista Estudos Feministas	State University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UEMS), Brazil	N = 4 Lesbian and bisexual women (4).	1, 2, 3 & 4
Viana et al. (2022)	Acta Paul Enferm	Public University of São Paulo (USP), Brazil	N = 9 Trans man (7), Trans non-binary (1) and Trans woman (1).	1, 2 & 4

Violence suffered by LGBTQIAPN+ university students on university campus

This category consists of 10 articles that address the violence that university students suffer because they belong to the LGBTQIAPN+ community. The main forms of violence discussed were sexual violence, discrimination, and violence in intimate relationships. Minority stress, which intensifies due to the context of discrimination, increases both the risk of sexual violence and intimate partner violence.

LGBTQIAPN+ people experience sexual violence in the university context. This violence encompasses physical, verbal, psychological, and symbolic violence against LGBTQIAPN+ people and appears to be related to homophobia, transphobia, victims' disclosure of their gender and sexual identities, as well as gender nonconformity (clothes,

appearance and behavior outside gender standards and norms) (Martin-Storey et al., 2022). Sexual violence is also related to minority stress, especially internalized homophobia, following the association: the greater the internalized homophobia (regardless of the gender of the targets), the greater the risk of unwanted sexual experience. Conversely, the greater the sense of LGBTQ community, the lower the risk of unwanted sexual experience (Murchison et al., 2017). Additionally, transgender young adults are at greater risk of experiencing an unwanted sexual experience (Murchison et al., 2017), making them significantly more likely to become victims of sexual assault, especially if they are trans people of color (Coulter et al., 2017).

Most violence against people of sexual and gender minorities is carried out by a male perpetrator (Martin-Storey et al., 2022), both in violence where the target is a woman and when it is another man (Murchison et al., 2017). Furthermore, these perpetrators are individuals already known to the victims, such as their partners or friends (Murchison et al., 2017). One of the motivations for sexual violence against LGBT people is the perpetrator's intention to "cure" this person's gender orientation or identity through sexual aggression (Coulter et al., 2017). One of the responses to this type of violence on the part of the student who was a victim is the process of minimizing the severity or importance of the violence suffered, as if it had not been so bad or as if it were something normal. Another outcome is the victim's exclusion from university social activities or even academic dropout itself (Martin-Storey et al., 2022).

Another facet of violence present in the university context occurs in intimate relationships. In the case of sexual violence, for example, intimate partners represent almost a third of perpetrators overall (Murchison et al., 2017). A strong element associated with increased risk of intimate partner violence is minority stress (Edwards et al., 2021; Murchison et al., 2017). Edwards et al. (2021) carried out research with people of different

gender identities and outside heteronormativity and found that internalized homophobia, identity concealment, and awareness of stigma had a direct effect on victimization in cases of intimate partner violence. In the case of perpetrators, this direct effect did not appear, however, minority stress indicators were associated with both perpetration and victimization when those involved consumed higher levels of alcohol (above the cutoff for hazardous consumption) (Edwards et al., 2021).

The university environment, when hostile to people outside of heteronormativity, can increase internalized homophobia. At an individual level, the person experiencing this stress may be less likely to leave their abusive partner, as they are the main source of affirmation of their sexual orientation (Murchison et al., 2017). Moreover, sexual violence prevention programs that have proven effective in reducing this violence among heterosexual students have not reduced violence in intimate relationships among people who are sexual minorities, highlighting the need for more personalized programs that combat minority stress among the population. LGBTQIAPN+ (Edwards et al., 2020).

Discrimination is also a form of violence that LGBTQIAPN+ students suffer in the university context (Marzetti, 2018). This is based on issues of gender, prejudice, anti-trans bias and dysphoria (Ehlinger et al., 2022). This discrimination takes place explicitly, such as the attacks that lesbian students suffer on the way home from university (Cordeiro & Auad, 2021), but can also occur in a more subtle way: microaggressions and microinvalidations (Marzetti, 2018); the misuse of pronouns; non-recognition of gender identity; treating people as if they were a cis person; the constant policing of student gender expression that is outside cisheteronormativity (Ehlinger et al., 2022); and the absence of gender-neutral bathrooms (Viana et al., 2022). Furthermore, in a more personal way, students express feelings of rejection from their romantic peers (Ehlinger et al., 2022).

Another key to analyzing discrimination in the context of higher education is the absence of trans students in this space, as they find it difficult to access and remain at university (Santos et al. 2020; Viana et al., 2022), as well as the "social non-place" of affirmative action black lesbian and bisexual women in this environment (Cordeiro & Auad, 2021). Through discriminatory attitudes, these students are reminded that it is not a social space for them as they are considered incapable of carrying out intellectual activities (Cordeiro & Auad, 2021).

Faced with constant discrimination, trans or non-cisgender students feel the need to defend their identity with cisgender colleagues and authority figures at the educational institution (Ehlinger et al., 2022). Lesbian and bisexual women seek postive actions and different support networks (Cordeiro & Auad, 2021). In the same way, in the context of research with a sample exclusively made up of homosexual students, life projects are constructed, based on the fight for visibility, for equal rights, for the affirmation of their identity and the expression of their sexuality (Silva, 2020).

Impacts of LGBTphobia on the lives of LGBTQIAPN+ university students

This category consists of 13 articles that discuss different types of impacts of LGBTphobia on the lives of LGBTQIAPN+ university students. The perceived impacts are minority stress, involvement with alcohol and other drugs, affiliation with some groups that are predictive of academic risk, and damage to mental health.

The academic environment appears to be a paradoxical space. On the one hand, it generates negative consequences on the physical and mental health of LGBTQIAPN+ university students, as it is a cisgender, heteroromantic and heterosexual environment in the organization of its spaces, policies and practices (Marzetti, 2018). On the other hand, the university promotes actions to value the lives of this same population (Cordeiro & Auad, 2021; Falconer & Taylor, 2017). In the case of queer religious university students,

for example, the university presents itself as a device for new, more liberating opportunities for experimentation and identity formation, in a context of greater tolerance compared to their families and home lives. However, this same academic space does not welcome students who, in addition to being queer, are also religious, thus intensifying their feelings of insecurity, exclusion, and conflict of identity (Falconer & Taylor, 2017).

Minority stress among LGBTQIAPN+ college students was found by several studies (Edwards et al., 2021; Martin-Storey et al., 2022; Marzetti, 2018; Murchison et al., 2017; Salerno et al., 2022). This type of stress increases the vulnerability of LGBTQ people in the university environment, causing them to be unable to be assertive in abusive interpersonal relationships. The environment itself, often found to be a hostile context for sexual and gender minorities, increases the stress of this public (Murchison et al., 2017).

Isolation, exclusion, low academic performance and dropping out of university are some of the consequences that impact the mental health of students who are sexual and gender minorities (Martin-Storey et al., 2022; Marzetti, 2018). Trans or non-cisnormativity college students feel anxiety about how others will see them, discomfort in revealing their trans identity and fear of retaliation directed at their gender identity and expression. Such feelings can manifest themselves in the form of exacerbated body dysphoria (Ehlinger et al., 2022). Constant self-moderation, when faced with deciding what to say about yourself or how to behave in the presence of others, can be a stressor because of your cognitive load, as well as resulting in inauthenticity, which harms your mental and physical health (Marzetti, 2018). Another observed impact is the involvement with alcohol and other drugs as a way of coping with minority stress, anxiety, and body and/or gender dysphoria. Excessive alcohol consumption interferes with daily activities and responsibilities (Ehlinger et al., 2022), and increases the likelihood of becoming a victim or perpetrator of intimate partner violence (Edwards et al., 2021).

People who identify as LGBTQIAPN+ are present in many aspects of campus life and are part of different social groups. This affiliation in LGBT peer groups positively predicts loneliness and stress, and negatively predicts academic well-being, and may therefore have negative effects on their college adjustment. Furthermore, LGBT peer group membership does not predict college belonging to a significant degree (Blankenau et al., 2022). Morse et al. (2021) identified four grouping profiles among LGBT peers, known as: protester, social, non-vocal, and athletic (Morse et al., 2021). Affiliation to the protester profile group, which is characterized by political activism, was positively predictive of academic risk due to drugs and sex. Affiliation to the social profile group, which is made up of students who participate in social life, was negatively predictive of loneliness. Affiliation to the non-vocal profile group, which is characterized by non-participation in the campus's LGBT culture, showed a positive correlation with academic risk. The article does not present results related to the athletic group, which corresponds to students engaged in sports and physical preparation, but makes reference to other research that associates it with risky behavior. What's more, research has shown that drug use among young people was predictive of greater academic disengagement and lower academic performance (Morse et al., 2021).

In the context of affirmative action black lesbian and bisexual women, where the basic conditions for survival and maintenance of life are under threat, participation in student collectives appears to be a fundamental strategy for remaining in higher education. The collective space for mutual strengthening, as well as the support of teachers from an anti-racist, non-sexist and non-LGBTphobic perspective are essential for their permanence (Cordeiro & Auad, 2021).

With regard to quality of life, LGBT students present worse results when compared to university students in general or heterosexual students specifically (Santos

et al., 2020). Directly related to the low quality of health of these students is family rejection (Santos et al., 2020). Some developments regarding the mental health of LGBTQ university students emerged in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, especially in its first year when university campuses closed and students needed to return to their homes and attend classes remotely. A significant association was observed between increased racism and family rejection and greater probability of identity concealment, which negatively impacts the mental health of these students (Salerno et al., 2022). Gonzales et al. (2020), when analyzing the experience of 477 LGBT university students from the United States and Puerto Rico during the pandemic, saw that almost half (45.7%) of the students had families that did not support or were unaware of their LGBT identity. Approximately 60% of students in the sample were experiencing psychological distress, anxiety, and depression. Compared to students with families who support their LGBT status, students with families who do not accept them were more likely to experience frequent mental distress (Gonzales et al., 2020).

Another significant section deals with the university experience of trans people. The university is considered a heteronormative and transphobic space that enhances feelings of insecurity and non-belonging, thus making the permanence of trans people in the university vulnerable. In the university environment, trans students point out difficulties in self-affirmation and coexistence, situations of veiled violence, and the use of the bathroom as a situation that generates stress, insecurity and fear. However, the institutionalization of the use of social names is symbolized as an opportunity to exercise citizenship. Once again, support from peers and the institution is essential for facing difficulties (Viana et al., 2022). Finally, there are LGBTQIAPN+ groups led by students that often provide the support, welcoming, security and solidarity necessary for other sexual and gender minorities present at the university. However, this is a difficult and

highly responsible task, which can lead students who undertake it to stress and exhaustion (Marzetti, 2018).

LGBTphobia and Intersections

In the third category, there are six articles that point to some type of intersectionality related to experiences of LGBTphobia in higher education. Sexism, ableism, racism, classism, and fatphobia are experiences that appear to converge with LGBTphobia and create different forms of oppression according to each intersection.

Marginalized social identities, such as identities that break with cisheteronormativity, and processes of oppression, such as racism and family rejection, are interconnected, producing social and health inequalities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Salerno et al. (2022) revealed that family rejection interacts with racism, significantly increasing the chances of identity concealment among university students who are sexual and/or gender minorities, which, in turn, negatively impacts their mental health.

In the field of sexual violence suffered by people outside cisheteronormativity, trans and black people were also more likely to become victims (Coulter et al., 2017). In addition to the commitment to addressing sexual violence, campuses need to be aware that violence is demarcated by intersectional factors, as well as being actively engaged in actions that combat systemic problems such as racism and heterosexism (McMahon, Burnham & Banyard, 2020).

In the context of transgenderism, intersectionalities with gender and race can be found. Ehlinger et al. (2022), in a study with participants characterized by different identities and degrees of power in society, identified that the experience of discrimination varied based on the dynamic interweaving of these identities. The results showed that

trans women experience greater discrimination and social stigma than trans men, with oppression being increased if they are also people with minority racial identities.

In addition to gender and race, other social markers appear to compound the complexity of the phenomenon of LGBTphobia among university students. Marzetti (2018) explored the experiences of LGBTQIAPN+ students at a Scottish university and identified that the simultaneous experience of sexism, ableism and racism aggravates queerphobia. Intersectionality was felt by research participants as multiple marginalizations. Cordeiro and Auad (2021) observe that LGBTphobia, racism, sexism, classism and fatphobia converge and mark the arena of power relations at the university, demarcating the university as a "social non-place", or as a place that it is not appropriate for lesbians and bisexual women (Cordeiro & Auad, 2021).

Strategies for confronting and combating LGBTphobia at an individual and institutional level

Composing this last category are 10 articles that discuss individual and institutional strategies that aim to confront and combat LGBTphobia in the university context. Emphasis is given to the role of the educational institution. Existing actions and others to be developed by the university itself are highlighted. Research identifies the institution's responsibility both in perpetuating violent and exclusionary practices and in disrupting and transforming this reality.

One of the strategies for preventing violence, oppression and harm in the academic environment is through bystander intervention programs. McMahon et al. (2020), in a study that aimed to analyze this strategy, with 101 racialized students and/or belonging to the LGBTQ spectrum, found the need to expand the focus of spectators, employing a lens of intersectional social justice. Research participants identified various forms of racism, homophobia, transphobia and microaggressions, in addition to sexual violence on

campuses. For the program to be effective, the study highlighted measures that must be undertaken by the educational institution, such as: institutional guarantee in promoting respect and safety; institutional respect for different identities; inclusion of teachers, staff, and administrators in the intervention program; development of interventions with perpetrators of violence or oppression; changing institutional norms; and investment in building trusting relationships with students who are minoritized by race, sexuality or gender identity, so that they believe in and accept institutional support (McMahon et al., 2020).

The university should be concerned about the stress of the negative impact of queerphobia and cisheteronormativity on the mental health of LGBTQIAPN+ students, affecting their academic performance and permanence (Marzetti, 2018). Therefore, strategies to combat LGBTphobia must be institutionalized so that the university does not allow prejudice and guarantees access and permanence for these students (Santos et al., 2020). In this sense, institutions must create safe, inclusive, diverse and welcoming environments (McMahon et al., 2020), through institutional measures that contribute to the quality of the university environment for LGBTQIAPN+ students. These measures include: the development of training for employees so they can combat queerphobic situations; providing personalized support for queer students; and the celebration of the campus queer community with pride and proactivity (Marzetti, 2018). Another intervention refers to having trans people and people of color leading assistance programs for LGBTQIAPN+ students (Ehlinger et al., 2022). More specifically, to guarantee the permanence of trans students and transform the university into a safe and welcoming place, it is necessary to create specific inclusion policies with concrete actions to combat transphobia and promote the well-being of these people, which involve the entire academic community (Viana et al., 2022).

When receiving students who have suffered sexual violence, higher education institutions must include staff training on sexuality, gender and race/ethnicity (Coulter et al., 2017). In efforts to prevent intimate partner violence among LGBTQIAPN+ university students, personalized prevention programs that address experiences proximal to minority stress are necessary, since programs aimed at cishetero people do not generate impacts on this population. The creation of an inclusive and safe campus for LGBTQIAPN+ students and the institutionalization of policies that reduce structural sexual stigma are also preventive practices (Edwards et al., 2021).

Cordeiro and Auad (2021) realized that, faced with the violence and exclusion felt in the university experience, lesbian and bisexual women look for positive actions and different support networks, and find in student groups possibilities for creating affective relationships that enhance life. Student collectives are spaces for militancy and political struggle, which enable the understanding that students are not alone and that they have somewhere to turn to in the search for help and protection. For the permanence and good academic performance of these women, it is necessary that the institution commits to some steps, namely: expansion of permanence scholarships; offers of a university restaurant and student housing; training of teachers from an anti-racist, non-sexist and non-LGBTphobic perspective; and advancement in the process of democratization of higher education (Cordeiro & Auad, 2021).

Efforts to deal with discrimination, prejudice and transphobia also take place at the individual level. In this sense, they contribute to individual resilience, and include: social support from friends, family and other communities; sharing experiences, with understanding and affirmation, among other sexual and gender minorities; meditation and therapy practices; and interventions tailored to meet their individual needs, for example, corresponding with ethnicity and/or gender identity in the client-therapist relationship

(Ehlinger et al., 2022). The individual response to homophobia can also be detected through the analysis of life projects of homosexual people. Silva (2020) identified that the life projects of homosexual people are based on the constant struggle for the affirmation of identity, for visibility, and against attitudes that try to take away the rights of the LGBT population.

Only the study by White, Magrath & Thomas (2018) presented data that showed that the university had already moved towards an inclusive culture among LGB students. Over the last two decades, homophobia has declined significantly in British culture, with teenagers being the protagonists of more positive attitudes towards sexual diversity. In this context, lesbian, gay and bisexual students, mostly white, at Newcombe College reveal that the institution has an inclusive culture, LGB visibility, absence of homophobia, and care with language so that it is not used in an offensive way (White et al., 2018)

Discussion

Almost all studies reported the gender identity and/or sexual orientation of the people participating in the research. In total, nine gender identities and 19 sexual orientations were found and named. This visibility is an important act of resistance and social tension in the field of research. Added to this are the different acronyms (LGBTQ, LGBT, LGB, LB women) that appeared in the articles according to the target audience of each investigation. Although the acronym LGBTQIAPN+ brings together groups that break with cisheteronormativity, each group presents different experiences and specificities. Therefore, it makes sense for each study to demarcate who they are talking about, so as to also open up possibilities for appropriate interventions for each group present or absent in higher education.

LGBTQIAPN+ students in higher education face various forms of violence, contributing to exacerbated social vulnerability and significant impacts on mental health.

The analysis of these experiences identified sexual violence, discrimination and intimate partner violence, as well as the outcomes observed in the face of these adversities.

When examining experiences of sexual violence, the results indicate a significant presence of this form of aggression among LGBTQIAPN+ students. In addition to being associated with homophobic and transphobic discrimination, sexual violence is directly related to the internalization of minority stress, making students more vulnerable to unwanted experiences (Murchison et al., 2017).

Discrimination manifests in hostile ways, including physical and verbal attacks, as well as constant regulation and invalidation of LGBTQIAPN+ identities (Ehlinger et al., 2022; Marzetti, 2018). These experiences lead to non-voluntary dropping out, which, in turn, results in a significantly low presence of LGBTQIAPN+ people in higher education (Martin-Storey et al., 2022).

Another category analyzed deals with the impacts of LGBTphobia on the lives of LGBTQIAPN+ university students, these include minority stress, involvement with alcohol and other drugs, affiliation with some groups that are predictive of academic risk, and damage to mental health. LGBTphobia in the academic environment generates minority stress that impacts mental health, increasing the incidence of mental disorders in these students (Russell & Fish, 2016). Coping strategies, such as excessive use of alcohol and drugs, are adopted to deal with stress, amplifying the risks to physical and mental health (Ehlinger et al., 2022).

Affiliation with LGBTQIAPN+ academic communities has not been universally beneficial, and can often result in higher rates of loneliness and stress (Blankenau et al., 2022). However, student collectives enable the creation of healthy emotional relationships (Cordeiro and Auad, 2021) and provide the necessary reception and security for sexual and gender minorities present at the university (Marzetti, 2018). This highlights

the complexity of social dynamics within these groups and the need for more comprehensive support strategies.

Furthermore, other forms of oppression such as racism, sexism, ableism, classism and fatphobia intersect with LGBTphobia and complicate the university experience for the LGBTQIAPN+ population, producing multiple marginalizations and social and health inequalities. This category showed that higher education institutions need to be aware of the intersectional factors that permeate the experience of LGBTQIAPN+ students and that combating LGBTphobia requires measures that also combat systemic problems such as racism and heterosexism (McMahon et al., 2020).

However, in addition to violence, discrimination and increased vulnerability due to intersectionalities, there are also suggestions for strategies for combating and coping with LGBTphobia at universities, to be implemented by educational institutions, which constituted the last category analyzed. These include: institutional respect for different identities; development of interventions with perpetrators of violence; investment in building trusting relationships with students who are minoritized by race, sexuality or gender identity, so that they believe in and accept institutional support (McMahon et al., 2020); training employees to combat queerphobic situations; providing personalized support for queer students; celebration of queer pride (Marzetti, 2018); promotion of assistance programs for LGBTQIAPN+ students with trans and people of color as a focus (Ehlinger et al., 2022); creation of specific inclusion policies, with concrete actions to combat transphobia and promote the well-being of these people (Viana et al., 2022); staff training on sexuality, gender, and race/ethnicity (Coulter et al., 2017); developing personalized programs that prevent intimate partner violence and that address experiences proximal to minority stress (Edwards et al., 2021); expansion of scholarships that encourage permanence, with provision of a university restaurant and student housing;

anti-racist, non-sexist and non-LGBTphobic training for teachers; advancement in the process of democratization of higher education (Cordeiro & Auad, 2021); and finally institutionalization of policies that reduce structural sexual stigma (Edwards et al., 2021). In countries that are more advanced on this issue, robust institutional policies have already proven effective in promoting a safer and more welcoming academic environment for LGBTQIAPN+ students (White et al., 2018).

Final Considerations

The conclusions of this review highlight the complexity of experiences faced by LGBTQIAPN+ in higher education, emphasizing the prevalence of violence, discrimination and the direct impacts on the mental health of these individuals. The intersectionalities between LGBTphobia, racism, sexism, ableism and fatphobia highlight the need for complex approaches to promote inclusion and equity in the university environment. On the other hand, the leading role of LGBTQIAPN+ people in the formulation of strategies and resistance against LGBTphobia in higher education and the effective possibility of confronting LGBTphobia in educational institutions deserve to be highlighted in the research findings. The guidelines presented in the studies refer to the promotion of institutional respect for different identities, specific interventions with perpetrators of violence, investment in building trusting relationships, comprehensive staff training, and the development of prevention and personalized support programs. It is argued that the implementation of these measures can significantly contribute to the construction of safer, more inclusive academic environments which are favorable to the well-being of LGBTQIAPN+ people, and which represents a fundamental step in combating LGBTphobia in higher education

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