Chapter 9

From Forms of Violence to the Specificities of the Impact on LGBTI+ Victims

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ABSTRACT

LGBTI+ people are victims of different forms of violence all over the world, from situations of hate, discrimination, LGBTI+ phobic bullying, domestic violence, and even violence within intimate relationships. A large part of this violence sends a message to the community: a message of intolerance and non-acceptance. These are acts that undermine the dignity and identity of the victims. This chapter therefore aims to specify these forms of violence, outlining and understanding the differential impact that violence has on LGBTI+ victims. At the same time, it seeks to list some measures that can contribute to combating or reducing the occurrence of this violence.

INTRODUCTION

Despite all progress in increasing recognition and fulfilment of the rights of LGBTI+ people, this community remains at high risk of becoming victim of violence due to sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression. The LGBTI+ population is especially vulnerable to different forms of violence, from acts of discrimination, to hate speech, to bullying and cyberbullying. Even within their dating relationships, abusive dynamics can take on particularly difficult contours, with truly harmful consequences for the victims.

In the public and private spheres, at social, family, work, educational and legal levels, among others, asymmetries persist, which serves to reinforce that the formal and legal rights already achieved do not mean, nor guarantee, in themselves, its effective execution (Sousa et al., 2023).

This chapter aims to address the specificities of violence directed at LGBTI+ people and how the impact of victimization can be particularly devastating for victims. On the other hand, it is also intended to highlight how important raising awareness on this topic can be, especially to promote the demystification of stereotypes, beliefs and social and cultural values that promote and legitimize precisely some acts of violence. Information, knowledge and even in a more structured way, prevention, can be key tools for reducing these acts. The family and the educational community are essential figures, especially for children and young people, but the whole of society must assume a central role in combating this violence. Regardless of whether we know or are close to LGBTI+ people, it is everyone's duty to contribute to ensuring that their rights are shared by all. It is everyone's duty to foster a more balanced and egalitarian society, which is respectful and welcoming of difference as natural and positive.

1. SPECIFICITIES OF THE LGBTI+ COMMUNITY

Gender norms are socially constructed, learned, and transmitted, varying culturally and historically. These norms are unwritten rules about acceptable and ideal forms of conduct and behaviour and will influence the attitudes of individuals in their family and intimate relationships (Carman et al., 2021). Furthermore, these norms influence the way society sees and acts towards the LGBTI+ community, feeling legitimized to exclude and marginalize anyone who is part of this population.

Gender and gender inequality are constructed based on the assumption that "real" men and women are necessarily heterosexual. Thus, LGB, trans and gender diverse people challenge the assumptions that support a binary and heterogeneous system of the model of the relationship between sex, gender, and sexuality. At the same time, they can threaten to expose patriarchy and the heterosexist foundations that sustain situations of violence. Also, gender norms are reinforced by the idea that the only "normal" and "natural" bodies/sexes and gender identities are "male" and "female". Binary gender norms are, therefore, associated with the cisnormativity that drives violence against trans and gender diverse people, and in some cases, motivates medical interventions aimed at "normalizing" intersex bodies (Carman et al., 2021).

Due to the existence of a highly heterosexist and cisnormative society, a large proportion of LGBTI+ people live within a triad of invisibility, isolation and social insult, with each vertex feeding the other. The social insult emerges within

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