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Review Paper

Gender - Based Violence and Harassment against Men and LGBTQ+ Community: A Scoping Review

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ABSTRACT

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines violence as the purposeful use of physical force or any power, against oneself, or against a group or an individual which is more likely to result in injury, death psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation. Research gap: Most of the research has mentioned women in the role of victims, however studies on men or LGBTQ+ facing violence or harassment are limited and the root cause for such incidents remain undermined. Thus, the study reviews and systematically charts the existing literature to understand the impact of gender-based violence and harassment and depicts the underlying methodological gap. The PRISMA - SCR guidelines and framework by Arksey & O'Malley's were followed. Primary and secondary data has been sourced and extracted from data bases including, ScienceDirect, Google scholar and PubMed. Research articles outside search codes, non - English, published from 2022 onwards, non - peer - reviewed, editorials, white papers and web-posts have been excluded from the review. The collected data was analysed using Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Findings reveal that men and LGBTQ+ communities face all forms of violence and harassment and also it has an impact on their overall well-being. The study calls for gender-inclusive laws, improved institutional accountability, and culturally responsive psychological support mechanisms to ensure justice and protection for all survivors.

Keywords: *Gender based violence, Harassment, Men, LGBTQ, Scoping Review*

Gender-based violence and harassment refers to the harmful acts towards the individuals or groups because of their gender identity, perceived sex, or gender expression. It represents a serious violation of human rights, deeply rooted in rigid social norms, unequal power relations, and persistent gender inequality. Harassment, as a specific form of gender-based violence, includes unwanted behaviours such as verbal abuse, bullying, sexual advances, stalking and intimidation. This issue has become a major global concern, as recent studies indicate a rise in various forms of violence across different genders and cultural contexts worldwide. Gender-based violence can take place in multiple ways, including physical, sexual, psychological, etc. In particular, there has been a

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noticeable growth in online harassment, intimidation and threats. Numerous examples show us that women are particularly vulnerable to fall victim of online harassment (Bartlett, Norrie, Patel, Rumpel, & Wibberley, 2014; Jane, 2014a). Also, many women were targeted by online harassment and the experience with gendered cyber hate is no longer limited to women who are visible in the public sphere (Jane 2017). Yet, a frequently overlooked reality is that men and LGBTQ+ communities also experience significant forms of violence and harassment, which remains insufficiently researched. It has been found that transgender individuals had experienced higher rates of digital harassment and abuse overall compared to heterosexual cisgender individuals (A Powell, AJ Scott, N Henry). Therefore, there is a need to examine gender-based violence and harassment affecting men and LGBTQ+ individuals, along with the coping strategies they adopt to navigate and overcome such experiences. It is also essential to review the existing coping strategies and interventions that they have been following. Although sexual harassment is often highlighted it is not only limited to women. Therefore, it is crucial to comprehend this specific gender-based violence and harassment including the men and LGBTQ+ population apart from women. Hence, this scoping review is expected to highlight the gender-based violence and harassment towards men and LGBTQ+ communities across cultures worldwide based on the outline of existing literature's scope.

METHOD

Study design

This scoping review used a framework for scoping reviews and the scoping review reporting framework (PRISMA-ScR). Arksey and O'Malley's five-phase approach included the following steps: (1) defining the research question, (2) locating relevant publications, (3) study selection, (4) charting the data, and (5) compiling, summarizing, and publishing the results.

Defining the research question

Our systematic search strategy and reporting of results were guided by the following overarching research question: What does existing literature reveal about gender-based violence and gender-based harassment against men and LGBTQ+ communities?

Key definitions

- **Gender based violence**: Gender-based violence (GBV) is a type of violence that is directed against a person on the basis of gender. It comprises breach of the fundamental right to life, liberty, security, dignity and equality between women and men. (Council of Europe, 2012)
- **Gender based harassment**: Harassment of a person on the basis of the person's sex or gender, with the intention of offending, humiliating the person or in circumstances where a reasonable person would have anticipated the person would be offended, humiliated or intimidated by the conduct (WorkSafe Queensland, 2024).

Data sources

The initial search was carried out in February - March 2026 across the following electronic databases: ScienceDirect, Google scholar and PubMed. The eligibility criteria included studies published in English from 2022 onwards, analyzing gender-based violence gender-based harassment. Due to lack of translation sources, only English-language publications were included.

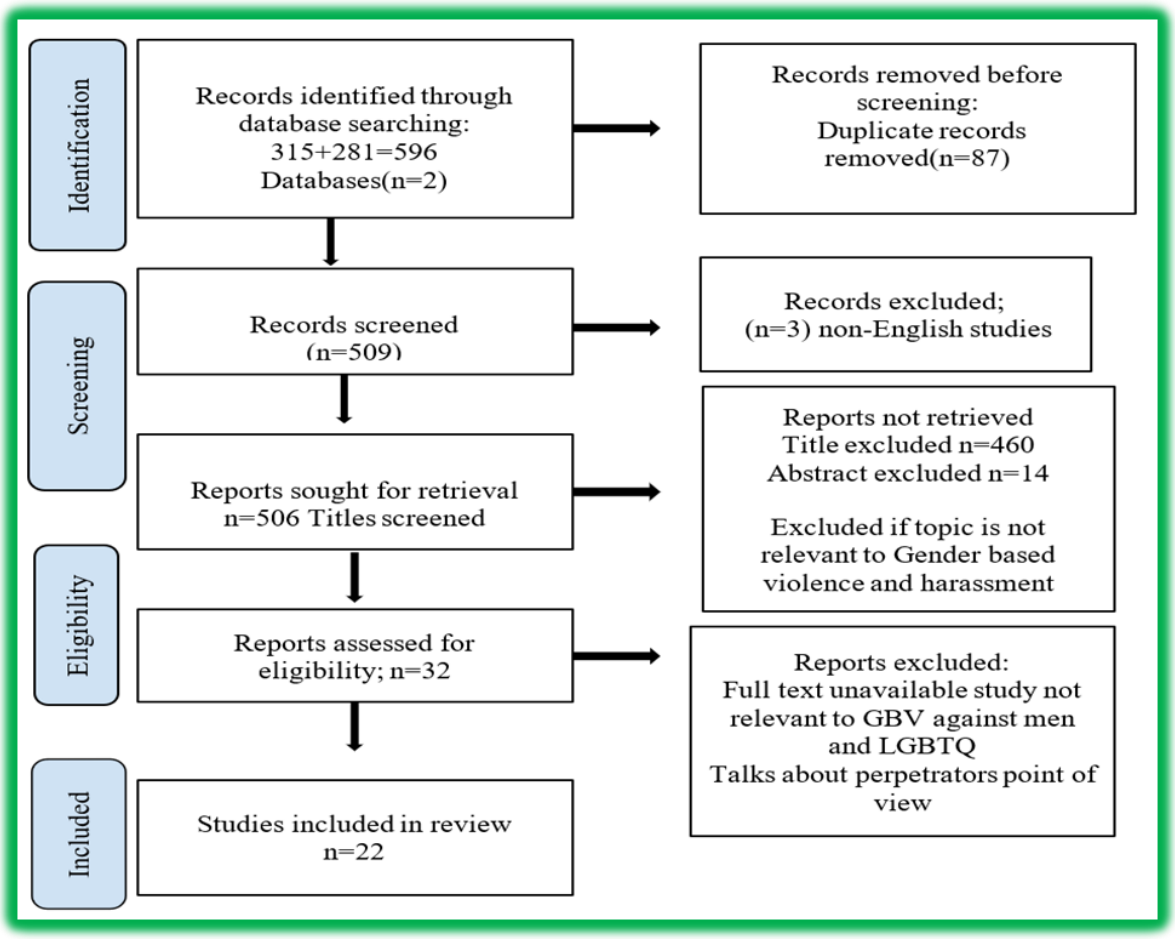
Search strategy

The search was conducted by using the above databases using the following keywords and combinations: ((“gender-based violence”) OR (“gender-based harassment”)) AND (“men”) OR (“LGBTQ+) in accordance with the syntax guidelines of the respective databases. Finally, publications were to report on research completed globally between 2022 and 2026 to ensure that the literature was current, as gender-based violence and harassment are growing exponentially, especially in the post-covid era. Grey literature was searched via Google.

Eligibility criteria

The articles were selected based on the criteria that they present research on gender-based violence and gender-based harassment with one of the study’s components addressing men and LGBTQ+ communities. Studies focusing on men and LGBTQ+ individuals’ experiences of gender-based violence or harassment were included, whereas violence against women were excluded. The first level review looked at titles, the second at abstracts, and the third at full-text articles. The research can focus on the general population without additional complexity. There was no geographical restriction since region-specific studies were fewer. As scoping reviews involve less specific research questions, the attempt was made to provide a broad description of the available literature, encompassing diverse study designs and refraining from excluding studies based on quality appraisal. Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method studies were included to allow the comprehensive evaluation of evidence. The PRISMA-ScR flow chart is presented in Fig. 1.

Figure 1 PRISMA-ScR Flow Chart



Data charting and analysis

Evidence screening was conducted independently by three reviewers. In the case of disagreements, the three reviewers reached a consensus through discussion. Information was extracted based on the following study characteristics: study author(s), country, year, study aim(s), study design, population characteristics, results relevant to the current study (Table 1). Findings were organized using thematic analysis by identifying and organizing recurring patterns, concepts, or themes across diverse studies (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This approach facilitates a structured data synthesis, making it easier to understand key trends and gaps in the literature.

RESULTS

The results section is organized to first provide an overview of the characteristics of the included studies, followed by a presentation of the six identified themes: gender-based violence against men, gender-based violence against LGBTQ+, gender-based harassment among men, gender-based harassment LGBTQ+, other kinds of violence among LGBTQ+, Impacts GBV and GBH on men and LGBTQ+.

Characteristics of the included sources

In total, 22 papers published between 2023 and 2026 were included in the review (Fig. 1). The studies were conducted across the globe undertaken in the USA (n=5), India (n=1), South Africa (n=3), Australia (n=2), Ireland (n=1), Sri Lanka (n=1), Portuguese (n=1), Brazil (n=5), Singapore (n=1), Southeast Asia (n=1), two quantitative studies, fifteen qualitative studies and five mixed-method studies were included in the review. Studies included individuals ranging from children to older adults.

Studies and their primary focus

A majority of the studies focussed on gender-based violence with regard to men. Some studies explored the forms of gender-based violence and harassment and also the mental, physical and other impacts on health. Apart from men and LGBTQ+ three studies also took into account violence and harassment towards women. Two studies focused on institutional and interpersonal violence other than gender-based violence and harassment.

Table 1 Data Charting

Study authors, Year and Country	**Aim**	**Study design**	**Participants characteristics**	**Participants age**	**Main Findings**
Sashini Jayaratne, Kumudu Wijewardena (2025) Colombo, Sri Lanka	Explore cause, social & health effects and help seeking behaviour of GBV victims	Qualitative Study	15Male victims of GBV	18 - 60 years	Patriarchal norms expect men to prove masculinity through toughness and provision, while abuse against them is often ignored. Men seen as effeminate face stigma, showing traditional gender roles still persist.

Study authors, Year and Country	Aim	Study design	Participants characteristics	Participants age	Main Findings
Caroline Stein, Luisa S Flor, et al (2025) USA	Evaluate association between 3 sub types of GBV and 8 health outcomes	Systematic review	Victims of GBV- men and women	Type not mentioned	Gender-based violence is linked to a range of serious health harms. Evidence for sexual, physical and psychological violence is less strong, highlighting significant gaps in research.
Denis Gonçalves Ferreira, et al (2023) Brazil	Factors of sexual violence, phenomena of SV against men and boys and its impacts. Analyzing perception of health	Scoping Review	Brazilian Boys and men who are victims of sexual violence	0 - 18 years and above	Sexual violence against men and boys is widely underreported due to cultural stigma and difficulty identifying as victims. Prevalence is higher among MSM, drug users, and those with sexual dysfunction, and men often face SV earlier than women.
Jagbir Singh Malik & Anuradha Nadda (2023) Haryana, India.	To find prevalence, characteristic and socio demographic correlates of GBV against men.	Cross-sectional Study	Married men	21 - 49 Years	People with middle-level education in nuclear families faced higher violence risk, possibly due to weaker support systems than joint families. An earning, graduate-educated spouse was linked to more bidirectional violence, reflecting shifts in household

Study authors, Year and Country	Aim	Study design	Participants characteristics	Participants age	Main Findings
					power dynamics.
Monica Malta et al (2023) Brazil	Develop and evaluate a mobile health intervention Addressing discrimination and violence against / (LGBTQ) persons from Brazil	Qualitative Study	11SGM community people	Type not mentioned	People with middle-level education in nuclear families faced higher violence risk, possibly due to weaker support systems than joint families. An earning, graduate-educated spouse was linked to more bidirectional violence, reflecting shifts in household power dynamics.
Carmo E et al (2025) Portuguese	The aim was to understand how judges perceived and regarded the prevalence of the gendered dynamics between the victim and the offender in a SVWM case, and its legal implication, and how they regarded the Justice System's response.	Qualitative Study	Judges 3 men and 5 women	45 - 60 Years	The study explains its findings through four themes: the victimized man, the woman offender, gender, and the justice system. It highlights the need for legal responses that recognize men as victims and women as offenders despite social stereotypes.
Denhard L et al (2024) Africa	The aim was studying predictors of service-seeking	Qualitative Study	Men victims of physical/sexual violence	18 - 24 Years	Childhood experiences influence the likelihood of seeking post-

Study authors, Year and Country	Aim	Study design	Participants characteristics	Participants age	Main Findings
	behavior among males who experienced GBV in childhood or early adulthood, with a focus on the presence of adverse and positive childhood experiences.				violence services. Most male victims also report multiple adverse childhood experiences, highlighting the need for trauma-informed support.
Marchant Van Der Schyff (2025) South Africa	The aim was to highlight the portrayal of the victimology of gay men and the societal dynamics, including gender-based violence, abduction, victimisation and queercide, in the South African context	Qualitative study and Systemic Review	Gay men	22 - 43 Years	Victims were lured through dating apps and faced severe violence, with technology used for blackmail and extortion. Stigma, fear of exposure, and poor police response led to underreporting among gay men.
Maria Amelia de Sousa Mascena Veras et al (2024) San Francisco, USA	To examine the association of GBV on retention in HIV care and viral suppression among Brazilian transgender	Pilot Trial	Trans Amigas enrolled São Paulo-based transgender women who were either newly	18 years and above	This study shows that lifetime sexual violence reduces retention in HIV care and viral suppression among TWH.

Study authors, Year and Country	Aim	Study design	Participants characteristics	Participants age	Main Findings
	women living with HIV in São Paulo.		HIV-diagnosed (within 12 months) entering CRT care, or existing CRT patients improving retention.		
Cortney Mc Lellan et al (2026) North Carolina. USA	To estimate the prevalence of overall, physical, sexual, and psychological violence against transgender and gender-diverse adults globally.	Systematic Reviews	Transgender	18 years and above	A meta-analysis of 94 studies (65,608 participants) found a global prevalence of 64% for lifetime violence and 60% for recent violence against transgender and gender-diverse people. Lifetime prevalence was 36% for physical violence and 33% for sexual violence.
Storholm ED et al (2024) United States	To identify groups of transgender women and travestis (TGW) with specific patterns of gender - based discrimination (GBD) and analyze the factors associated with GBD.	Cross-sectional Study	Participants were recruited using respondent-driven sampling (RDS) in each of the five cities.	Up to 24 years and 35 years	Homeless transgender women were more likely to fall into the high gender-based discrimination group. This may be due to greater exposure to cis-heteronormative environments, weak social support, and higher risk of public harassment.

Study authors, Year and Country	Aim	Study design	Participants characteristics	Participants age	Main Findings
Laio Magno et al (2024) Brazil	To identify different groups of transgender women and travestis based on their experiences of gender - based discrimination, and to examine the factors linked to these experiences.	Cross-sectional Study	This study includes transgender women and travestis from 5 Brazilian cities.	18 years and above	The study of 906 participants found gender-based discrimination among transgender women at low (41.7%), medium (44.5%), and high (13.8%) levels. Discrimination was common in daily life and higher among younger, homeless individuals, those without legal name change, and those with violence experiences.
Gilberto da Cruz Leal et al (2024) Brazil	The aim of this study is to analyze and examine research evidence on the institutional violence faced by transgender individuals in health services, based on their personal experiences and narratives.	Systematic review of qualitative studies	Transgender individuals who reported experiences of violence or discrimination in healthcare settings across different countries.	18 years and above	Transgender individuals often face denial of care, stigma, and disrespect in healthcare settings. These barriers create hostile environments that discourage them from seeking medical care.
Marino Neto KRE et al (2024) Brazil	The aim of this research is to examine the Interpersonal violence against	Repeat panel study	Cisgender and Transgender women	20 - 59 Years	Younger and Black transgender women faced higher violence, mainly physical, followed by psychological and

Study authors, Year and Country	Aim	Study design	Participants characteristics	Participants age	Main Findings
	transgender and cisgender women in Brazilian municipalities				sexual forms. Violence often occurred in public spaces due to transphobia and social vulnerability.
Idia Enogieru et al (2024) USA	To estimate the lifetime prevalence of workplace harassment, physical violence or sexual assault perpetrated because of the worker's gender identity, and to identify correlates of such workplace violence.	Cross-sectional Study	transmasculine, transfeminine, non-binary assigned female at birth (AFAB) and non-binary assigned male at birth (AMAB)	25 to 34 Years	Harassment was highest among individuals with low education, those involved in the street economy, and those currently unemployed. Transfeminine and non-binary AMAB workers of colour faced higher violence than transmasculine or non-binary AFAB workers.
Natalie Amos et al (2023) Australia	The study aimed to address the limited research on LGBTQ experiences of intimate partner violence (IPV) and family violence (FOV) in Australia by examining various sociodemographic and	Cross-sectional Study	LGBTQ+ community	18 years and above	Participants were more likely to have experienced FOV if they had ever experienced suicidal ideation. Participants who had ever experienced homelessness were almost 3 times more likely to have experienced IPV. Participants were more likely to have experienced IPV if they had ever experienced suicidal ideation.

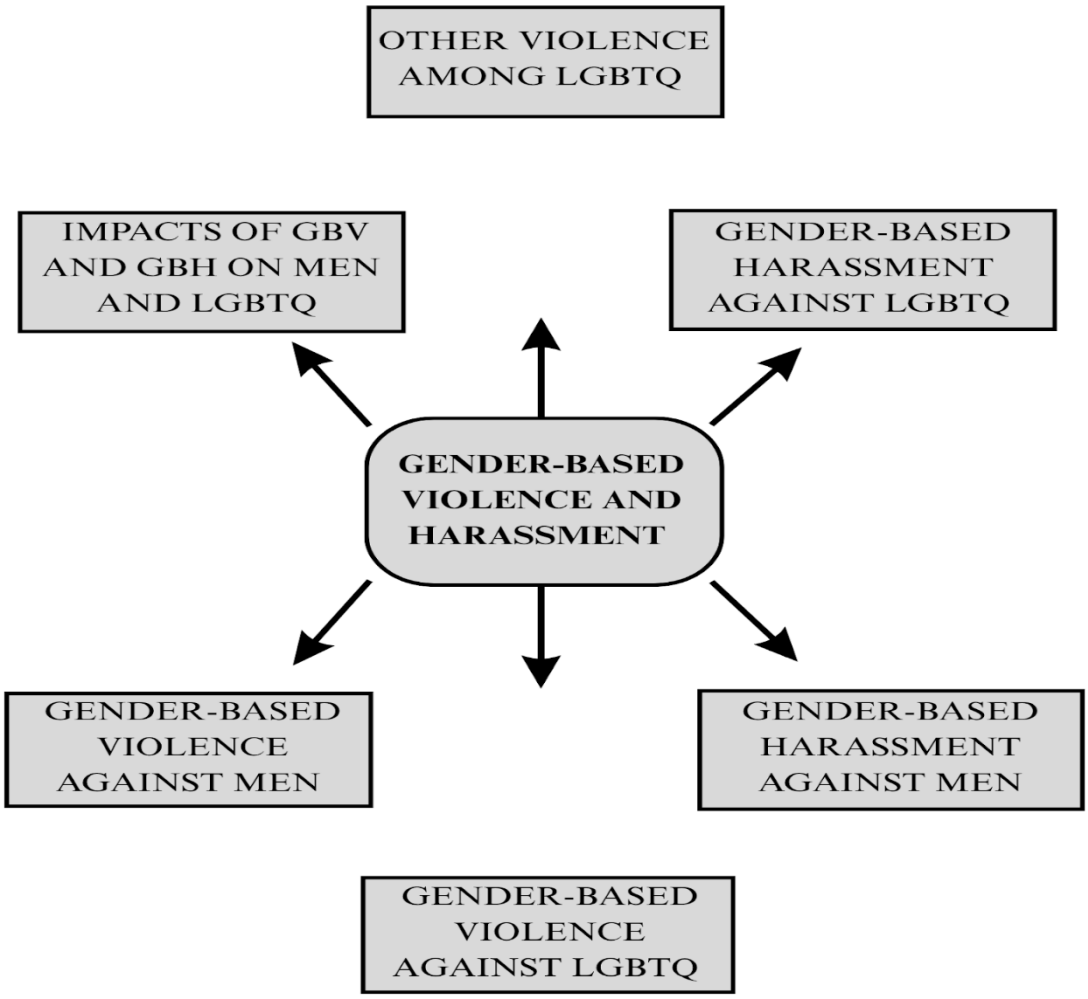
Study authors, Year and Country	Aim	Study design	Participants characteristics	Participants age	Main Findings
	wellbeing factors linked to these experiences among a large sample of LGBTQ adults.				
Amos et al (2024) Australia	The study explores LGBTQ adults residing in Australia. It focuses on comparison between preferences for mainstream family violence services, mainstream LGBTQ inclusive services, and LGBTIQ-specific services. It also aims to detail the subsections of the LGBTQ community.	Cross-sectional Study	The participants were LGBTQ adults from different parts of Australia, who include people with a variety of gender identities such as cisgender, transgender, and non-binary, as well as different sexual orientations like gay or lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, queer, asexual, and others.	18 to 88 Years old	Most participants (57.5%) preferred inclusive mainstream family violence services, while 33.8% preferred LGBTQ-specific services. Transgender and non-binary participants were more likely to choose LGBTQ-specific support, especially after prior discrimination.
Bansal et al (2023)	The aim of this research	Literature review	Male and Female	Type not	Findings from South and

Study authors, Year and Country	Aim	Study design	Participants characteristics	Participants age	Main Findings
South and Southeast Asia	is to examine and summarize technology - facilitated gender - based violence (GBV) in low- and middle - income countries in Asia.		victims and perpetrators of GBV	mentioned	Southeast Asia show that technology-facilitated gender-based violence (GBV) is widespread and strongly gendered. It includes forms of abuse such as cyberbullying, sexual harassment, image-based abuse, threatening messages, and gender-trolling. Women, youth, LGBTQIA+ individuals, ethnic and religious minorities, and people in the public eye are more likely to experience these forms of online violence.
Sinbad Kelleheret al (2025) Ireland	The aim of this study is to review and evaluate the existing tools used to measure intimate partner violence (IPV) among LGBTQ+ populations, and to examine how reliable and accurate these tools are	Systematic review	The review included studies that focused on LGBTQ+ individuals, like people who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, non-	18 years and above	The review of 42 articles identified 22 tools used to measure IPV among LGBTQ+ populations. While many showed good internal consistency, limited evidence exists for their overall validity and reliability.

Study authors, Year and Country	Aim	Study design	Participants characteristics	Participants age	Main Findings
			binary, and other sexual and gender minority groups. Some studies also focused on specific groups within the community, such as men who have sex with men (MSM) or transgender individuals.		
Adriana Argento et al (2024) Italy	The study aimed to answer: What insights can be drawn from indexed publications on violence perpetrated by women against men?; Do male victims seek assistance by reaching out to specialized professionals available in the area?;	Literature review	Male victims of Violence	19 to 44 Years	Violence impacts men's workplaces by lowering productivity, affecting safety, and creating fear of judgment. Male victims often face disbelief and limited services, so many rely on informal support instead of seeking help.

Study authors, Year and Country	Aim	Study design	Participants characteristics	Participants age	Main Findings
	What are the repercussions within the workplace context?				
Deborah Ngobeni et al (2025) South Africa	The paper sought to understand the challenges both mentally and physically of gender-based violence against men.	Exploratory research	victims of GBV	18 to 44 Years old	The study found out that the male victims have mental health impacts, physical effects after GBV. Also it was found that men are open and don't seek because of the societal and cultural stigmatisation.
Wen Zhi Ng et al (2024) Singapore	aims to investigate experiences of workplace discrimination and harassment among LGBTQ+ individuals in Singapore.	Exploratory cross-sectional survey	LGBTQ+ workers	18 to 85 years old	Discrimination in Singapore limits employment opportunities for LGBTQ+ individuals, especially racial minorities. Transgender people face higher workplace discrimination, including harassment and being denied or losing jobs.

Figure 2 Thematic analysis map



DISCUSSION

This scoping review consolidated literature on gender-based violence and harassment related to men and LGBTQ+ community. Earlier studies have indicated that violence and harassment are not only faced by women, so the review shifts focus to explore whether gender-based violence and harassment is also faced by men and LGBTQ+ communities. Consequently, this study emphasizes the need for a dedicated scale to measure impacts and effects on men and LGBTQ+ related to GBV and harassment.

Gender based violence against men

Violence is experienced by men when they are not in accordance with societal and cultural norms and proving their manhood by inappropriate behaviours like smoking. In most of the cases men are accused of initiating any kind of violence or harassment on women without prior investigation. They are attacked for the accusation until they are proven guilty. Legally, the laws for gender-based violence and harassment are also favouring women more than men. Other kinds of gender-based violence include: wife (women) nagging, being over possessive of their husband(men) which is considered as invasion of personal space. And all these are forms of GBV against men.

Gender based violence against LGBTQ+

Studies infer that, gender-based violence against LGBTQ+ has become common and has begun to increase serving in the early stage of violence. Violence faced by them includes beating, hitting and talking abusively of them. Transgender women who are mixed of race/ brown colour or Asian with low income are less likely to experience any violence than others. Brazil is found to have higher death rates of transgender women because of transphobia. There are three levels - low, high and medium of discrimination was found to be experienced among transwomen. Younger transwomen who did not change their name legally, coming from socially vulnerable groups are found to experience more violence than other categories Hence studies indicate that transwomen are more likely to face gender-based violence and discrimination from all over the globe.

Gender- based harassment against men

Studies have examined that men also equally face all types of harassment similar to that of women. It is also found that men are often forced by women to get physical with them, get beaten by their wives which all are considered as harassment. But since gender symmetry is not found in India especially all these have been normalised for men. But speaking logically men getting beaten by their wives is a form of gender-based harassment. Unemployment, earning a spouse with higher educational qualifications, being a nuclear family are also reasons for women to be violent towards men. In one of the studies, considering the perception of Judges towards gender-based violence and harassment of men and women, they have put forward their opinion that men too have freedom to say no when they are forced by women to get physical with them. But the probability of men saying no is comparatively less in reality.

Gender - based harassment against LGBTQ +

Study says that LGBTQ+ experience various types of harassment in various places and people. They often face harassment and abuse even before they are recruited for a job, by binary gender people. In a study it is found that the gay male is often beaten very violently for nothing. Transwomen often suffer GBH because of confinement and marginalisation. Harassment includes mocking a person's sexual orientation, offensive jokes about them, demanding remarks, unwanted sexual comments, being fired suddenly, not being hired easily despite being qualified and unfair treatment at workplace. 50% of individuals belonging to this community are more likely to experience one of these harassments at least once in their lifetime. These groups are likely to fall prey to technical based harassment such as image morphing, inappropriate texts or images.

Other kinds of violence among LGBTQ+

Study says that other types violence such as intimate partner violence and institutional violence is also discussed along with GBV against LGBTQ+. Institutional violence refers to the inappropriate behaviour or violence performed by an institution or a professional towards the minority gender groups which includes refusal to provide healthcare services for these LGBTQ+ by healthcare professionals, less opportunities for \healthcare access, poorly trained healthcare professionals for the health of these communities. Even the technology of healthcare is often binary which includes health insurance, medical reports. Whereas, interpersonal violence includes the violence that are faced by them by their partners, family or any immediate circle of social relationships. It is found that violence against cisgender women is comparatively more than faced by transgender women.

Impacts of GBV and GBH on men and LGBTQ+

The study examines and founds many mental and physical health impacts that are experienced post GBV and GBH. The mental health impacts include mental disorders, substance use disorders, anxiety disorders and often it may lead to self-harm. Sexual impacts include miscarriage, abortion, sexually transmitted diseases (SIT). Physical impacts include injury in the body and in genital regions in case of sexual harassment. There are increased chances for chronic illness, stress and trauma.

Implications

The findings of this study highlight that gender-based violence and harassment not only takes place in women but also in men and LGBTQ+ community. This suggests the need for more inclusive policies, legal frameworks and support systems to benefit the victims. Social awareness programmes and educational initiatives are necessary at school or university level. In addition to this, psychological counselling and mental health support should also be made accessible. Healthcare professionals should be trained to understand the needs of LGBTQ+ communities and provide unbiased care.

Limitations

This review is to assess gender-based violence and harassment among men and LGBTQ+ community. The studies reflect a range of countries, encompassing both Eastern and Western cultures, though not in a fully representative manner. However, several limitations should be noted. First, relevant studies may have been missed due to unclear titles, abstracts, or poor database indexing. Second, the review is limited to English-language studies, potentially excluding valuable insights from non-English research. The focus was solely on men and LGBTQ+ excluding the women population which could have enriched the findings. Moreover, the review also lacked cross-country comparisons, which could provide insights into how cultural, economic, and policy differences influence GBH and GBV on various populations. Lastly, access limitations to subscription-based databases may have restricted the comprehensiveness of the literature reviewed.

Future recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, future research should focus on empirical studies to understand the prevalence and patterns of gender-based violence and harassment against men and LGBTQ+ individuals even better, especially in developing countries and in places where the research is limited. Comparative studies across different age groups, cultures, and socio-economic backgrounds, would also help in identifying the factors that lead to the kind of violence. The studies can also examine the long term psychological, physical and social impacts on gender-based violence and harassment of these populations.

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Conflict of Interest

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