



# Gender and Family Violence Impacts in LGBTIQ Communities

Zhuomalazong

Monash University, Melbourne, Australia

760137011@qq.com

**Abstract.** The aim of this paper is to propose an enhanced policy for Monash University's HR department to address gender and family violence among LGBTIQ communities. The paper highlights the significance of recognizing power dynamics within gender frameworks and acknowledging the abuse that the LGBTIQ community faces. The objectives of the paper include evaluating the increase in gender and family violence rates within Monash University's LGBTIQ communities, providing a secure and safe space for victims of gender and family violence to express their feelings and experiences, and reviewing existing support programs to prevent sexual violence. Additionally, the paper discusses the history of the issue, including the CDC's 2010 national study, which found that the LGBTIQ community faced a higher rate of violence than heterosexual individuals. Furthermore, the paper examines critical family violence concerns, such as the adverse impact of family violence on LGBTIQ communities, including homelessness in some cases. The paper concludes by emphasizing the importance of understanding that this violence is primarily physical, sexual, and emotional in nature and recognizing the significance of empathizing with victims.

**Keywords:** LGBTIQ; domestic violence; policy; Monash University

## 1 Introduction

The existence and decisions made by individuals within the LGBTIQ community serve as a challenge to conventional understandings of sexuality and gender. Nevertheless, instances of intimate partner violence within such relationships have been overlooked, resulting in a lack of attention to this issue in governmental policies [1]. Hence, there is a pressing need to establish updated policies that can effectively address the issue of family violence within the LGBTIQ community. Monash University is dedicated to fostering a secure environment that is free from sexual or gender-based violence for both its employees and students. Therefore, it is crucial for the university's human resources department to introduce new policies that not only prioritize addressing sexual violence against women but also provide a platform for the LGBTIQ community. An innovative system is poised to function as a mechanism for registering complaints, primarily from the LGBTIQ community of the university, thus allowing

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external parties to report incidents of domestic and familial violence and receive support from the HR department, which can mitigate sexual offenses against the community. In achieving this objective, the paper must investigate the effects of family violence and gender on the LGBTIQ population. However, it is first necessary to analyze why the power dynamics of gender have hindered the recognition of the maltreatment faced by the LGBTIQ community please rephrase following the sentence in academics.

## **2 Aim and Objectives**

The central aim of this document is to offer comprehensive guidance to Monash University's Human Resources department. This guidance takes the form of a newly proposed policy crafted to effectively address instances of familial and domestic violence prevalent within the LGBTIQ communities associated with the university. To fulfill this overarching goal, a diverse range of specific objectives must be achieved through concerted efforts by both university faculty and students. Foremost, it is of utmost importance to thoroughly examine the extent to which gender-based and familial violence has permeated the LGBTIQ communities within the university's sphere. This critical analysis will facilitate collaborative endeavors between Monash University and external organizations committed to eradicating all forms of violence against LGBTIQ individuals. By joining forces with these organizations, a comprehensive policy and platform can be collectively devised to offer unwavering support to those confronting issues of gender-related and domestic violence.

In parallel, the manuscript seeks to forge a secure and nurturing environment wherein victims of gender-centric and family-oriented violence can candidly articulate their emotions and the ramifications of the maltreatment they have endured. Through interactive sessions orchestrated with the participation of students and staff members, these victims can find solace and assistance. The ultimate ambition is to instate an atmosphere where their voices are heard and validated, leading to healing and recovery.

Simultaneously, the third focal point of this paper involves an assessment of the existing measures implemented by the university to institute programs addressing sexual violence. Moreover, this endeavor encompasses the creation of an enhanced platform tailored explicitly for the LGBTIQ community. Within this dedicated space, individuals can openly share their personal encounters, thereby engendering a network of support. These collective pursuits are pivotal in advancing the university's commitment to a more inclusive and protective environment. By diligently accomplishing these objectives, the document strives to craft a haven of security and empathy for the LGBTIQ community ensconced within the folds of Monash University.

## **3 Background**

Referencing a nationwide study conducted by the Centre for Disease Control (CDC) in 2010, it was revealed that the LGBTIQ community encountered markedly higher rates of violence in contrast to their heterosexual counterparts. This comprehensive

study highlighted bisexual women as the demographic most severely affected by these distressing trends [4]. Responding to this disconcerting reality, Universities Australia initiated the Respect Now Always campaign in February 2016. The central focus of this campaign revolves around the prevention of sexual violence within the intricate fabric of university communities [9]. The campaign assumes a pivotal role in fostering institutions' proactive responses to instances of sexual violence and concurrently furnishing robust support systems for those grappling with its aftermath.

Demonstrating a parallel commitment to the cause, Monash University introduced a dedicated module as an integral facet of the Respect Now Always campaign. This particular module was designed to illuminate students about the university's resolute pursuit of an educational milieu that is secure and inclusive for all individuals [7]. Given the university's staunch endorsement and celebration of its LGBTIQ members, the onus falls squarely on the HR department to envision and institute elevated policies adept at tackling issues of domestic and gender-based violence within this community. A paramount facet of this initiative entails the establishment of an exclusive platform, engineered to facilitate sharing within the LGBTIQ community [2]. Through the candid recounting of experiences concerning domestic and familial violence, a blueprint for identification of problematic behaviors is forged, propelling students into the roles of active bystanders. This proactive approach is further substantiated by empirical data, which underscores the heightened vulnerability of lesbians and bisexual women. Disturbingly, research delineates that approximately 44% of lesbians and a staggering 61% of bisexual women have encountered physical violence or rape, surpassing the corresponding figure of 35% for heterosexual women. Likewise, Campo and Tayton's [3] findings spotlight that around 26% of gay men have suffered instances of physical abuse or rape. Intriguingly, this figure contrasts favorably with the 29% of heterosexual men undergoing analogous experiences.

Root causes of familial and gender-based violence within LGBTIQ communities are often traced back to deeply entrenched patriarchal structures, orthodox gender role paradigms, and the persisting scourge of gender inequality. To adequately address this multifaceted challenge, the university must erect a scaffold of support, enmeshing its members within a web of programs devised to heighten their consciousness regarding domestic violence aimed at the LGBTIQ community. While no all-encompassing theory of partner violence seamlessly explains the intricacies of abuse within LGBTIQ relationships, the constructs of coercive control and intimate terrorism emerge as pertinent frameworks. These frameworks underscore the critical role of power dynamics and manipulation in shaping partner violence patterns. Prior to the unfurling of enhanced policies and dedicated support mechanisms, the university's foundational step entails empathy and understanding, acknowledging that this form of violence often takes on various manifestations, spanning the realms of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

## 4 Key family violence issues

Research indicates that family violence can have harmful consequences for the LGBTIQ community, including an increased risk of homelessness. Grant et al. [5] found that nearly 48% of LGBTIQ individuals who experienced domestic violence also experienced homelessness, whereas only 9% of those whose families accepted their sexual preferences experienced the same. Similarly, data from the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey conducted by the CDC indicates that around 57.4% of bisexual women and 33.5% of lesbians have experienced physical violence or rape, resulting in negative consequences such as missing school or work and experiencing post-traumatic stress [4]. Policymakers can use this data to survey absenteeism rates at their universities, particularly among the LGBTIQ community, to better understand the reasons behind missed work or study days. By implementing a platform specifically for the LGBTIQ community, the HR department can learn about the experiences of this group and take immediate action to address sexual crimes. Monash University has already established a platform called the Monash Gender and Family Violence Prevention Centre, which seeks to prevent family violence and bring about social change [6]. The HR department can upgrade this platform for the LGBTIQ community, providing staff and students with training and education to enable them to better support victims of familial and gender-based violence. The implementation of training and education programs will raise awareness among staff and students regarding the different types of violence and their impact, allowing them to approach each case differently. Research indicates that 61% of young people have experienced verbal abuse due to their gender identity, with 80% of the abuse taking place at school and 24% occurring within their own families [3]. This data suggests that members of the LGBTIQ community are more likely to face abuse from their family members than strangers. The Monash Gender and Family Violence Prevention Centre plays a crucial role in preventing such family violence, educating individuals, and driving social change to end this violence [6]. When developing an upgraded policy, the HR department should consider the implications of the data on family violence against the LGBTIQ community, which calls for swift action to provide better support not just to individuals who conform to binary gender norms, but also to members of the LGBTIQ community to create an inclusive university environment. The Monash program addresses the drivers that underpin violence, which can be cultural, economic, or physical. Likewise, the upgraded policy should first identify the drivers that act against the LGBTIQ group within their families and then take various measures to support them remotely.

In order to understand the impact of inequality and violence on LGBTIQ communities, it is crucial to recognize the patterns of abuse, exploitation, control, and other harmful tactics. For example, in the US, the Anti-Violence Program's 2017 report on the LGBTIQ community revealed that there was one homicide of an LGBTIQ individual per week, highlighting the severe consequences of family and gender-based violence within these communities [11]. To achieve shared goals and objectives, it is necessary to gather information from contemporary Australian sources supporting the prevention of sexual violence. Our Watch, for example, works to prevent violence

against women by developing tools and resources such as "Changing the Picture," which contains clear drivers of violence and offers training and webinars to those who want to promote a ban on sexual violence against women in Australia [8]. For the HR department of Monash, this suggests that creating a platform for victims to share their stories is not enough. They must also provide training and workshops for university staff and students who wish to support the cause of reducing family and gender-based violence towards the LGBTIQ community[6]. The lack of understanding of gender by family members becomes a significant issue in cases of violence against the LGBTIQ community. Discrimination against the transgender group and the domestic violence they face from family members is primarily due to their non-conformity to gender norms [5]. Therefore, creating a safe space where victims of violence within the LGBTIQ community can share their stories and receive support from those who are educated about gender-based violence against this group is essential.

The Universities of Australia and Our Watch have collaborated to launch a program called 'Educating for Equality' that aims to prevent gender-based violence in universities. This program promotes a safe learning and working environment that challenges gender stereotypes and promotes gender equality [10]. Similarly, the policymakers of the current plan must include programs within their gender-safe platform that contain tools to help all members of the university against such crimes. By doing so, Monash can not only prevent violence against the LGBTIQ community but also challenge the culture, norms, behaviors, and mentalities that drive such violence. The Respect Now Always campaign of Universities Australia is based on work and surveys done by specific universities in Australia over the years, which has enabled the organization to develop its policies, reporting processes, and degree of supporting services. For example, it conducted national surveys in 2016 and 2021 with students to understand their experiences of violence, which helped to improve training resources for members of the university. Additionally, it published a guide to raising awareness with the help of evidence and other materials. The implication for the HR department of Monash is to partner with such a reputable organization and tailor the platform with adequate guidance to guide staff, students, and supervisors. By doing so, Monash can bring the cases of gender-based violence against the LGBTIQ community into the spotlight and receive support not only from the university but also from media organizations, which can help policymakers to report such family and gender-based violence.

## 5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper has addressed the issue of family and gender-based violence within the LGBTIQ community, as well as its impact on individuals. Due to a lack of attention to this issue in government policies and universities, updated policies that effectively address the issue are required. The paper proposes a revised policy for Monash University's Human Resources department that prioritises addressing sexual violence against women and also provides a platform for the LGBTIQ community to report and receive support for incidents of domestic and familial violence. The paper

aims to create a safer and more supportive environment for the LGBTIQ community at Monash University by evaluating the escalation of gender and familial violence within the LGBTIQ communities, creating a secure and safe environment for victims, and establishing programs to increase awareness and training. Data can be used by policymakers to survey absenteeism rates and take immediate action to provide better support to members of the LGBTIQ community, such as training and education programs that challenge cultural, economic, and physical drivers of violence. Collaborations with reputable organisations like Our Watch and Universities Australia can also assist in tailoring the platform and guiding staff, students, and supervisors in reducing family and gender-based violence against the LGBTIQ community. Finally, policymakers can take the necessary steps to prevent gender-based violence in universities and create an inclusive environment that promotes gender equality and challenges gender stereotypes by recognising patterns of abuse, exploitation, control, and other harmful tactics.

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