OPEN ACCESS

ISSN: 2835-6764

Dogou M. 2026; 5(6) 700-708
DOI: 10.71010/2835-6764/ajser-e332

Research Article

American Journal of Science Education Research

Analyzing the Role of Race, Ethnicity, Indigeneity, Gender, and Sexual Orientation in Shaping Political, Economic, and Sociocultural Interactions

By Martial Dogou*

Faculty of Political Science: University of Belgrade/Serbia
Department of English, Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny of Cocody/Abidjan; Côte d'Ivoire

***Corresponding author:** Martial Dogou, Email: dogoumaxwell@yahoo.fr; Tel: +381 616637594

Citation: Dogou M (2026) Analyzing the Role of Race, Ethnicity, Indigeneity, Gender, and Sexual Orientation in Shaping Political, Economic, and Sociocultural Interactions. American J Sci Edu Re: AJSER-332.

Received Date: 29 May, 2026; **Accepted Date:** 02 June, 2026; **Published Date:** 05 June, 2026

Abstract

This paper presents a research background to deepen our understanding of international and global dynamics by exploring the intricate intersection of race, ethnicity, indigeneity, gender, and LGBT identities through a sociological lens. From this perspective, Sociologists analyze the complexities of group relations, social interactions, and human behavior to uncover both historical and contemporary tensions. The methods employed in this study were guided by the senior author (LER), in collaboration with a multidisciplinary team of researchers specializing in LGBTQ2S+ poverty in Canada, to design a search strategy. A professional librarian reviewed and refined the strategy to ensure comprehensive coverage of relevant keywords and their combinations. Their literature search was conducted across several databases, including MedLine, PsycINFO, Sociological Abstracts, Social Science Abstracts, EconLit Search, and through a targeted Google search for relevant government reports. The results, informed by C. Wright Mills' (2000) sociological imagination, reveal how personal experiences intersect with societal structures. It underscores the complex and multidimensional nature of race and ethnicity, showing how individuals negotiate their racial identities within institutions shaped by enduring historical legacies. This study concludes by expanding beyond the traditional Black-White focus to explore the complex experiences of other racial minorities. Addressing their often-overlooked perspectives challenges dominant racial narratives in contemporary global interactions.

***Keywords**: Race; ethnicity; indigeneity; gender; LGBT identities; global interaction; international relations.*

Introduction

Exploring race, ethnicity, indigeneity, gender, and LGBTQ identities is crucial for enhancing our understanding of international and global dynamics. Over the past decades, the rights of sexual and gender minorities, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit, and other marginalized identities (LGBTQ+), have made notable progress. In 1996, for instance, sexual orientation was acknowledged as a prohibited ground for discrimination in human rights legislation, leading to the 2005 recognition of marriage equality for same-sex couples [20]. Furthermore, gender identity and expression were later included in 2017 as part of the prohibited grounds for discrimination, marking a significant milestone in legal protections for these communities.

Despite these advancements, sexual and gender minorities still encounter persistent challenges in various domains, including health, employment, and housing, largely due to entrenched stigma and discrimination [24]. These disparities are further compounded for individuals who occupy multiple marginalized identities, such as racialized LGBTQ+ people, newcomers, and Indigenous two-spirit individuals [16]. The intersections of race, indigeneity, gender, and sexual identity reveal distinct and complex socio-economic realities that enhance our understanding of global social dynamics. For example, younger and older LGBTQ+ populations are overrepresented in vulnerable groups such as the homeless and often experience worse mental health outcomes than their cisgender and heterosexual counterparts [12-1]. Meanwhile, racialized and newcomer LGBTQ+ individuals face significant employment and income inequalities, contributing to poorer health outcomes compared to white LGBTQ+ individuals [18]. The two-spirit population in Indigenous communities continues to experience systemic barriers due to the legacies of colonialism combined with ongoing racism and homo/bi/transphobia [23]. Furthermore, the stereotype of "gay affluence" persists, masking the real material conditions of poverty and exclusion faced by many within LGBTQ+ communities [19]. This misconception has contributed to the underrepresentation of bisexual, transgender, and racialized sexual and gender minorities in poverty studies, neglecting crucial intersections that influence inequalities in global and international settings [1].

This paper investigates how an intersectional analysis of race, ethnicity, indigeneity, gender, and LGBTQ+ identities enhances our understanding of global social inequalities, with a particular focus on poverty and marginalization. By examining how these intersecting identities shape the lived experiences of marginalized populations, particularly racialized, Indigenous, and newcomer communities, the paper aims to reveal the socio-economic, cultural, and political dynamics that traditional international studies often overlook. Through this lens, it examines how systems of oppression intersect globally to produce and reinforce inequalities, while also highlighting the forms of resistance that emerge in response. The study addresses critical questions, such as: How do race and ethnicity impact global power dynamics and international relations? What insights do Indigenous experiences offer in post-colonial and global contexts? In what ways do gender and LGBTQ+ identities challenge dominant narratives in international studies? And what are the broader implications of these identities for policy-making, human rights advocacy, and international

development? The central hypothesis asserts that focusing on these intersecting identities reveals the hidden structures of global inequality and contributes to a more nuanced and inclusive understanding of global interactions.

1. Literature Review

1.1 Historical Context and Theoretical Frameworks

1.1.2 Exploring intersectionality (e.g., Collins and Crenshaw's concepts)

Becker and Paul (2015) argue that 'Intersectionality' examines how various interconnected systems of oppression influence social experiences [3]. According to Collins (2022), this theoretical approach stems from the oral and written works of racialized women, particularly Black and Indigenous women in North America, who have highlighted the historical marginalization of groups oppressed on multiple fronts, such as race and gender, within mainstream feminist and critical race discussions [7-26]. However, Yuval-Davis (2006) explains that much of the existing intersectional research has typically focused on the interplay of gender and race-based oppression; nonetheless, he recognizes that scholars have acknowledged the effectiveness of this perspective for exploring any intersection characterized by multiple forms of marginalization [30].

In line with that, Mulé (2009) adopts an intersectional framework for several reasons. Firstly, this approach allows for emphasizing the manifestations of disadvantage arising from the interplay of poverty and LGBTQ identities, while also addressing the variations in social conditions and experiences of poverty among different LGBTQ populations. Indeed, Research and social policies aimed at LGBTQ communities often overlook the unique challenges faced by various groups within sexual and gender minorities [19]. Therefore, this framework is particularly valuable in challenging this trend and highlighting the specific realities of LGBTQ poverty. His literature review reveals significant differences across various intersections, including age (young and older adults), racialization and newcomer status, and Indigenous identity. It underscores the gendered and other distinctions within these categories. Thus, he employs an intersectional lens to illuminate these specific sources of variability in the findings.

Secondly, Hill (2009) uses an intersectional framework to address the significant material disparities within the broader "LGBTQ" community. For instance, the collective category of "sexual and gender minorities" encompasses white men, whose social standing has historically been linked to social, political, and economic privilege [13]. Whereas trans people of color are often found living below poverty thresholds in disproportionate numbers [26]. His application of intersectionality is essential for emphasizing the relative nature of marginalization across these and other groups of sexual and gender minorities that experience varying degrees of material disadvantage (i.e., socioeconomic conditions and outcomes that are systematically poorer than those of dominant reference populations).

1.1.3 Engaging with feminist theories (e.g., Judith Butler's Gender Trouble)

In her theoretical book *Gender Trouble*, Butler (1990) contends that within Western culture, sex, gender, and sexual orientation are perceived as interrelated and essential attributes. In particular, the dominant belief holds that biological sex is binary (male versus female), inherent, and natural, serving as the foundation for binary gender, which is considered the cultural interpretation of sex and sexual desire. Essentially, there is a widespread assumption that a child born with a penis grows up to be identified as a man, whatever that entails in a given culture, and, as part of this gender role, will be sexually attracted to women. Likewise, it is assumed that a child born with a vagina will grow up to be identified as a woman and, as part of this gender role, will be attracted to men. Butler contends that these constructs of sex, gender, and sexual desire are viewed as the only "intelligible" genders in our society [5].

Moreover, this societal view on gender is reflected in the work of many feminist scholars, who often distinguish between sex as biological and gender as cultural. Nevertheless, Butler disputes this separation, rejecting the notion that sex is natural, essential, or exists independently of cultural interpretation. Instead, she argues that both sex and gender are culturally constructed, with norms that dictate how they should be understood. For Butler (1990), the distinction between sex and gender is ultimately meaningless, as "perhaps this construct called 'sex' is as culturally constructed as gender; indeed, perhaps it was always already gender, rendering the distinction between sex and gender no distinction at all" (p. 9).

1.1.4 Contemporary Case Studies and Existing Research

1.1.5 Reviewing key studies on the impact of race and ethnicity in international relations

McCall (2005) categorizes the expanding body of intersectional scholarship into three primary types, each illuminating the critical role of race and ethnicity in international relations. The first type, anti-categorical complexity, challenges and deconstructs the often-reductive categories of "othered" differences, emphasizing how the lived experiences of marginalized racial and ethnic groups intersect with global power dynamics. This perspective is particularly essential for understanding that international relations are shaped not only by geopolitical interests but also by the racial and ethnic identities of those involved [19].

In contrast, the second type, termed intracategorical inquiry by McCall (2005), investigates the varied experiences among already marginalized groups, particularly regarding social location. For instance, the unique challenges faced by Black women who are subjected to both gender-based and racial oppression underscore the necessity of acknowledging these layered identities in discussions about international relations. This nuanced approach resonates with Bowleg's (2012) examination of how intersecting oppressions inform the lived realities of sexual minority individuals within diverse racial and ethnic contexts.

Furthermore, inter-categorical analyses (McCall, 2005) provide a framework for comparing the social conditions of multiple marginalized groups with those of dominant groups, revealing how race and ethnicity intertwine with various systems of oppression on a global scale. Such analysis is crucial for understanding the mechanisms through which international policies may perpetuate inequalities along racial and ethnic lines.

In line with this, in their review of the literature on poverty within LGBTQ populations, Mulé et al. prioritize intracategorical analysis to capture the nuances of material disparities experienced by these groups across different racial and ethnic backgrounds. This analytical strategy enables the identification of common experiences of poverty while acknowledging the diverse expressions of these hardships,

influenced by intersecting identities. They are mindful of the historical context surrounding the essentialization of 'LGBTQ' as a monolithic category of marginalization. Although these communities have strategically united to combat shared systems of oppression affecting sexual and gender minorities, they are also profoundly shaped by the racial and ethnic identities of their members [19]. While they often employ language that implies a unified 'LGBTQ' collective for the sake of research and policy applicability, their work aims to illuminate the significant distinctions in poverty conditions experienced by these groups. Ultimately, by foregrounding the intersection of race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, they contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how international relations and social policies can both challenge and reinforce systemic inequalities.

1.1.6 Examining gender roles in diplomacy and conflict resolution

Diplomacy is often characterized as an adaptable institution that operates in both public and private realms. While state-driven, it has existed long before the rise of nation-states and adheres to a code of honor. Nevertheless, it lacks a robust moral framework, as its practice is not inherently tied to righteousness or virtue. Consequently, Scholars and practitioners typically describe diplomacy in neutral terms, viewing it as a means for representation, communication, and negotiation between political entities. Moreover, its significance in international relations is evident, serving as the primary tool for governments to resolve conflicts and engage in strategic discussions. However, one of the less adaptable and flexible aspects of diplomacy is its masculine nature. As both an institution and a practice, it reflects a male-centric perspective [1] within international relations. Indeed, most literature depicts diplomacy as an art performed by an exclusive group of trained men. Historically, apart from a few extraordinary women who broke through societal barriers to influence foreign policy, few have gained recognition as practicing diplomats. Instead, women in diplomatic settings have often been relegated to the roles of wives, acting as sounding boards for their diplomat husbands and contributing to their government's international objectives primarily through their roles as hostesses.

In the current political landscape, despite notable advancements in women's participation, men hold 77 percent of parliamentary seats worldwide, occupy 82 percent of senior ministerial positions, and make up 90 percent of heads of state. Although women represent 25-45 percent of ambassadors in countries like Finland (44 percent), Sweden (40 percent), and the United States (30 percent), men still account for 85 percent of ambassadors globally. Furthermore, from 1990 to 2017, women constituted only nine percent of negotiators. These statistics paint a stark picture of the gross under-representation and exclusion of women in diplomacy. Recently, this issue has begun to garner scholarly attention, exemplified by two edited volumes by Aggestam and Towns, as well as Cassidy, which explore women's roles in the United Nations and examine case studies of female diplomats in various countries.

1.1.7 Investigating the global LGBT rights movement and its influence on international law and human rights

How do different religious and legal systems respond to contemporary developments that challenge the binary distinction between men and women, which shapes their sexual and cultural identities as well as their roles? In particular, how do specific societies and legal frameworks address the demands of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgender individuals (LGBT) seeking broader recognition? Moreover, what are the distinctions between Western provisions and policies enacted by relevant legal bodies, such as the European Court of Human Rights and the Supreme Court, regarding these issues? Are there shared policies among Western societies and Christian churches, or do significant differences exist between these entities? Additionally, what is the nature and actual impact of international civil society movements, such as the Yogyakarta Principles, which advocate for the expansion of rights for LGBT individuals?

The French philosopher Michel Foucault (1990) examines the issues surrounding gender identity and sexual orientation that have been explored and incorporated into Western academic discourse on gender dynamics, which has been addressed through formal laws, soft laws, and social norms. For example, the philosopher contends that varying interpretations of sexual austerity have been a consistent aspect from Antiquity through Christian texts to the modern era; however, the expressions of these ideas have been reformulated in diverse ways. In fact, in Western civilization, there has certainly been a trend to associate sexual austerity with various social, civil, and religious taboos and prohibitions [10-13]. Similarly, according to Eribon and Lucey (2001), moral perspectives on sexuality have historically been characterized by fundamental gender asymmetries, where moral frameworks were created for and directed solely at free men, excluding women, children, and slaves[2]. Consequently, this system did not seek to define conduct or valid rules for interactions between men and women; rather, it elaborated a male-centric viewpoint that shaped their behavior [10].

The rise of Christianity did not fundamentally alter people's relationships with their sexual activities, but it introduced a new code of sexual conduct that marked gender arrangements. This established a novel relationship between sex and subjectivity, emphasizing the importance of self-discovery over self-control through continuous self-examination as a sexual being[3]. Moreover, Palfy's (1997) research shows that the interdependence of sexuality, subjectivity, and truth within Christianity has continued to influence not only personal identity formation but also scientific methods of analysis and inquiry, notably through discourse and "confessional" practices in psychoanalysis. In modern times, there has been an increasing categorization of sexual deviants; previously, a man engaged in

[1] The opinions expressed in The Culture Mandala are solely those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views, positions, or policies of the Centre for East-West Cultural and Economic Studies. Considering the ongoing contentious debates in International Relations and East-West studies, the editors welcome a range of critical and dissenting perspectives, provided they adhere to ethical and academic standards.

[2] In pre-modern Europe, same-sex unions were regarded as sacred, and in the ancient Greco-Roman world, both deities and individuals frequently engaged in same-sex relationships. While heterosexual marriage arose primarily from economic and parenting considerations, homosexual unions were formed solely out of love. Although there were no legal frameworks governing homosexual partnerships, both partners were free men bonded by love and openly expressed this connection in public.

[3] Christianity significantly influenced relationships from its early centuries. It promoted monogamy and sexual fidelity within marriage, implementing penalties for breaches of these norms. Divorce was increasingly discouraged and eventually rendered impossible. Homosexual acts were viewed as harmful distractions from the proper path, with sodomy labeled as one of the gravest sins. Women were relegated to the roles of wives and mothers, losing their previous public rights and privileges.

same-sex activities were seen merely as abnormal gap sodomy, while today such individuals are labeled as homosexual [21]. On another front, feminist scholar Judith Butler (1990) critiques the assumptions underlying various feminist theories that seek to establish gender identity and a subject represented both linguistically and politically. Specifically, she highlights the distinction between sex as a biological category and gender as a cultural construct. Drawing on further Foucault's ideas, she argues that the notion of a "real," "true," or "original" sexual identity is a myth, with "sex" merely being one aspect of pervasive power dynamics. Accordingly, utilizing certain Foucauldian concepts, Butler suggests that the paternal law and the symbolic framework shape the category of "feminine" and the specific idea of maternity, thus positioning women as products of discourse [5-21].

1.1.8 Analyzing how Indigenous perspectives have shaped global conversations on sustainability and governance

The persistent challenges surrounding misunderstandings related to sexual orientation and gender identity, together with the patterns of abuse connected to these issues, are evident in both the development of black letter law and the significant cases outlined below, but also in the formulation of the Yogyakarta Principles. In particular, the 'Yogyakarta Principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law concerning Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity' provides a framework for applying international human rights law standards to address the violations faced by LGBT individuals, including issues related to intersexuality.

The Yogyakarta Principles assert that every individual, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, is born free and holds inherent dignity. These principles were developed collaboratively by the International Commission of Jurists, the International Service for Human Rights, and global human rights experts at Gadjah Mada University in Java. Their primary goal is to strengthen the interpretation of human rights treaties, but they have yet to be fully incorporated into international human rights law. Although signatories have tried to establish the Yogyakarta Principles as a universal legal standard for states to adopt, some countries continue to resist.

Moreover, the interim report on the right to comprehensive sexual education, presented by the 'Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education' to the 'United Nations General Assembly', referenced the Yogyakarta Principles as a critical human rights standard. Nevertheless, the majority of members of the General Assembly's 'Third Committee' recommended against their adoption. For example, representatives from 'Mauritania' criticized the Special Rapporteur for a broad interpretation of human rights, asserting that it promoted controversial doctrines lacking universal acceptance and for redefining established concepts related to sexual and reproductive health education. Additionally, a conservative pressure group based in the US, the 'Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute', contended that the principles might undermine traditional family structures and potentially curtail freedom of speech.

Despite these obstacles, Carpenter (2021) argues that interpretations of the Yogyakarta Principles vary among international and European legal institutions. The 'Council of Europe' has highlighted the relevance of Principle 3, noting that same-sex marriage is only legal in a limited number of member states, which forces many married transgender individuals to divorce before their new gender identity can be officially recognized. Many of these individuals prefer to maintain legal recognition as a family unit, fearing that enforced divorces may hurt their children. The 'Council of Europe' has also criticized legal requirements, such as sterilization and other compulsory medical treatments, necessary for recognizing a person's gender identity in laws governing name and sex changes. Furthermore, Council members advocate for the accessibility of gender reassignment procedures—including hormone treatment, surgery, and psychological support—for transgender individuals, emphasizing that these should be covered by public health insurance plans associated with sex and name changes [6].

2. Methodology

2.1 Qualitative Research Approach

2.1.2 Conducting a comparative analysis of selected case studies

The senior author (LER), in collaboration with a large team of researchers focusing on LGBTQ2S+ poverty in Canada, developed our search strategy. A professional librarian reviewed it to ensure a comprehensive set of keywords and their combinations. They searched using the following databases: MedLine, PsycINFO, Sociological Abstracts, Social Science Abstracts, EconLit Search, and a custom Google search for relevant government reports. Various search terms related to LGBTQ2S+ identities, poverty, and associated factors (e.g., homelessness) were used in each database, along with the Canadian context. This provides examples of search terms, such as "sexual orientation," "gender identity," "poverty," and "Canad," which were adjusted as needed to account for differences in indexed subject terms across databases. For the initial screening, they included all studies written in English that featured at least one term from each of the three categories (LGBTQ2S+ identities, poverty, and Canada) and were published between January 1, 2000, and May 1, 2018. They focused on literature from 2000 onward due to the limited number of earlier studies and concerns about the relevance of older research to the current context [11].

2.1.3 Data Collection

2.1.4 Primary Sources

We used Covidence (www.covidence.com), a systematic review tool, to screen some abstracts from peer-reviewed articles and grey literature identified in our initial search. The screening process consisted of two phases. First, we reviewed titles and abstracts to find sources that provided original empirical data on socioeconomic measures (such as income, wealth, benefit use, occupation, education, housing, and homelessness) or issues related to poverty or social class (such as lived experiences of poverty or homelessness, or educational experiences) within LGBTQ2S+ populations in Canada. Two reviewers assessed each abstract for eligibility, and any disagreements were resolved by the senior author based on adherence to the study's inclusion criteria. After this process, 94 studies advanced to full-text screening.

For this paper, we specifically focused on studies that present Canadian data on socioeconomic indicators among LGBTQ2S+ populations. Following the framework of Albelda et al, our attention centers on individuals who were: (1) youth (under 25 years old), (2) older adults (50 years and older), (3) self-identified as non-white (often also as newcomers), or (4) self-identified as Indigenous or two-spirit. Our definition of "youth" (under 25) aligns with common understandings in the literature

on younger LGBTQ populations in Canada, and our definition of "older adulthood" is similarly based on the criteria used in LGBTQ aging studies [11]. Additionally, in our review of poverty among LGBTQ2S+ youth, we included studies that reported Canadian data on LGBTQ2S+ individuals in the school system or higher education, recognizing the well-established connection between poor educational outcomes and/or negative school experiences and poverty in sexual minority adults [1].

2.1.5 Case Study Selection

2.1.6 Selecting relevant global case studies

We focused on these specific categories of intersectional differences based on a preliminary literature review, which highlighted the unique roles of age, racial minority and newcomer status, and Indigeneity in shaping the varied experiences of LGBTQ2S+ poverty in Canada. Since gender differences were consistently emphasized across all categories of the literature, we did not establish a separate category for gender-focused studies [24-1].

In this second stage of study selection, we identified a total of 21 works for inclusion in the review. The selection was finalized through consensus among the four authors of this paper. We organized the extracted data related to LGBTQ2S+ poverty into three tables, each representing a different category of intersectional difference: age and early educational experiences, racial identity (excluding Indigeneity), newcomer status, and Indigenous identity. For each study, we documented its geographic scope, study period, sample size, the inclusion of poverty-related variables or phenomena in data collection tools and analyses, and findings related to socioeconomic status or poverty among LGBTQ2S+ populations in Canada. We also categorized each study as either peer-reviewed literature or grey literature on LGBTQ2S+ poverty.

3. Results

3.1 Race and Ethnicity in International Relations

3.1.2 Analyzing the role of race and ethnicity in shaping global power structures

Although we did not analyze gender differences separately, we prioritized extracting intersectional insights on gender within each of the three categories of literature. For any study that included analysis related to gender and/or gender identity in its findings or discussion, we incorporated those insights into our literature summary. The three categories discussed in this section are consolidated and included as supplementary information. Our paper follows a narrative literature review approach, also known as a non-systematic literature review [8]. While it shares similarities with a systematic review in terms of synthesizing and evaluating a body of literature, it differs in its design. Systematic reviews typically involve a deductive approach, focusing on hypothesis-testing and quantitative meta-analyses, often applied to a relatively homogeneous population, standardized interventions, or common outcome measures. In contrast, narrative reviews are more iterative and flexible, usually involving qualitative analysis across diverse populations and varied research designs, which results in greater variability in conclusions, implications, and insights. This diversity in populations... (sentence continues). In contrast to a systematic review, which involves establishing relatively fixed inclusion criteria to address specific objectives defined at the outset of the review, a narrative review allows for a more flexible, iterative process where the inclusion criteria can be adjusted as the objectives evolve during the review [9]. Early in our search, we observed that social conditions and experiences related to LGBTQ2S+ poverty varied significantly depending on intersectional factors such as age, racial minority status, newcomer status, and Indigeneity, with gender differences being prominent within each category. A narrative approach was suited to the emergent insights that guided us in reviewing, synthesizing, and evaluating the literature addressing these areas of variability, which eventually became the central focus of our study. Although we systematically identified relevant literature on these topics (including all eligible published studies found in our search), we used a narrative method to define the key objectives that shaped our inclusion criteria and guided our summary of the findings. No studies that met the inclusion criteria outlined in the "Study Selection" section were excluded.

3.1.3 Indigeneity in Global Governance

3.1.4 Investigating the influence of Indigenous identities on global institutions

Shadeism, a form of discrimination based on skin tone, privileges individuals with lighter skin over those with darker complexions, providing them with greater access to opportunities in employment, housing, and education [14]. This phenomenon underscores how "dark-skinned individuals may be perceived as more racially and culturally authentic than their light-skinned counterparts, making them desirable hires in workplaces that require the presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people" [4]. Despite this, individuals with darker skin are often marginalized or excluded from dominant workplace cultures. This form of racism often appears as 'soft bigotry,' where people of color are hired out of 'compassion' driven by settler guilt, but then face infantilization or exoticization, which serves to reinforce white moral superiority [25]. As a light-skinned aboriginal woman, she has experienced situations where her Indigeneity was questioned or dismissed by others, including potential employers, who deemed her insufficiently 'authentic' for token representation. Blumer (1969), who introduced the term "symbolic interactionism," built upon Mead's work on the concept of the self and explained: Symbolic interactionism is grounded in the analysis of three fundamental premises. The first is that human beings act toward things based on the meanings those things hold for them. The second is that these meanings are derived from, or emerge through, social interactions with others. The third is that these meanings are interpreted and modified through a process of interpretation employed by individuals as they engage with the things they encounter [28].

The framework underscores the significant role that group dynamics play in shaping individual behavior, illustrating how interactions with family, friends, communities, and workplace environments influence human actions. From an early age, family interactions can lead to the conscious or unconscious transmission of shadeism, which affects how individuals perceive themselves and others [29]. According to interactionism, social interactions assign meanings to behaviors, thereby constructing those meanings. Interactionists like Mead and Blumer emphasize that the self emerges within a group context, shaped by communication and interaction. These examples highlight the complex challenges of expressing one's identity. Personally, many of our encounters with racism or shadeism have been rooted in institutional racism. The example involving Suchit, set in a healthcare context, reflects the broader issue shaped by colonial influences in the Australian education system (e.g., "What percentage Aboriginal are you?") and compounded by lateral violence from organizations and prospective employers.

3.1.5 Gender and Global Politics

3.1.6 Exploring the impact of gender on diplomatic negotiations and international conflict

In foreign affairs, diplomatic roles have historically been shaped by a gendered assumption that diplomats are male[4], reflecting cultural norms. This assumption fails to recognize that bodies, while tangible, are also shaped by societal constructs. For example, in discussions such as those at cultural geography conferences, the term "body" is often used without acknowledging its functions, such as sweat, hair, or other physical realities. This leads to an idealized, sanitized view of the body, which aligns with societal expectations that suppress aspects associated with femininity, including sexuality, emotional expression, and natural bodily processes.

In Western discourse, masculinity is frequently linked to a unified self, with physical symbols like erections representing self-realization and control. This symbolism is rarely extended to femininity; instead, women's bodies are often marginalized or reduced to derogatory references. Scholar McDowell notes that women's bodily experiences, such as menstruation and lactation, disrupt conventional boundaries of what is deemed acceptable, reinforcing a binary that associates men with control and containment, and women with insecurity and bodily "discharges." These gendered representations significantly shape perceptions of which bodies are acceptable in public, professional spaces, including diplomacy. Diplomats are expected to display professional behavior characterized by rationality and bodily control, often reflected in formal attire such as dark business suits that conceal the body and project authority. Studies on Norwegian diplomats emphasize the importance of "bodily comportment," with diplomats expected to display a "relaxedly authoritative" demeanor, highlighting how gender norms subtly dictate physical presence and authority in diplomatic environments. By exploring the intersection of gender and diplomatic practice, we can better understand how these implicit norms shape women's participation and perception in international negotiations and conflict resolution.

3.1.7 Assessing the role of gender in peacebuilding efforts

The section highlighted that to reduce the risk of a resurgence of violence, peacebuilding efforts must include specific policies addressing women's needs. These policies are crucial not only for achieving short-term peace (negative peace) but also for fostering longer-term transformative processes. It also emphasized the importance of challenging the dominance of masculinity in key institutions to support sustainable peacebuilding. In this section, we will explore further strategies for promoting institutional change and other methods to move toward positive peace. We begin by examining the implications of involving women in peace efforts and adopting a gender-sensitive approach to peacebuilding. These considerations will lead to Section 5, which presents policy recommendations. The frequent association of women and the female gender with peace suggests that involving women should be a fundamental aspect of peacebuilding. As noted, it is often assumed that women possess unique qualities that make them more suited for peace than men and better suited for peace than for war. For example, International Alert's draft Code of Conduct highlighted this idea. We explicitly acknowledge the unique and significant peacemaking roles that women play in conflict-affected communities. Women's organizations and women themselves often serve as valuable sources of local expertise that can be leveraged for peacebuilding efforts.

There are numerous instances where women have bravely stepped into conflicts to advocate for peace, such as in Ethiopia, Somalia, and Sudan. Women have also seized opportunities to mediate peace among warring factions of men. In these situations, they often draw upon and embody values, behaviors, and norms traditionally linked to their gender. As one female peace activist remarked in "Women as Peacemakers".

Both men and women possess the potential and responsibility to establish and maintain peace. However, women often appear more innovative and impactful in fostering peace. Their emotional resilience in overcoming pain and suffering, combined with a natural inclination towards peace, gives them a greater capacity for peacemaking.

Similarly, another female activist highlighted the significance of coalition building in the peace process in the Philippines, stating, "Women have played a substantial role here. Their relative lack of exposure to traditional political dynamics and how power has been wielded in this country has shaped their perspective. This is not due to inherent traits but stems from our experiences and cultural context, leading to a considerably lower level of 'ego involvement.' This reduced ego involvement is crucial when addressing the pressing issues that require resolution and the consensus-building necessary to achieve peace for a deeply divided populace."

4. Discussion

4.1 LGBT Identities and Global Interaction

4.1.2 Examining the global LGBTQ+ rights movement and its influence on international law

We gathered data on how well the policies of Council of Europe (CoE) member states align with European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) rulings on LGBT rights, including the specific years of compliance. A "no" designation for a particular legal issue indicates that the court would likely find the state in violation of the European Convention if its practices were challenged after the ruling that established the relevant legal principle. Our analysis involved collecting information from various surveys, reports from international organizations (IOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as well as secondary sources. We also reviewed primary documents and consulted national experts on LGBT legal issues. The specific coding rules for each issue are explained as they are introduced.

Some data show the number of countries that decriminalized homosexual conduct and equalized the age of consent between 1955 and 2008. Coding criminal law issues involves a straightforward assessment of whether existing laws conflict with the Convention as interpreted by the Strasbourg Court. Additionally, these data highlight key decisions by the ECtHR and the European Commission that established the fundamental legal principles for these matters. The Dudgeon ruling (1981) was the first to conclude that criminalizing consensual homosexual acts violated the Convention, while the Sutherland

[4] For instance, see Sara Meger's chapter, "'No Man is Allowed to be Vulnerable': Situating the Rape of Men in Armed Conflict within the Feminist Paradigm of Wartime Sexual Violence," in "Engaging Men in Building Gender Equality", edited by M. Flood and R. Howson (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015).

case (1996) similarly ruled against laws enforcing unequal ages of consent [13].

4.1.3 Analyzing the movement's impact on human rights treaties and the spread of progressive social policies globally

In this study, we define LGBT policy as a national law enacted through judicial decisions, executive orders, legislative approval, or other mechanisms that specifically impact individuals of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. While the mere adoption of these policies does not ensure effective implementation, they offer critical insights into state preferences. They can lay the groundwork for future impacts on the lived experiences of these communities. Most policies under review aim to promote recognition and equality; however, this project also encompasses targeted and discriminatory policies. The array of policies relevant to the LGBT community is extensive and does not all neatly fit under the label of "LGBT-related policies." For instance, policies that address mental health outcomes (Mays and Cochran 2001), school bullying (Birkett, Espelage, and Koenig, 2009), or homelessness (Abramovich, 2012) have significant implications for LGBT individuals. To qualify as "LGBT-related policies," there must be a deliberate intent to address aspects of this community. Furthermore, many policies are context-dependent, as LGBT communities are not a singular, homogeneous entity [22].

Sociologists and international relations scholars are delving into how global forces shape state behavior in our increasingly globalized world. A pertinent approach, informed by world society theory, examines how isomorphism, structural conformity, and similarity across the global system reflect a consensus among states, transnational actors, and international organizations regarding state behavior [27]. To appear "modern," states often align with evolving expectations through voluntary agreement or because the cost of resisting these norms becomes prohibitively high[5]. This theoretical framework has enabled researchers to elucidate the spread of various policies, including gender quotas (Hughes et al. 2006, 2015), state responses to domestic violence (Htun and Weldon 2012), and environmental regulations [15].

Since the late 1990s, scholars have increasingly examined how this broader global context specifically shapes LGBT policies and their alignment with human rights treaties. For instance, Frank and McEneaney (1999) posited that a fundamental shift in global societal models led to a world-level redefinition of sex, culminating in global transformations in its criminal regulation, particularly regarding the decriminalization of same-sex acts and sodomy laws (p. 870). Their research illustrates that the extent to which a state engaged with this evolving global discourse significantly influenced how it regulated sexual acts. Following this critical shift in the understanding of sexual orientation and gender identity, other researchers have investigated how connections to transnational networks impacted a broader spectrum of LGBT policies, including same-sex unions (Kollman 2007) and various policies within European Union member states [2]. This exploration of how the LGBT movement affects human rights treaties underscores the importance of a global dialogue on equality and the adoption of progressive social policies across nations.

Implications and Conclusion

Examining the roles of race, ethnicity, indigeneity, gender, and sexual orientation deepens our understanding of international and global dynamics by highlighting how intersecting identities influence individual experiences and access to rights. Since the early 1990s, we have observed how various countries have implemented LGBT policies, leading to significant advancements such as decriminalizing same-sex acts, protecting against employment discrimination, and recognizing same-sex marriage. However, we recognize that comprehending the complexities of these reforms requires a deeper exploration, especially regarding transgender identities, which remain underrepresented in existing research.

Despite the positive correlation between global LGBT pressure and policy reform, we see that the narratives of human rights organizations (HRINGOs) and LGBT organizations (LINGOs) are not sufficient to explain state behavior. While Secretary Clinton's assertion that "gay rights are human rights" resonates globally, it often overlooks the nuanced dynamics at play within local contexts. To navigate these intricacies, we believe that activists and researchers must prioritize understanding how transnational advocacy networks influence policy outcomes, particularly for marginalized communities, including transgender individuals.

Our analysis highlights the necessity for comprehensive frameworks, like the LGBT Policy Index, that consider diverse state responses to varying identities and experiences. However, it also reveals significant gaps, particularly regarding transgender rights, urging the need for further research in this area. Addressing these gaps will enrich our understanding of global interactions and ensure that all voices within the LGBT spectrum are acknowledged and represented in policy discussions. Thus, ongoing research is crucial for uncovering the material disparities that affect various sexual and gender minority populations, challenging prevailing narratives that obscure the realities faced by these communities.

Ethics Declarations: Not applicable

Competing Interest: On behalf of all authors, the corresponding author states that there is no conflict of interest.

Funding: No funding was received for conducting this study.

References

1. Albelda, R., Badgett, M. L., Schneebaum, A., & Gates, G. J. (2009). *Poverty in the lesbian, gay, and bisexual community*. JSTOR. https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/resrep35577.pdf
2. Ayoub, P. M. (2015). Contested norms in new-adopter states: International determinants of LGBT rights legislation. *European Journal of International Relations*, *21*(2), 293-322. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066114543335
3. Becker, S., & Paul, C. (2015). "It Didn't Seem Like Race Mattered": Exploring the Implications of Service-learning Pedagogy for Reproducing or Challenging Colorblind Racism. *Teaching Sociology*, *43*(3), 184-200. https://doi.org/10.1177/0092055X15587987

[5] Some studies have challenged the fundamental power assumption of this theory (Beckfield 2003), suggesting that global norms are not established through consensus but are instead imposed by dominant Western entities (Rahman 2014).

4. Boulton, A. B. (2021). *Negotiating Multilingual Writer Identity in the Dissertation: International Perspectives on Language and Writing Practices*. https://openriver.winona.edu/educationedddissertations/6/
5. Butler, J., & Trouble, G. (1990). Feminism and the Subversion of Identity. *Gender trouble*, *3*(1), 3-17.
6. Carpenter, M. (2021). Intersex human rights, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex characteristics and the Yogyakarta Principles plus 10. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, *23*(4), 516-532. https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2020.1781262
7. Collins, P. H. (2022). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. Routledge. https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9781003245650/black-feministthought-30th-anniversary-edition-patricia-hill-collins
8. Cook, D. A., & West, C. P. (2012). Conducting systematic reviews in medical education: A stepwise approach. *Medical Education*, *46*(10), 943-952. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2923.2012.04328.x
9. Cook, D. J. (1997). Systematic Reviews: Synthesis of Best Evidence for Clinical Decisions. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, *126*(5), 376. https://doi.org/10.7326/0003-4819-126-5-199703010-00006
10. Eribon, D., & Lucey, M. (2001). Michel Foucault's histories of sexuality. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, *7*(1), 31-86.
11. Fredriksen-Goldsen, K. I., Hoy-Ellis, C. P., Goldsen, J., Emlet, C. A., & Hooyman, N. R. (2014). Creating a Vision for the Future: Key Competencies and Strategies for Culturally Competent Practice with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Older Adults in the Health and Human Services. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, *57*(2-4), 80-107. https://doi.org/10.1080/01634372.2014.890690
12. Gattis, M. N. (2010). *Psychosocial problems of homeless sexual minority youths and their heterosexual counterparts*. Washington University in St. Louis. https://search.proquest.com/openview/36056d97ebc31f0401df90aca4450b46/1?pqorigsite=gscholar&cbl=18750
13. Helfer, L. R., & Voeten, E. (2014). International courts as agents of legal change: Evidence from LGBT rights in Europe. *International Organization*, *68*(1), 77-110.
14. Hunt, F. (2008). *Dropping Out from School: A Cross Country Review of the Literature. Create Pathways to Access. Research Monograph, No. 16*. ERIC. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED504047
15. Longhofer, W., Schofer, E., Miric, N., & Frank, D. J. (2016). NGOs, INGOs, and environmental policy reform, 1970–2010. *Social Forces*, *94*(4), 1743-1768.
16. Lyons, T., Krüsi, A., Pierre, L., Smith, A., Small, W., & Shannon, K. (2016). Experiences of Trans Women and Two-Spirit Persons Accessing Women-Specific Health and Housing Services in a Downtown Neighborhood of Vancouver, Canada. *LGBT Health*, *3*(5), 373-378. https://doi.org/10.1089/lgbt.2016.0060
17. McCall, L. (2005). The Complexity of Intersectionality. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, *30*(3), 1771-1800. https://doi.org/10.1086/426800
18. Millett, G. A., Peterson, J. L., Flores, S. A., Hart, T. A., Jeffries, W. L., Wilson, P. A., Rourke, S. B., Heilig, C. M., Elford, J., & Fenton, K. A. (2012). Comparisons of disparities and risks of HIV infection in black and other men who have sex with men in Canada, UK, and USA: A meta-analysis. *The Lancet*, *380*(9839), 341-348.
19. Mule, N. J., Ross, L. E., Deeprose, B., Jackson, B. E., Daley, A., Travers, A., & Moore, D. (2009). Promoting LGBT health and wellbeing through inclusive policy development. *International Journal for Equity in Health*, *8*(1), 18. https://doi.org/10.1186/1475-9276-8-18
20. Nierobisz, A., Searl, M., & Théroux, C. (2008). Human rights commissions and public policy: The role of the Canadian Human Rights Commission in advancing sexual orientation equality rights in Canada. *Canadian Public Administration*, *51*(2), 239-263. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1754-7121.2008.00017.x
21. Palfy, R. R. (1997). *Psychiatry, social control, and homosexuality: Clients' perceptions of therapeutic care in the decades following demedicalization* [PhD Thesis, University of Saskatchewan]. https://harvest.usask.ca/bitstream/10388/etd-11292011-110519/1/Palfy_Randa_Richelle_sec_1997.pdf
22. Richardson, D. (2017). Constructing sexual citizenship: Theorizing sexual rights. In *Citizenship Rights* (p. 433-463). Routledge. https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315260211-19/constructingsexual-citizenship-theorizing-sexual-rights-diane-richardson
23. Robinson, M. (2018). Two-spirit and bisexual people: Different umbrella, same rain. In *Under the bisexual umbrella* (p. 7-29). Routledge. https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780429447549-2/two-spiritbisexual-people-different-umbrella-rain-margaret-robinson
24. Ross, L. E., O'Gorman, L., MacLeod, M. A., Bauer, G. R., MacKay, J., & Robinson, M. (2016). Bisexuality, poverty, and mental health: A mixed methods analysis. *Social Science & Medicine*, *156*, 64-72.
25. Sandras, D. J. (2024). *The Good White Guise: Rhetorical (Re) Constructions of White Allies on US Television* [PhD Thesis, The University of Nebraska-Lincoln]. https://search.proquest.com/openview/3e3d3f6e106cb5c1703024d0aee15ca7/1?pqorigsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y
26. Scheim, A. I., Zong, X., Giblon, R., & Bauer, G. R. (2017). Disparities in access to family physicians among transgender people in Ontario, Canada. *International Journal of Transgenderism*, *18*(3), 343-352. https://doi.org/10.1080/15532739.2017.1323069
27. Schofer, E., & Meyer, J. W. (2005). The Worldwide Expansion of Higher Education in the Twentieth Century. *American Sociological Review*, *70*(6), 898-920. https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240507000602
28. Suchit, C. R. (2016). *Shadeism: Exploring Inequalities Within a Historicizing Agenda*. https://yorkspace.library.yorku.ca/bitstream/10315/32664/2/Suchit_Caroline_R_2016_Masters.pdf
29. Wilder, J. (2010). Revisiting "Color Names and Color Notions": A Contemporary Examination of the Language and Attitudes of Skin Color Among Young Black Women. *Journal of Black Studies*, *41*(1), 184-206. https://doi.org/10.1177/0021934709337986

Yuval-Davis, N. (2006). Intersectionality and Feminist Politics. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, *13*(3), 193-209. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506806065752