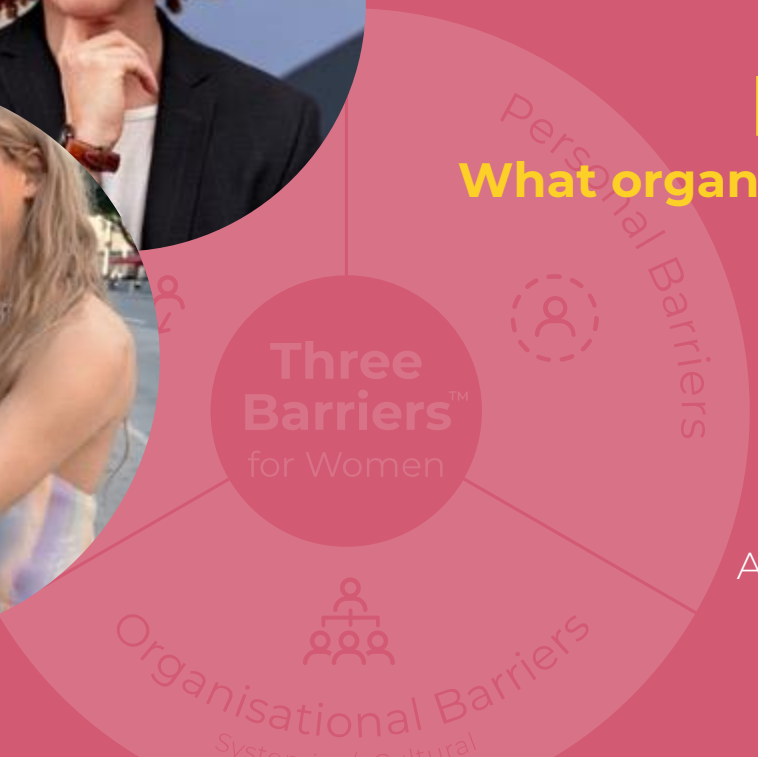
SHAPE TALENT

Accelerating gender equality



The three barriers to progression: LGBTQ+ edition

What organisations can do about them

A white paper by Dr Ciarán McFadden
on behalf of Shape Talent

1st Edition, June 2023

“”

We should indeed keep calm in the face of difference, and live our lives in a state of inclusion and wonder at the diversity of humanity.

George Takei | Actor, Author & Activist

Acknowledgements

This white paper would not have been possible without the excellent work of Dr Ciarán McFadden. His deep expertise and thoroughness in evaluating the evidence base behind this report has resulted in a powerful and unique report. He has clearly demonstrated how some of the career barriers facing women apply also to the LGBTQ+ community and has further identified the unique career barriers faced by this community.

In addition, Dr Priscila Pereira's subject expertise in cisgender career barriers for women has been invaluable in ensuring a clear narrative of how the Three Barriers Model applies, at least in part, to the LGBTQ+ community. The report is undoubtedly richer for her editorial contribution.

We have no doubt these findings will be of great use to organisations working to build more inclusive workplaces for their employees.

Report author

Dr Ciarán McFadden is a Senior Lecturer in Organisational Behaviour and Human Resource Management at the University of Stirling. His teaching, research, praxis, and consultancy work centres on workplace equality, equity, diversity and inclusion. His PhD focused on the career and workplace experiences of lesbian, gay and bisexual workers in the Republic of Ireland. His current research explores the workplace experiences of trans workers in the UK, hiring discrimination against trans job applicants, diversity resistance, and neurodiversity in the workplace.

Ciarán was a visiting Fulbright Scholar at The Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Law and Public Policy at UCLA. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Academy of Human Resource Development and is a Fellow of the Global Labor Organisation. He has delivered EDI training and workshops in a number of organisations. He and his work have featured in The Conversation, RTÉ's Brainstorm and The Irish Times, at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting, and on Radio 4's Today programme.

Content

Foreword

Around the world, LGBTQ+ people face prejudice for who they are and whom they love. In many countries, being openly gay, lesbian or bisexual is met with hostility or aggression, and in some countries by imprisonment and the death penalty. Trans people in particular face violence, poverty, and societal exclusion.

Even in countries where discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual identity is legally prohibited, LGBTQ+ people are routinely subjected to discrimination in the workplace and throughout their careers – in recruitment, pay, evaluations, and interpersonal relationships with colleagues and managers.

The LGBT in Britain: Work Report[1] highlighted the extent of discrimination faced:

25%	of LGBT employees have hidden their identity at work because they feared discrimination.
12%	of trans people have been physically attacked by customers or colleagues because they are trans.
18%	of LGBT employees have been the target of negative comments or conduct from work colleagues because they are LGBT.
12%	of Black, Asian and minority ethnic LGBT employees have lost their job because of their LGBT identity, compared to 4% of White LGBT employees.

Legislation and company policies have been introduced in many countries to offer protection from such discrimination. However, the amount of research on LGBTQ+ experiences, particularly within the workplace, is small compared to that of other demographic groups. This lack of research, and associated awareness, means that legislators and policy-makers are limited in their ability to dismantle systemic LGBTQ+ inequalities. In many countries, the number of openly-LGBTQ+ people is higher within younger cohorts, highlighting the growing impetus for policies and practices that protect, encourage, and inspire new generations entering the workforce.

To date, our focus at Shape Talent has been on understanding the career barriers faced by cis women at various intersections, as detailed in our comprehensive Shape Talent Three Barriers Model™. Increasingly it became apparent to us in our work that a number of these barriers also applied to the LGBTQ+ community, across different gender identities. We wanted to understand more comprehensively the extent that these barriers overlap, and what organisations and allies can do to help dismantle these barriers.

In this report we present the findings of an extensive literature review of over 150 studies conducted by scholar Dr Ciarán McFadden. The report provides a detailed explanation of the LGBTQ+ barriers that research has identified, highlighting how Shape Talent's three major barriers – social, organisational, and personal – interact to limit the opportunities and progression of LGBTQ+ employees and jobseekers. In doing so, we hope to present a base upon which organisations and policy-makers can build meaningful policy, practice and interventions to improve the experiences of LGBTQ+ people around the world.

Sharon Peake
Founder & CEO
Shape Talent

Notes on context and terminology usage

1. *There is no standard, universally agreed-upon acronym referring to those who are non-heterosexual and/or non-cisgender. This white paper uses 'LGBTQ+', which refers to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Queer, with the '+' referring to other queer gender and sexual identities. When referring to a particular study/survey, we generally use the terms used by the respective researchers.*

2. *For brevity and understanding, we use the LGBTQ+ umbrella term throughout, we acknowledge that each subgroup of the LGBTQ+ community can experience specific barriers within their career. For example, those within the trans community often face specific challenges, barriers, and experiences that cis people with a marginalised sexual orientation (e.g., lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer) do not.*

3. *In addition to being inspired by the social, contemporary and historical associations between the LGBTQ+ subgroups, and its common usage as an acronym in general, our focus on the community as a whole reflects the practical concern that research on each respective subgroup is relatively scant, and that there are some commonalities that arise from similar hegemonic sources (e.g., cissexism, heteronormativity, patriarchy) that can give us a much-needed basis of understanding.*

4. *We also acknowledge that we are influenced by our own socialised frameworks and cultural standpoints. As we have taken an international focus, we mention non-heterosexual and non-cisgender identities around the world, in a wish to highlight the breadth of diversity within this community. However, the 'LGBTQ+' acronym, a Western-originated framework, may not fully or completely accurately describe local sexual and gender identities, which require contextualised interpretation.*

5. *Throughout this white paper, our usage of the terms 'women', 'men', 'female', and 'male' are inclusive of trans identities. There will be times where precise wording is needed to accurately describe a finding or study. The terms 'cis' or 'trans' are used to specify if the sentence refers only to those whose gender identity matches the sex assigned to them at birth, or only to those whose gender identity does not match the sex assigned to them at birth, respectively.*

6. *There is variation within the literature regarding the inclusion of non-binary identities within the trans umbrella group – some authors will discuss non-binary people separately from other trans people, while other authors will include non-binary identities when using the term 'trans' or researching the experiences of the trans community. For brevity, we use 'trans' throughout this white paper, but specify when non-binary identities in particular are the focus of the sentence. Like with the use of LGBTQ+, we acknowledge that the experiences of those trans people whose identities fit within a binarised model of gender may differ from those who are non-binary, despite some common barriers, challenges, and experiences.*

Glossary of terminology used in this white paper[2 3 4]

Asexual – a person who does not experience sexual attraction. Some asexual people experience romantic attraction, while others do not.

Cis/Cisgender – a term used to describe those whose gender identity matches that assigned to them at birth, i.e., those who are not trans or non-binary.

Bisexual/Bi – 'Bi' is increasingly being used as an umbrella term to include those attracted to two or more genders. Bisexual is also often used in the same sense, but was originally used (and is still used by some) to refer to attraction to the binary gender identities of male and female.

Cissexism – a form of prejudice against trans people, in which a cisgender identity is regarded as the preferred default 'norm' and trans identities are regarded as aberrant, deviant and/or undesirable. *Cisnormativity* is also used.

Coming Out – disclosing one's sexual orientation for the first time. The term may refer to one coming out for the very first time in one's life (e.g., in the phrase "I came out at aged 17") or the general act of coming out to a person/people (e.g., "I came out to my colleagues").

Gay – the term used to describe men who are attracted solely to men. In addition to lesbian, it is also used to describe women who are attracted solely to women. Because of its medicalised and negative historical connotations, the synonym homosexual is now often avoided.

Gender Identity – this is one's innately held sense of their own gender. This may or may not correspond to the sex assigned to them at birth. One's gender identity is distinct from one's sexual orientation (see following terms).

Heteronormativity – a cultural belief system in which heterosexuality and heterosexual relationships are seen as the preferred default 'norm' and queer identities and relationships are seen as aberrant, deviant and/or undesirable.

Lesbian – the term used to describe women who are attracted solely to women. Some may also/alternatively use the term gay.

Non-Binary – another umbrella term, used to describe someone whose gender identity does not exclusively correspond to the binarised identities of 'man' or 'woman', or 'male' or 'female'. Non-binary identities are often included under the trans 'umbrella' categorisation, but the term non-binary is increasingly being used alongside trans (i.e., "trans and non-binary").

Pansexual – refers to a person whose romantic and/or sexual attraction towards others is not limited or defined by sex or gender.

Queer – a term with a number of meanings. It is used by those who do not want to specifically label their sexual/romantic orientation and/or gender identity. Additionally, queer serves as an umbrella term to describe non-heterosexual and non-cisgender identities. It is also used in some contexts to show a rejection of particular societal and community norms surrounding sexual orientation, gender identity, and the stability of such categories. Queer was (and still sometimes is) used as a slur directed primarily at gay men. The term was reclaimed by the LGBTQ+ community in the late 1980s, but is not universally accepted as a positive term.

Sexual Orientation – one's sexual attraction to other people. This is distinct from gender identity (see above). One who doesn't experience sexual attraction to others may describe themselves as *asexual*.

Trans – an 'umbrella' term used to describe an individual (and the community of individuals), whose gender identity differs from, or does not comfortably align with, the sex assigned to them at birth. The term often encompasses a range of identities, including transgender men and transgender women, and agender. The terms trans, transgender and agender are used as adjectives (e.g., trans employees, a trans man) and not as nouns (i.e., the term 'transgenders' is incorrect)

Transsexual – this term's meaning roughly equates to 'trans'. The term was primarily used in the past and, because of its medicalised and negative connotations, is not used as often anymore (trans or transgender are more accepted variants).

Transitioning – the process of changing one's outward appearance, characteristics, and presentation to match one's gender identity, instead of those relating to the gender assigned to them at birth. One may transition at any point of their life. A differentiation is made between one's *social transition* and one's *medical transition*. The steps within a transition will be unique to every individual – there is no one 'definitive' way to transition.

Social transition and medical transition
While discussions of transitioning often focus on medical interventions, like surgery or hormone therapy, one's social transition is also a momentous step. A social transition can involve steps such as coming out to others in all or some interpersonal contexts (e.g., work, home, education), changing one's name and pronouns, and changing one's appearance and clothing. At this point, many trans people may approach the HR department to notify them of their transition and request changes to organisational records.

Overview

The Shape Talent *Three Barriers to Women's Progression* white paper detailed the societal, organisational and personal barriers that women face throughout their careers, some of which apply to the LGBTQ+ community. In addition, LGBTQ+ employees and jobseekers also may encounter specific challenges arising from heteronormativity and cissexism. Lesbian, bisexual, trans and queer women may also face additional, or different, barriers arising from being both a woman and LGBTQ+.

Below we summarise how the barriers identified in the Three Barriers Model™ (from which the underpinning research has a cisgender focus) apply to LGBTQ+ identities. The findings of this report reflect the LGBTQ+ literature as it currently stands*.

SOCIETAL BARRIERS

- Political representation gap
- Lack of research and data
- Heteronormativity and cissexism
- Patriarchal values, gender, and sexuality

PERSONAL BARRIERS

- Coming out
- Transitioning
- Reluctance in networking

ORGANISATIONAL BARRIERS

Systemic barriers

- Intersectionality
- Career Identity, development and choices
- Limited expatriation opportunities
- Recruitment discrimination and unemployment

Culture and work

- Implicit bias and LGBTQ+ stereotypes
- Microaggressions, discrimination and everyday sexism
- Leaders: born or made?
- Heteroprofessionalism and the LGBTQ+ glass ceiling

*It is important to note the limitations in this research base, for which there is a distinct gap around trans research, as well as an overall Western-centric – and particularly US-centric – focus in the available literature.

Barrier is similar for cis women and the LGBTQ+ community

Barrier is significantly different to cis women or exclusive to the LGBTQ+ community

SHAPE TALENT

Accelerating gender equality

1. Societal barriers

The first category of barriers relates to the subtle and often unspoken societal and cultural cues and messages we all receive over our lifetimes that reinforce the ways in which people ‘ought’ to think, behave, and feel. We call these Societal Barriers.

> If I wait for someone else to validate my existence, it will mean that I’m short-changing myself.
>
> **Zanele Muholi | Artist & Activist**

1. Societal barriers

In the context of LGBTQ+ identities, the social barriers discussed below primarily stem from the cultural and socio-political system known as *cisheteropatriarchy*, which comprises:

- **Patriarchy**, which privileges men and masculinity over women and femininity,
- **Heteronormativity**, which privileges heterosexual identities and systems while othering and devaluing LGBTQ+ identities, and
- **Cissexism**, which privileges cisgender identities – particularly male – while othering and devaluing trans identities.

Because of the interplay between all three systems listed above, these barriers may be translated in many ways. For example, with heteronormative stereotypes, gay men are often characterised as feminine and lesbian women as masculine, as well as being disfavoured generally. They are in turn is affected by patriarchal norms privileging masculinity and denigrating femininity, particularly in male dominated organisations. Bisexual people face prejudice and erasure regarding heteronormative values. Trans people additionally suffer from cissexist norms that reinforce the privileged position of cisgender identities.

When comparing the Societal Barriers here to those identified within the Shape Talent *Three Barriers Model*™, which focuses on cisgender women, the political representation gap sub-barrier was identified for both groups.

Colonialism & Anti-LGBTQ+ laws

Many of the countries that criminalised or still criminalise same-sex activity were subject to imperialist colonisation by the British Empire, who introduced anti-LGBTQ+ laws.[6] The laws reflected the strict Victorian-era and Christian heteronormative values prevalent within Britain at the time. Organisations and policymakers should be mindful of the lingering impact of colonialisation in these countries, whilst also ensuring we do not similarly impose our own cultural frameworks (e.g., the use of term “LGBTQ+”) where they may not accurately resemble local gender identity and sexual orientation frameworks.

1.1. Political representation gap

A survey by Ipsos of 27 countries around the world highlighted the diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities amongst their participants.[7] Yet, no country in the world accurately represents this diversity within its body of elected officials. The parliament with the largest number of openly LGBTQ+ elected representatives is in the UK, where 6.91% of the Members of Parliament are openly LGBTQ+.[8] In the USA, LGBTQ+ people hold 0.21% of elected offices, despite an estimated 7.1% identifying as LGBTQ+.[9]

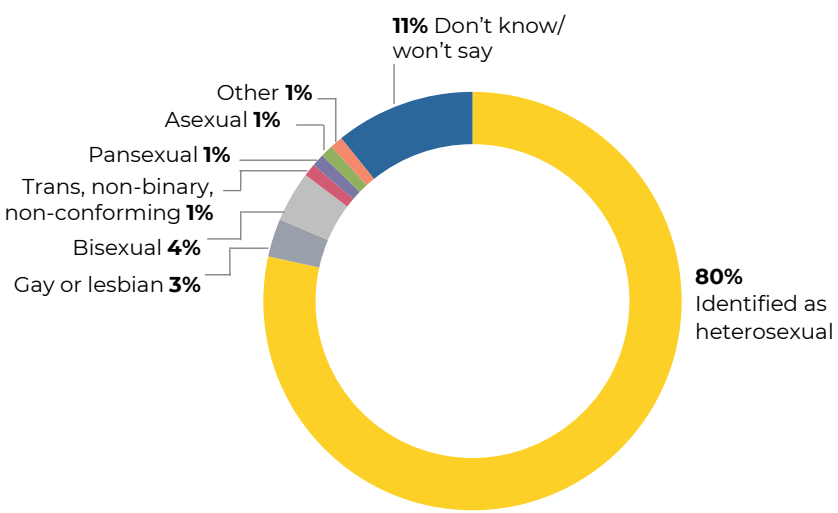
LGBTQ+ representation in politics is extremely low at a global level, despite the historical breakthroughs made by LGBTQ+ heads of government like Xavier Bettel (Luxemburg), Ana Brnabić (Serbia), and Leo Varadkar (Republic of Ireland), and the first openly-LGBTQ+ parliamentarians, like Taiga Ishikawa (Japan), Marcela Riquelme (Republic of Chile) and Geraldine Roman (Republic of the Philippines). There has been a recent rise in the number of openly LGBTQ+ politicians in the past few years, however, most representation is concentrated in Europe, where parliaments have some of their historically highest (yet still low) numbers of LGBTQ+ members.

The low number of openly-LGBTQ+ politicians is not surprising, given the amount of stigmatisation that LGBTQ+ people face in many countries, with some not being able to safely reveal their sexual and/or gender identity. In addition, research has found that LGBTQ+ candidates face electoral discrimination, with candidates in the USA and trans candidates in general facing more bias.[11] A recent survey experiment found that voters were more likely to vote for lesbian and gay candidates who were married with children than those who did not – reflecting heteronormative expectations surrounding the 'ideal' political candidate.[12]

Political representation allows LGBTQ+ people to know that some of their lawmakers are cognisant of the challenges facing them. Echoing findings related to gender and race, research from the USA has shown that having even a small number of openly gay legislators has a transformative effect on the views and perceptions of their straight colleagues, and is significantly associated with the future passage of enhanced gay rights legislation.[13] It is important, therefore, to ensure that LGBTQ+ people are fully represented in elected office, particularly in parliaments, to bring light to inequalities facing their community and to sponsor protective legislation.

The political representation gap is a problem common to both cis women and the LGBTQ+ community but is particularly pronounced for the latter. The following societal barriers centre on LGBTQ+ employees and jobseekers in particular.

Global diversity of genders and sexual orientation
(Ipsos Survey of 27 Countries[10])



1.2. Lack of research and data

There are a number of issues with the extant research on LGBTQ+ employees that have implications for policy-making at the political and organisational levels, and for organisational practice. The majority of these issues are arguably linked to estimates of the size of the LGBTQ+ population; there are many fewer attempts to measure it than with other marginalised groups and, as a stigmatised yet often concealable identity, it may be difficult to obtain accurate numbers.

The most recent estimates, however, suggest that LGBTQ+ people make up between 4.5%[14] and 5.6%[15] of the US population, between 3.1%[16] and 6.5%[17] of the UK population, and almost 10% of the Japanese population.[18] For researchers in academia and business, and indeed for majority-cisgender and heterosexual parliaments, these relatively low population estimates may mean that LGBTQ+ research and change is not a high priority, compared to other marginalised groups. Additional consideration must also be given to intersectionality, because the experiences of those with multiple stigmatised identities will differ from those with a single one. For example, LGBTQ+ people of colour face particular microaggressions related to the intersection of race and sexual and/or gender identity[19], as well as identity erasure within the LGBTQ+ community, that white LGBTQ+ people do not face.[20]

Research has highlighted a particular lack of knowledge in relation to trans issues.[21] This may be due to the lower visibility of trans people, relative to gay, lesbian and bisexual people, and the very low amount of trans people in the population – although estimates are rare, a recent estimate states that approximately 0.6% of the US population is trans.[22] A lack of knowledge in the workplace about trans issues, such as transitioning, is particularly problematic, as trans employees may face a number of interpersonal, organisational, administrative, and legal barriers that cisgender people do not. Ideally, an HR department should have a good practice transitioning policy and general trans inclusion and non-discrimination policy that will give a comprehensive overview of trans issues, and what trans employees need from their employer.

Lastly, much of the research on LGBTQ+ employees focuses on those in the West, particularly within the USA[23] and more specifically, within large cities in the USA.[24] Comparatively little is known about, for example, experiences of LGBTQ+ employees in Asian or African countries, where LGBTQ+ inclusion efforts may range from nascent[25] to non-existent and/or illegal. The small amount of research in these contexts, which are often completely different socially, culturally and politically, raise questions about the applicability of Western studies. For example, additional stress and discrimination may be faced by LGBTQ+ people in collectivist societies such as China, where a family may face social shame from having an LGBTQ+ family member.[26] In Japan, the sharing of personal information at work is not as common a practice, and a recent study found only 18% of LGBTQ+ participants had come out at work[27], so research centred on Western countries may not be accurate or even applicable for the Japanese context. With regards to gender identity in particular, there are groups around the world that, although often considered part of the trans community, have their own specific cultural, social and historical contexts which renders their experiences completely dissimilar to trans people faced in Western countries.

Despite these clear differences across countries and cultures, much of the research, as well as organisations and policy-makers, discuss LGBTQ+ people as an entirely homogenous group[28] and ignore inter-subgroup differences as well as intersectional oppression.

Gender identities around the world – some examples

Fa'afatamas and Fa'afafine – groups within Samoan society described as third and fourth gender.[29] These are fluid gender identities. They often care for elder members of the community and educate others on the topic of sex, which is taboo for men and women to discuss.

Hijra – found throughout the Indian sub-continent and recognised as a third gender in India. They have been recorded since antiquity and are said to have been given the power to bless and curse others by the Hindu deity Lord Rama.[30 31] Despite their historical, religious and cultural position, hijras face stigmatisation and persecution, often living in poverty and engaging in sex work to survive.

Metis – a group of people within Nepal. The term is often used to refer to those assigned male at birth with a female gender identity, although other non-cisgender gender identities and presentations may be included in this group.[32] They are recognised as a third gender by Nepal.

Muxe – a person within the Zapotec people of the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca – they are assigned male at birth but have a female gender identity.[33] Officially recognised as a third gender. Have acceptance in society but have some limitations to employment.[34]

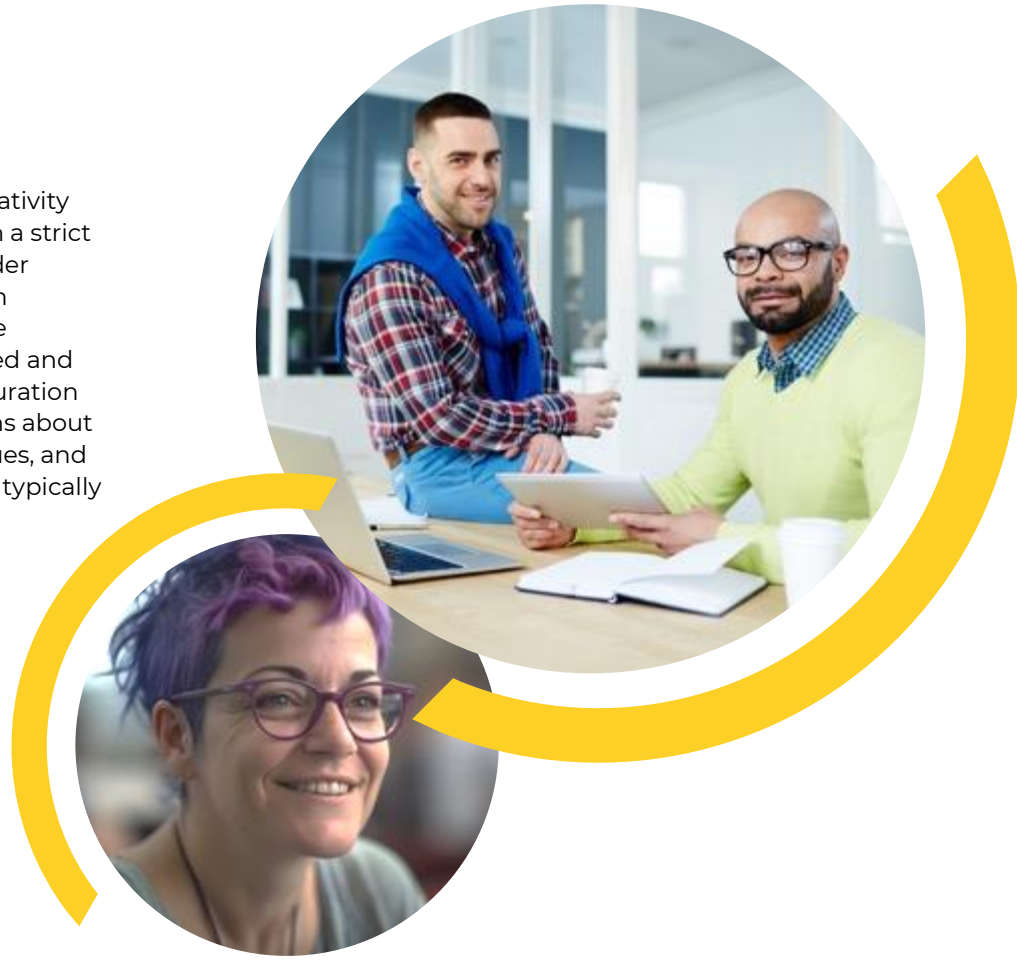
Two-Spirit – a relatively recent term used by indigenous North Americans across tribes to refer to those among them whose gender constitutes a third (and in some tribes fourth) gender. Traditionally highly respected, two-spirit people filled religious roles in many tribes, but they faced increasing persecution following European settlement in North America.[35 36]

1.3. Heteronormativity and cissexism

Heteronormativity and cissexism are both cultural value systems embedded within many countries around the world. Like patriarchy, they can both manifest in interpersonal, institutional, and systemic ways, and involve the privileging of one group and the devaluing or denigration of the other group, to the point where these values are hegemonic, seen as 'natural', and are taken-for-granted by many. In the same sense that patriarchy can be seen as the cultural system that leads to sexism against women in organisations and within interpersonal relations, heteronormativity and cissexism could be characterised as the cultural systems which lead to manifestations of (respectively) homophobia and biphobia, and transphobia.

Heteronormativity is a term used to describe the cultural value system and norms built upon the belief that heterosexuality is the default 'normal' and 'natural' sexual orientation – the superior and privileged standard against which other sexual orientations are seen as unnatural and/or inferior.[37] [38] Cissexism is an analogous (but not precisely equivalent) cultural value system/set of norms that focus on sex and gender, which privileges the idea of both sex and gender being fixed and binarised, and assumes that cis identities are more legitimate than trans identities.[39]

There are overlaps between the two: heteronormativity and cissexism both assume and work to maintain a strict gender binary, to which one's biological sex, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation all strictly align to cisgender and heteronormative standards.[40] Heteronormative norms are produced and reproduced in the workplace through the configuration of space and organisational policies, presumptions about one's gender and/or sexual identity from colleagues, and through visible artefacts such as dress codes and typically gendered behaviours.[41]



> "There's no obligation to have [office parties to celebrate a wedding] so you can't sort of say 'I've been discriminated against'. It's really subtle, but you feel it … A month later, a colleague was getting married, and there was a big thing about him, and tea and cake in the office, and mine was blatantly ignored. That hurts. Because it was…a deliberate thing to do."
>
> **Claire***

Heteronormative standards, in demanding that men act in a traditionally 'masculine' manner and women in a traditionally 'feminine' manner, help to uphold patriarchal and cissexist oppression, which not only place men in a dominant role and women in a submissive role but also confer a logic of gender essentialism upon it – the belief that these socially-constructed systems and roles are biologically innate. Cissexism also assumes a fixed, stable and binarised quality to gender identity, and therefore not only devalues trans women and trans men, but also non-binary and genderfluid people. Within both heteronormativity and cissexism, those who are seen to be acting in a manner not congruent with the norms of their gender (as perceived by others) may be seen as inferior, unnatural or deviant.[42] The spectrum of this supposed 'deviance' is broad, and may take the form of, for example, someone perceived to be male wearing clothes traditionally associated with females, or a woman acting competitively or assertively – behaviour traditionally associated with males. The punishments for such transgressions exist to reinforce the system, and may be legal (e.g., the person perceived to be cross-dressing may be imprisoned, as in several Asian and African countries) and/or social (e.g., a woman acting assertively may be perceived as less likeable).[43]

As a consequence of these heteronormative factors, exclusion and discrimination in employment is often deeply-rooted. Compared with cisgender women, representation of LGBTQ+ subgroups is small, resulting in their interests and needs not only being marginalised, but often being invisible to the cisgender majority.

PHYLL OPOKU-GYIMAH, LADY PHYLL

"When we rise together, we are mighty."

Lady Phyll is a British activist who campaigns for LGBTQ+ equality, racial equality, and gender equality. She is a co-founder and Executive Director of UK Black Pride, and Executive Director of the Kaleidoscope Trust. In 2016, she publicly refused an MBE, citing the UK's role in the formation of anti-LGBTQ+ laws in countries in the British Empire.

1.4. Patriarchal values, gender, and sexuality

Like the barriers discussed in our Three Barriers to Women's Progression white paper[5], many of the barriers that LGBTQ+ people face are built on patriarchal notions surrounding gender. For LGBTQ+ identities, it is important to call out this root cause barrier, so we can expand our understanding on how patriarchal values operate alongside heteronormativity and cissexism to form unique challenges and barriers for this community and its respective subgroups.

In particular, patriarchal values contribute to a binarised masculine/feminine cultural system that characterises lesbians and gay men as crossing the gender binary. In other words, those who are attracted only to the same sex are seen to be transgressing established notions of what it means to be 'a man' or 'a woman' and are thus often stereotyped as having characteristics from another gender.

Lesbian women, therefore, are often characterised as more masculine than heterosexual women, and stereotypes typically applied to cis heterosexual men are also often applied to them.[44] [45] [46] Similarly, gay men are often stereotyped as more feminine than heterosexual men, and thus stereotypes typically applied to cis heterosexual women are often applied to them too.[47] [48] [49] These patriarchal characterisations of gender, leading to gendered LGBTQ+ stereotypes, can lead to different forms of discrimination in organisations, particularly in professions that are traditionally dominated by one gender. For example, gay men may be perceived as less hireable than heterosexual men in professions that are seen as traditionally masculine, such as roofer, police office, investment banker, or mechanic (with no difference noted between lesbian women and straight women).[50] Conversely, gay men are seen as more hireable than heterosexual men in traditionally feminine professions (e.g., flight attendant, nurse, choreographer, preschool teacher).[51]

SHAPE TALENT

Accelerating gender equality

2. Organisational barriers

The second category of barriers relate to hurdles experienced in the workplace. Some of these are 'systemic', such as pay disparities and hiring discrimination, and others relate to organisational cultures and norms which disadvantage LGBTQ+ employees. We call these Organisational Barriers.

> Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.
>
> **James Baldwin | Author**

2. Organisational barriers

The ways in which marginalisation, discrimination, and stigma manifest within the workplace for LGBTQ+ employees are roughly analogous to how they manifest for cis female employees, as outlined in the *Three Barriers to Women's Progression* white paper[5]. The barriers appear most strongly when decisions and decision-makers are involved (e.g., hiring, remuneration, promotions), and it is here where culturally engrained ideals that devalue non-male, non-heterosexual and non-cisgender employees and jobseekers can be most visibly observed.

When it comes to organisational barriers, we found a number of similarities with the original Three Barriers Model™. However, the evidence suggests that the LGBTQ+ community might experience these barriers more intensively or in different ways, as they are subject to double prejudice (patriarchal and heteronormative influences) even before considering the other marginalised identities that one may have. Equally, new barriers also emerged that, while reflecting some of the experiences faced by cis women, are more specific to the LGBTQ+ community, for example, heteroprofessionalism and the LGBTQ+ Glass Ceiling.

Systemic barriers

2.1. Intersectionality

As with cis women, some of those in the LGBTQ+ community can face unique individual barriers related to having multiple marginalised identities. The term 'intersectionality' recognises how different elements of our identity – such as gender, race, age, class, marital status, disability or sexual orientation – overlap to form individualised experiences of oppression and marginalisation.[52] Individuals can thus experience the intersecting, cumulative and often unique effects of different forms of interacting discrimination, such as sexism, racism, ageism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and ableism.

Studies focusing on Black lesbian women discuss how participants experienced prejudice, in an additive manner, from being Black, female and a lesbian – a form of "triple jeopardy".[53 54] As well as facing sexism, manifesting as pay inequity, being denied advancement opportunities, and sexist remarks, the participants discussed how racism was a constant threat. The stress faced because of racism was alleviated somewhat by their bonds with the Black community, but these bonds were tested by perceived heteronormativity and homophobia. Some participants reported not coming out in the workplace, because as a Black woman they didn't want to add to the discrimination they already faced. Those who were out recalled how there were instances when they faced discrimination in the workplace but didn't know if it was because of their gender, race, or sexual orientation.[55]

A study investigating discrimination against black and/or gay men finds that white gay men are evaluated less favourably than white straight men in job applications, but black gay men are treated *more* favourably than black straight men.[56] It is argued that this arises from the conjunction of two opposing stereotypes – black men are stereotyped as violent and threatening, whereas gay men are stereotyped as feminine and weak, and thus non-threatening.[57] Black gay men then, are perceived to be less threatening than black straight men, and the former are thus evaluated more favourably.[58] Another study found that racial/ethnic minority men are in effect 'de-racialised' if they are gay, i.e., they are perceived as less stereotypical of their racial or ethnic group.[59] Signalling sexual orientation leads to different evaluations of one's competence and warmth, and this effect differs depending on the race of the person being evaluated – while white lesbian women are rated as less competent and warm than white straight women, Arab lesbian women are rated as more competent and more warm than straight Arab women, with the researchers arguing that this is because the former are seen to break stereotypes.[60] Gay men are rated as less competent and more warm than straight men, but the effects are smaller if they are also Arab men, compared to White men.[61]

Because of disparities in earnings and discrimination within employment (see below), older LGBTQ+ people in the USA face increased financial risk than older straight people[62], and were affected more severely by the COVID-19 pandemic, with older LGBTQ+ people of colour facing even worse outcomes.[63]

These findings highlight the complexity involved in intersectional analyses and lived experience, lending support to the critique of 'single-axis analyses', wherein only a single source of discrimination (e.g., racism) is focused on, leading to a distortion of the reality of marginality.[64]

Systemic barriers

2.2 Career identity, development and choices

There are several issues and challenges related to career development that younger LGBTQ+ people, in the process of choosing and building their career, may face. These are compounded by the fact that LGBTQ+ people can have fewer role models who can provide guidance or inspiration, or model how to successfully manage having a stigmatised identity in particular professions.[65] [66]

Because cognitive resources may be taken up with stress and indecision related to one's developing sexual and/or gender identity, fewer resources may be available for vocational planning, compared to heterosexual peers, which could have a long-term effect on the LGBTQ+ person's career success.[67] In addition, LGBTQ+ adolescents may look to stereotypical "LGBTQ+ occupations", e.g., the gay hairdresser or the lesbian truck-driver,[68] as a means of escaping anticipated discrimination in other industries or professions.[69]

Organisations seeking to redress historical underrepresentation from LGBTQ+ employees in their industry may therefore benefit from initiating positive action campaigns that signal inclusion and acceptance for all sexual and gender identities.

MARSHA P. JOHNSON

"How many years has it taken people to realize that we are all brothers and sisters and human beings in the human race?"

Marsha P. Johnson (1945-1992), an African American trans woman, was an activist for LGBTQ+ rights and those are homeless. She was part of the Stonewall Riots of New York in 1969, often considered the birth of the modern LGBTQ+ rights movement. Marsha's life and untimely death drew attention to the many intersectional struggles faced by LGBTQ+ people of colour.

Systemic barriers

2.3 Limited expatriation opportunities

A particular barrier affecting LGBTQ+ employees involves work assignments (and longer-term expatriation) that involve working in countries that are unfriendly to LGBTQ+ people, or unsafe due to legislation and social norms that outlaw LGBTQ+ identities and diverse gender expression (e.g., Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Egypt, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Malaysia).

LGBTQ+ employees are often tasked with trying to achieve work-related goals in other countries whilst being cognisant of the legal and social status of their marginalised sexual and/or gender identity whilst in these countries. They may decide to 'go back into the closet' (i.e., resume hiding their identity) in these countries[70], and suffer the cognitive toll that this entails.[71] Trans expatriates may face significant unique challenges, as their status as a trans person may be less easy to hide.[72] Even in countries where LGBTQ+ identities are not criminalised, the social norms of the local culture may render the expatriation an unsafe and thus undesirable assignment.[73] Many LGBTQ+ expatriates may also experience limited support from both their organisation and home country.[74]

This lack of potentially useful development opportunities and access to networks in other countries may affect LGBTQ+ employees' ability to compete for promotions and leadership positions, particular in industries and organisations where global travel and networks are of particular importance.

Systemic barriers

2.4 Recruitment discrimination and unemployment

Recruitment discrimination has shown to be particularly problematic for LGBTQ+ identities. The results of studies testing discrimination in the labour market show a consistent and significant pattern of discrimination against job applicants in the LGBTQ+ community, across geographical area and industry/profession.[75] A meta-analysis[76] shows that openly gay job applicants in OECD countries face similar levels of discrimination as ethnic minority job applicants. LGBTQ+ applicants for lower-skill professions face particularly high levels of discrimination, but less so in higher-skill professions, perhaps because discriminating in higher-skill professions costs comparatively more because of a smaller potential candidate pool. Lesbian women appear to face significantly less discrimination than gay men, except in those professions that are female-dominated.[77] Compared to remuneration, where evidence of a gay penalty and lesbian premium has been identified, studies of hiring discrimination suggest that gay men and lesbian women both face comparatively worse outcomes than their heterosexual counterparts.

There is evidence to suggest that the perceived femininity and masculinity of gay men and lesbians, respectively, contributes to the discrimination they may face on the labour market; as above, gay men face more discrimination than straight men in professions seen as traditionally masculine[78], whereas lesbian women face more discrimination than heterosexual women, especially in professions seen as traditionally feminine (e.g., nursing and elementary teaching).[79] Those whose voices 'sound gay' (i.e., a male with a more feminine sounding voice and a female with a more masculine sounding voice) face discrimination in hiring when compared to those who 'sound heterosexual' (i.e., their voices conform to gendered expectations).[80 81]

Gay men are more likely to be unemployed than heterosexual men, while lesbian women have a similar probability to heterosexual women.[82 83] However, both lesbian women and gay men have an average shorter employer tenure than heterosexual counterparts.[84] While lesbian women and heterosexual women have similar rates of unemployment, this may be because there are more periods of unemployment for lesbians (who are more likely to leave their jobs because of discrimination), but these periods of unemployment are shorter than those faced by heterosexual women (potentially as a result of specialisation, see section 2.5), resulting in a similar overall rate.[85] Gay men have a higher unemployment rate than straight men and are unemployed for longer.[86 87] A national survey of trans people in the USA in 2011 found the rate of unemployment to be double that of cis people, with trans people of colour facing four times the rate of unemployment.[88] In addition, 16% of the survey's respondents were forced to enter into sex work to survive.[89]

A recent study suggests that the gender of the hirer may play a role in the discrimination faced by LGBTQ+ job applicants, with male participants in the study rating résumés from men and women less favourably if they signal an LGBTQ+ identity.[90] Gendered norms also played a role alongside sexual orientation; résumés from women who did not signal an LGBTQ+ identity (and who are thus perceived to be heterosexual) were rated more poorly if they contained traditionally masculine adjectives (e.g., assertive, aggressive, confident) than if they contained traditionally feminine adjectives (e.g., caring, kind, sympathetic) but this was not found for those perceived to be lesbians.[91] In other words, heterosexual women who were seen to be transgressing established patriarchal norms about gender were treated less favourably than those who were seen to exemplifying those norms, whereas lesbian women did not suffer from such effects, perhaps as a result of their being stereotyped as more masculine anyway. Similarly, other researchers have found that a belief in traditional gender roles was associated with a lower hireability rating for gay/lesbian job applicants in comparison to heterosexual applicants.[92]

The trans population has a particularly high level of unemployment, in comparison to the cisgender population and other members of the LGBTQ+ community. Researchers implicate discrimination (and a lack of protective legislation) in workplaces, as well as in educational and housing settings, in the significantly worse socio-economic outcomes that trans people face in comparison to cisgender people.[93] Employment discrimination against trans people has been linked to decision-makers (e.g., recruiters) fearing that trans people are more likely to suffer from poor physical and mental health and thus be less productive, as well as to anticipated transphobia on behalf of the trans applicant's potential colleagues and customers.[94] Unemployment then has knock-on effects on the lives of trans people, with some being forced into sex-work in order to survive.[95]

Systemic barriers

2.5. Invisible pay disparities

Since the 1990s, consistent evidence has shown the existence of a 'gay-penalty' and a 'lesbian-premium' in relation to pay and remuneration.[96 97 98] That is, although estimates differ across region and industry, gay men appear to earn less than similarly qualified, educated, and experienced heterosexual men, and lesbian women earn more than counterpart heterosexual women.[99] It has been suggested that these disparities are particularly concentrated within the private and non-profit sectors.[100]

Generally, perceived masculinity may be a primary organising force here, as well as what are termed the 'fatherhood bonus' and the 'motherhood penalty' in remuneration.[101] Gay men may be seen as more feminine, and less likely to be fathers, than heterosexual men and thus earn less on average, but, because they are men, are positioned above women in the hierarchy. Lesbian women, perhaps because they are characterised as more masculine than heterosexual women, and less likely to be mothers, have been found to earn more than them on average.

Those in same-sex lesbian or gay male couples have been found to experience more of the premium or penalty, respectively.[102 103] Theories regarding specialisation predict that same sex couples are less specialised with regards the balance of labour market activity and housework activity than heterosexual couples.[104 105] Gay men in couples are on average more likely to spend more time on housework activity compared to heterosexual men in couples, which negatively impacts the former's average pay over time. Lesbian women in couples are also less specialised than heterosexual women in couples, leading to the former having a greater focus on labour market activities, which is rewarded through their evaluations, promotions, and subsequent pay.[106]

Pay differences by sexual orientation and gender identity

Gay penalty	gay men earn 7% less than similarly qualified heterosexual men[112]
Bisexual penalty	bisexual men earn 9% less, and bisexual women earn 5% less, than their heterosexual counterparts[113]
Lesbian premium	On average, lesbians earn 7% more than similarly qualified heterosexual women[114]
Trans woman penalty	After transitioning, trans women experience a 20% fall in their annual earnings[115]
Trans man penalty	After transitioning, trans men experience an 8% rise in their annual earnings[116]

The little evidence on bisexual people indicates that bisexual men earn significantly less than similar heterosexual men and bisexual women earn significantly less than similar heterosexual women.[107 108] Studies on pay discrimination against those in the trans community hint at the role of cissexism. Researchers have focused on the earnings of trans people after they transition and suggest that trans women earn less after they transition, while trans men earn as much (and perhaps a little more) after they transition.[109 110] In other words, their findings suggest that the labour market seems to penalise those that appear to move away from a prototypical masculine, male standard. Another US-based study suggests that binary trans people in general (both trans men and trans women) are 11.7% less likely than cis people to be employed and more likely than cis people to receive lower wages.[111]

Culture and work norms

2.6 Implicit bias and LGBTQ+ stereotypes

As well as gender-based stereotypes based on patriarchal values, LGBTQ+ are the target of more specific stereotyping. Gay men are often hyper-sexualised and seen as promiscuous, sexually deviant, and even as paedophilic[117], which can particularly lead to a fear of discrimination and the non-disclosure of their sexual orientation if they work in roles involving children, e.g., teaching.[118] [119] Lesbian women are often stereotyped as hypersexual also, as well as unattractive, overtly masculine, and hating men, leading to many delaying coming out.[120] Bisexuals are often stereotyped as sexually promiscuous and likely to be unfaithful in relationships, or have their identity erased (bi-erasure), with people claiming they are either gay (and have not realised it/do not want to come out as gay) or are actually straight (and seeking attention).[121] Similarly, trans people also face stereotyping related to sexual deviancy and predatory behaviour, as well as being seen as mentally ill and abnormal[122], and have in recent years particularly suffered from overt hostility in the UK and USA media.[123]

Therefore, while patriarchal norms position men as superior and women as inferior, heteronormativity and cissexism reinforce these norms by punishing those seen to be transgressing them – through their behaviour, appearance, sexual orientation or gender identity.

> I was up a ladder cleaning the ceiling and a colleague grabbed my behind twice. My manager saw the whole thing and when I complained, he said that I must like that sort of thing because I am a bi woman.
>
> **Participant | TUC The Cost of Being Out at Work survey[124]**

Culture and work norms

2.7. Microaggressions, discrimination and everyday sexism

As the Work Report from Stonewall[125] mentioned at the beginning of this white paper found – many LGBTQ+ participants face discrimination at work. Interpersonal discrimination is a common barrier faced by LGBTQ+ employees, who face homophobic, biphobic and/or transphobic harassment from managers and supervisors, colleagues, and customers. In particular, women within the LGBTQ+ community can face sexual harassment related to both their gender and sexual orientation.
One tends to think of harassment in terms of blatant, aggressive, hostility. However, because of the prevalence of anti-discrimination legislation and policies within workplaces, much of the discrimination faced by LGBTQ+ employees is no longer blatant or obvious, and is instead subtle or coded, delivered in a way that allows the perpetrator to feign innocence or a misunderstanding. There are many different ways to characterise this form of discrimination, but the concept of microaggressions is often used.

Microaggressions are "brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative... slights and insults toward members of oppressed groups".[126]
The construction of the term microaggressions may lead some to downplay their significance, yet the 'micro' in the term refers to the subtle nature of these acts of prejudice, aggression and/or hostility, rather than the impact, which may not be 'micro' at all. They can lead to extremely hostile workplaces for those with marginalised identities. Because they are often so subtle, happen so quickly, and are easy to characterise as unintentional, it may be difficult for those experiencing them to make a successful complaint to workplace officials.

> I had a particularly negative, nasty experience with one of the senior people in the firm. He sort of indicated that he would fix me, and sort me out: 'Don't be bothering with that kind of nonsense' kind of thing, 'You're far too pretty' kind of stuff.
>
> **Geraldine**

Microaggressions directed at sexual minorities may relate to the idea that sexual orientation "is just a phase".[127] Heteronormative standards are evident here, with lesbians and bisexual women more likely to be told to dress in a more feminine manner[128], and gay and bisexual men face negative messages about their speech and mannerisms.[129] Microaggressions experienced by gay men involved stereotypes surrounding promiscuity, HIV prevalence, femininity and the general use of anti-gay slurs in casual conversation, as well as consistently hearing the phrase "that's so gay" used to devalue or deride something.[130] Lesbian women face microaggressions based on misogyny and sexual exoticisation by heterosexual men. Microaggressions directed at transgender people may be based on genuine misunderstanding or intentional ignorance about trans issues, as well as stereotypical assumptions about trans people, and gendered norms.[132] They could include being condescending and patronising about one's outward gender expression (e.g., "teaching" someone how to behave according to established gendered standards).[133]

Homophobic interpersonal discrimination can additionally create a negative environment for colleagues who witness it, rather than being the target of it, and prompt them to focus more on concealing their marginalised sexual orientation rather than revealing it.[134]

On average, trans employees face a significantly larger amount of discrimination, harassment, and violence in the workplace than their cisgender colleagues.[135] Harassment against trans employees could involve maliciously and purposefully deadnaming (using a trans person's former name) and misgendering (using the wrong pronouns when referring to a trans person).[136] Trans people also face exclusion and marginalisation in the workplace.[137]

LISA POWER MBE

"...We can imagine a world where LGBT+ people everywhere can live free, fulfilled lives. And I think that's got to be the starting point. We have to stay committed to the idea that we can imagine that world. And if we can imagine it, then by working together we can bring that world into being."

Lisa Power (b. 1954) is a British LGBTQ+ rights and sexual health activist. She co-founded Stonewall, the largest LGBTQ+ rights charity in Europe, and the Pink Paper publication. In 1988 she became Secretary General of the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) and was the first openly LGBTQ+ person to speak at the United Nations on gay rights. She was appointed an MBE in 2011 for her campaigning work.

Culture and work norms

2.8. Leaders: born or made?

The 'Think Manager, Think Male' phenomenon is a belief that the characteristics of successful managers are more likely to be held by men than by women. This has been researched since the 1970s, and has been found to be prevalent in countries around the world.[138] Related to this phenomenon is Leader Categorization Theory, which argues that people construct in their minds a prototypical profile of a leader and evaluate the effectiveness of a leader based on how well the leader's attributes match the prototype leader. This often negatively affects the evaluation of female leaders and non-white leaders.[139]

This work has been extended in relation to LGBTQ+ employees, specifically gay men and lesbian women, and somewhat follows the gendered stereotyping of both subgroups. Gay male managers were associated with female gender stereotypes[140] and perceived as completely different to the prototypical manager profile, while lesbian managers faced both male[141] [142] and, in some cases, female[143] gender stereotyping, and perceptions of masculinity were associated with higher leadership effectiveness ratings.[144] Crucially, heterosexual male managers are seen as more similar to successful leaders than gay male or lesbian female leaders[145], and gay males are perceived to lack the qualities of being a successful leader.[146] As well as sexual orientation, masculinity and femininity also play a role – with more masculine male leaders being evaluated more favourably than more feminine male leaders, regardless of the leader's sexual orientation.[147]

Patriarchal norms around gender and leadership are not the only barriers for prospective LGBTQ+ leaders, however. As can be seen below, heteronormativity may be a consistent barrier affecting the chances of LGBTQ+ employees reaching leadership positions.

Culture and work norms

2.9. Heteroprofessionalism and the LGBTQ+ glass ceiling

Like the traditional glass ceiling – the invisible yet solid barrier that stops women from rising to the top of organisations – researchers have previously found evidence to suggest the existence of a 'gay glass ceiling', a barrier similarly stopping gay men and lesbian women from rising to the top of their organisation.[148] In the UK, both gay men and lesbians are significantly more likely than their heterosexual counterparts to have managerial authority and/or supervisory responsibilities. Gay men are also more likely than heterosexual men to have lower-level managerial roles, but are significantly less likely to have higher-level managerial roles, implicating the existence of a glass ceiling at this level. Conversely, lesbian women are less likely to have any managerial role (lower or higher level) than heterosexual women, despite evidence from Italy highlighting that lesbian women were perceived as being more effective leaders because of the stereotypically masculine traits that were attributed to them.[149] Bisexual men and women are less likely to have managerial authority or roles, although the evidence is less statistically significant for them.[150] Considering research on formal glass ceiling discrimination against trans employees, we may arguably extend this concept to discuss an "LGBTQ+ Glass Ceiling". While research on this phenomenon is relatively rare in comparison to the female glass ceiling, a number of studies have highlighted different forms of workplace discrimination that can contribute to it – particularly around promotions, performance reviews (and informal evaluations), and cultural norms surrounding leadership and the image of a leader.

Heteroprofessionalism is a term used to describe how norms of what constitutes as 'professional' in a workplace environment are often built on heteronormative ideals; presentations or behaviours that do not conform to the established binary gender norms not only attract discrimination (because they transgress *social* norms) but also appear as inappropriate and unprofessional (and transgress *organisational* norms).[151] These gender norms may be explicit – for example, in a binarised and gendered dress code, or tacit – shared through production and reproduction of certain ways of presenting and behaving in the workplace.[152] Ultimately, these may affect perceptions – and thus formal evaluations – of performance in a work setting, with LGBTQ+ employees who do not conform to heteronormative standards being evaluated more poorly.

Heteroprofessionalism may be a contributing factor to the gay glass ceiling. Men who 'sound gay' and women who 'sound lesbian' are discriminated against when applying for leadership roles, implicating a heteronormative aspect to evaluations of leadership potential.[153] Research in the USA suggests that LGBTQ+ people are often passed over for promotion[154], and although gay men in the UK are more likely than heterosexual men to report managerial and supervisory responsibilities, that are significantly less likely to be in the highest management positions.[155][156] Similar to the 'gay penalty' and 'lesbian premium' phenomena within remuneration, in Sweden gay men in same-sex couples are less likely to be in managerial positions, while lesbian women were more likely, compared to their respective heterosexual counterparts.[157] For trans employees, 23% of respondents in a national US survey of trans people stated that they had been denied a promotion because they were trans.[158] Other trans research participants have reported that they were denied promotions or fired when their managers learned of their intention to transition in their workplace.[159][160]

The research discussing the LGBTQ+ glass ceiling and heteroprofessionalism highlights the need for clear and consistent promotion criteria and opportunities in organisations, where one's individual talents can be objectively assessed. It is only in this way that a true meritocracy, that rewards the talent and hard work of anyone, no matter what their identity, can be achieved.

SHAPE TALENT

Accelerating gender equality

3. Personal barriers

The third category of barriers relate to how LGBTQ+ people present and share (or do not share) their identity within the workplace. We call these Personal Barriers.

> When I dare to be powerful – to use my strength in the service of my vision – then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid.
>
> **Audre Lorde | Author | Academic & Activist**

3.0. Personal barriers

There are no barriers in the *Three Barriers Model*™ that are similar to coming out or transitioning. These processes can make up fundamental parts of an LGBTQ+ person's life and their experience within the organisation(s) they work in.

The personal barriers section highlights the innate differences in experience between those with a marginalised sexual identity and those with a marginalised gender identity. While the sections above highlight the similarities, common history and shared sources of marginalisation, at a personal level the development and revelation of a marginalised sexual identity may be completely different to that of a marginalised gender identity. In addition, the way in which these distinct subgroups of the LGBTQ+ are treated socially and legally can differ widely. Trans people in particular are facing a lot of attention and outright hostility in the media in the UK and USA at the moment and are the focus of legislative efforts designed to curtail their rights in several countries. Although those who are transphobic may often be homophobic too, transphobia here appears to be more acceptable (or at least, less recognisable) than homophobia, leading to quite different contexts for each subgroup. Conversely, some countries retain criminal penalties for same-sex activities but afford legal protections to gender minorities (as is the case for Khawaja Sira in Pakistan).

3.1 Coming out

Coming out refers to the disclosure of one's sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Because LGBTQ+ people routinely face stigmatisation, coming out in thus an important decision to make in the workplace, where discrimination (explored above) may affect their career, employment and social life. It is an additional consideration that many in the LGBTQ+ community have when they are choosing a workplace, profession or career, and the process of coming out does not stop once one joins the workplace. Although it is often thought of as a tell-or-don't-tell decision, researchers have consistently described how complex the coming out process may be.[161] Concealing one's sexual orientation and/or gender identity, or continually dodging questions about it, can take up psychological resources[162] that could be used for work-related matters or other personal issues, and can negatively affect their mental and physical health, productivity, and job satisfaction.[163]

Coming out at work is associated with increased confidence and happiness at work, greater openness with colleagues, heightened productivity,[164] higher job satisfaction,[165] higher affective commitment, higher perceived top management support, lower role ambiguity, lower role conflict, and lower conflict between work and home.[166] Two of the most influential factors in choosing whether or not to come out at work, and which strategy to use, are the perceived supportiveness of the organisation[167] [168] and of co-workers,[169] [170] so it is within the organisation and employee's best interests for the former to build in supportive structures, policies and practices for the latter. Of course, one deciding not to come out in the workplace may do so not because they are ashamed or fear reprisal from colleagues, customers, or the organisation, but because they simply do not feel it is necessary, or wish to keep their personal life separate from their home life. Certain cultures (e.g., in Japan) may discourage the sharing of any personal information whatsoever, and so 'coming out in the workplace' may not be a primary consideration for LGBTQ+ employees.

The process of coming out is complicated by the fact that it is on-going – one is always making decisions about their coming out strategy to new people they meet, or upon entry into a new workplace. In addition, one must consider the complexity involved within 'disclosure disconnects', i.e., where one has disclosed their identity in one aspect of their life (e.g., with friends) but not disclosed it in another aspect (e.g., work).[171] As the use of social media and working from home have increased dramatically, particularly since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the line between one's work-life and one's home-life has blurred somewhat, meaning that the strategies involved in coming out may need to be adapted.

> I shouldn't need to feel like I have to be tougher to be out.
>
> **Participant | TUC The Cost of Being Out at Work survey[172]**

FRANK MUGISHA

"For me, it is about standing out and speaking in an environment where you are not sure if you will survive the next day; it is this fear that makes me strong, to work hard and fight to see a better life for LGBTI persons in Uganda."

Frank Mugisha is a prominent Ugandan LGBTQ+ rights activist. He is the Executive Director of Sexual Minorities Uganda, an NGO that engages in policy-reform and provides protection, medical attention, and other services for LGBTQ+ Ugandans, who face extreme discrimination, violence, and persecution. He was awarded the Robert F Kennedy Award for Human Rights and was nominated for the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize.

3.2 Transitioning

Transitioning is the process of aligning one's outward presentation with one's innate gender identity and, as above, may take place at any time in a person's life. In a workplace setting, the process of transitioning often involves a discussion with the Human Resources department, as one may wish to change one's name and gender on file. However, human resource professionals may not have the prerequisite knowledge to effectively lead this process, resulting in the trans employee themselves having to take charge and point out the changes needed to be made.

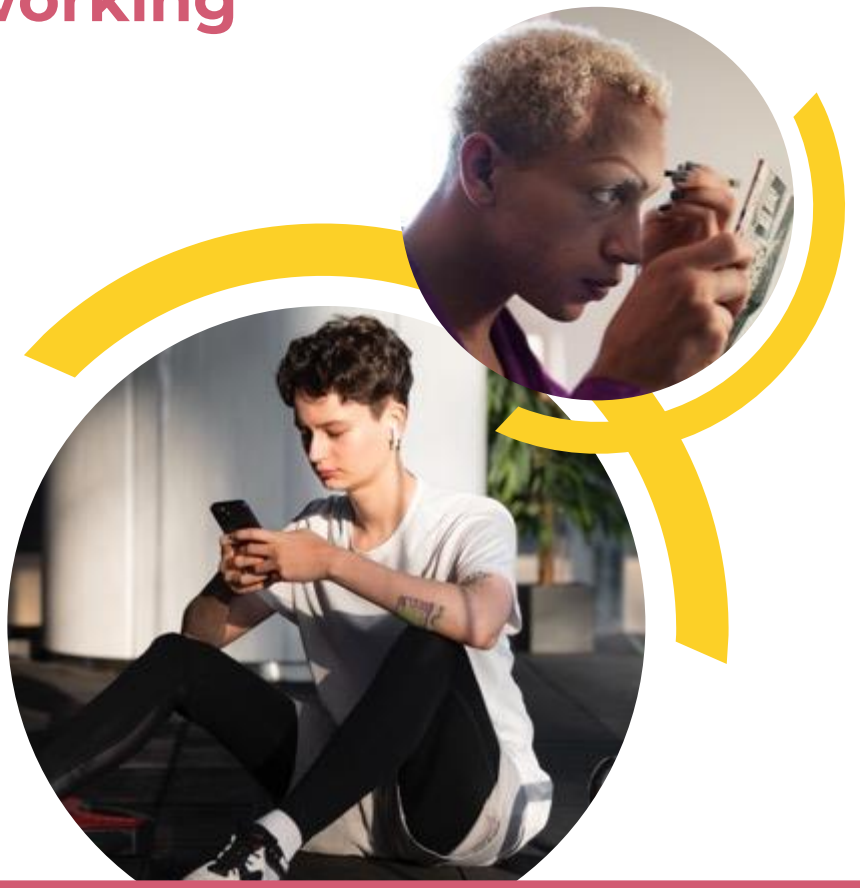
Transitioning in the workplace can lead to the trans employee facing extreme marginalisation and exclusion, as well as emotional abuse, physical threats, and a loss of respect,[173] [174] leading many to leave their job[175] or taking a leave of absence to address mental health concerns.[176] Trans employees who have transitioned and are entering new workplaces or applying for jobs may remove any job history and experience that was gained under their previous gender expression,[177] which may impact their ability to get roles matching their skills and goals.[178]

Many trans people reported that they believe they have been dismissed from their jobs after transitioning,[179] [180] although their workplaces used economic reasons like budget cuts or downsizing. Non-white transgender respondents report experiencing firing discrimination at a higher rate.[181]

3.3 Reluctance in networking

Networking and interpersonal relations are found to be more difficult for LGBTQ+ workers,[182] [183] arguably because of the existence of "good ole' boy networks"[184] and "boys clubs"[185] (maintained exclusively by heterosexual men within organisations) and the past experience, or fear, of harassment or stigmatisation, leading to decreased confidence and social engagement. The management of a stigmatised identity, along with the trepidation associated with the coming out process can lead lesbians and gay men to be hesitant when it comes to forging networks.[186]

A lack of confidence in relation to networking and building good workplace relationships may lead to LGBTQ+ workers being perceived by co-workers and managers as unfriendly or hostile; which could have implications for performance evaluations, interpersonal relations and overall career development.



> As gay people, we've always seen the world as a place that may or may not like us, depending on where we're at, and we kinda tip-toe into equality... We want to make sure that each step forward that we're not putting ourselves in harm's way, that we're not going to be discriminated against or whatnot, because we don't trust the structures that are there.
>
> **Yvonne**

SHAPE TALENT

Accelerating gender equality

Recommendations for organisations

Address heteronormativity

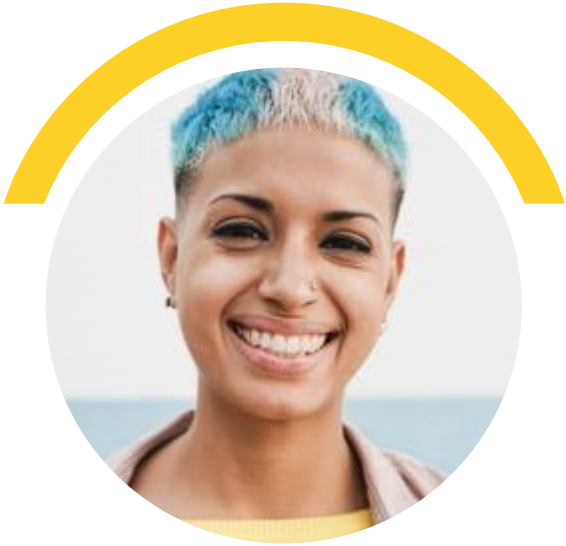
Many organisations, especially those within industries dominated by a particular gender, have considered how gender and gendered stereotypes affect the composition of the talent pool, the pipeline of future talent, and representation within the current workforce. The discussion above similarly highlights how gender and sexual orientation (through patriarchy and heteronormativity) may both play a role in the exclusion or discrimination of LGBTQ+ employees, for example, gay men in male-dominated industries. There is a chance, therefore, to recreate existing positive action practices (e.g., advertising roles to particular demographics, having "tester days" and internships for students from under-represented groups, challenging stereotypes in recruitment campaigns) and tailor them to the LGBTQ+ community.

Tackling heteronormativity in the workplace may also involve a critical introspection of the organisation and its policies, practices, culture and physical aspects, to ensure that they are not designed with only a heterosexual, cisgender employee in mind. Does the workplace have gender-neutral bathrooms, for example? Is a uniform required, and are there only gendered versions?

Do the childcare and parental leave policies assume a heterosexual employee? Do the Human Resources systems allow gender-neutral salutations such as 'Mx', and easy updates to names and gender markers? When considered separately, these may seem like small oversights, but taken together they can communicate exclusion and even intolerance of LGBTQ+ employees and jobseekers.

Don't treat LGBTQ+ employees as a homogenous group

Although there are social, cultural and historical reasons why lesbian women, gay men, bisexual people, trans people and queer people all form one distinct and recognisable collective group, the barriers identified in this paper highlight how the respective subgroups within the LGBTQ+ community can face particular challenges related to their specific sexual orientation or gender identity. The individualised challenges that those with intersectional identities face are also discussed. In addition, geographical and cultural disparities in LGBTQ+ inclusion may mean that some subgroups enjoy more legal protection and societal acceptance than others.



This means that, although the subgroups face many shared barriers arising from common sources, and although the phrase 'LGBTQ+ community' is often used, those two words represent a plethora of identities, lived experiences, challenges, and barriers that we should also be cognisant of. An organisation can readily buy in broad-brush inclusion and anti-discrimination policies and practices but treating LGBTQ+ employees as a homogenous group may not lead to genuine inclusion.[187]

Multi-national organisations may be at particular risk from this; a blanket policy or practice that doesn't take into account local cultures, laws (see below), or customs, could be ineffective or invalidated, and may lead to scorn or distrust from LGBTQ+ employees.[188]

Eradicate discrimination

Within the workplace, performance appraisals and evaluations can potentially be affected by conscious prejudice or unconscious bias, influenced by heteronormative, patriarchal and/or cissexist norms and beliefs. Consequently, LGBTQ+ employees are subject to compounding prejudice making them even more vulnerable to discrimination and implicit bias. Where possible, the use of 360-degree feedback and appraisals can help mitigate the effects of anti-LGBTQ+ hostility arising from a small number of individuals. Within those performance management and talent management systems, clear objectives, desired outcomes, KPIs or goals, where appropriate, can minimise both anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination and preferential treatment for non-LGBTQ+ employees. Equally, decisions related to recruitment, remuneration and promotions should be designed so as to minimise the impact of implicit bias, for example, using blind CV screening.

With regards to interpersonal discrimination, organisations in many jurisdictions are liable for any harassment that happens in the workplace and may be brought to an employment tribunal if they fail to prevent or put a stop to it. In some cases, anti-LGBTQ+ harassment may be framed as arising from a religious belief, as innocent curiosity, as playful 'banter', or as a genuine lack of knowledge. For example, In the case of *Ms C v Thistle Communications Ltd*. (Scotland), the lesbian claimant was asked repeated and intrusive questions by her manager about sex between lesbian women and was told by a colleague that he didn't think "LGBT should be taught in schools". The employment tribunal found that she was subject to harassment on the basis of her sex and sexual orientation, and Thistle Communications were ordered to pay £30,468 to the claimant. To protect their LGBTQ+ employees and themselves, organisations should have clear and well-communicated anti-discrimination and harassment policies, provide anti-discrimination training, and engage in cultural audits to uncover any potential informal issues.

Understand the law

While legislation concerning other marginalised employees is often relatively static, laws concerning sexual orientation and gender identity (and particularly the latter) are more volatile. Many LGBTQ+ people in the world are still in a constant legal battle for their rights. While focus is often placed on new laws that promote LGBTQ+ inclusion (e.g., same-sex marriage, gender recognition), changes in law are not always beneficial for LGBTQ+ people – for example, Indonesia's new criminal code, which in effect criminalises sex between two people of the same gender, and the many newly proposed and enacted state laws within the USA restricting trans rights.

Issues concerning interpersonal discrimination against trans employees, inclusive bathroom facilities, and gender expression are known to be emotive and charged as well as, in some jurisdictions, complex. Indeed, some parts of the law and legal precedent are still being written and updated. For example, *Taylor V Jaguar Land Rover Ltd.* (UK), which involved a non-binary employee suffering harassment and issues regarding bathroom access, confirmed for the first time that non-binary and genderfluid people were protected under the *Equality Act 2010*. 'Gender critical beliefs' are protected by law under the Religion or Belief grounds of the *Equality Act 2010* in the UK. These include the beliefs that sex is biological, binary, and immutable, and should not be conflated with gender identity. Organisations are required to equally respect the law with regards gender critical beliefs whilst also ensuring that they are not used as a cover for transphobic harassment. UK case law protects trans people from malicious misgendering and deadnaming or other acts of harassment based on the grounds of gender reassignment.

A sound knowledge of the laws surrounding sexual orientation and gender identity is therefore required to ensure your organisation can meet, and in some cases surpass, legislative requirements. The extension of partner benefits to those in same-sex couples, for example, can be delivered at organisational level, even if local laws outlaw legal marriage.

Educate all employees

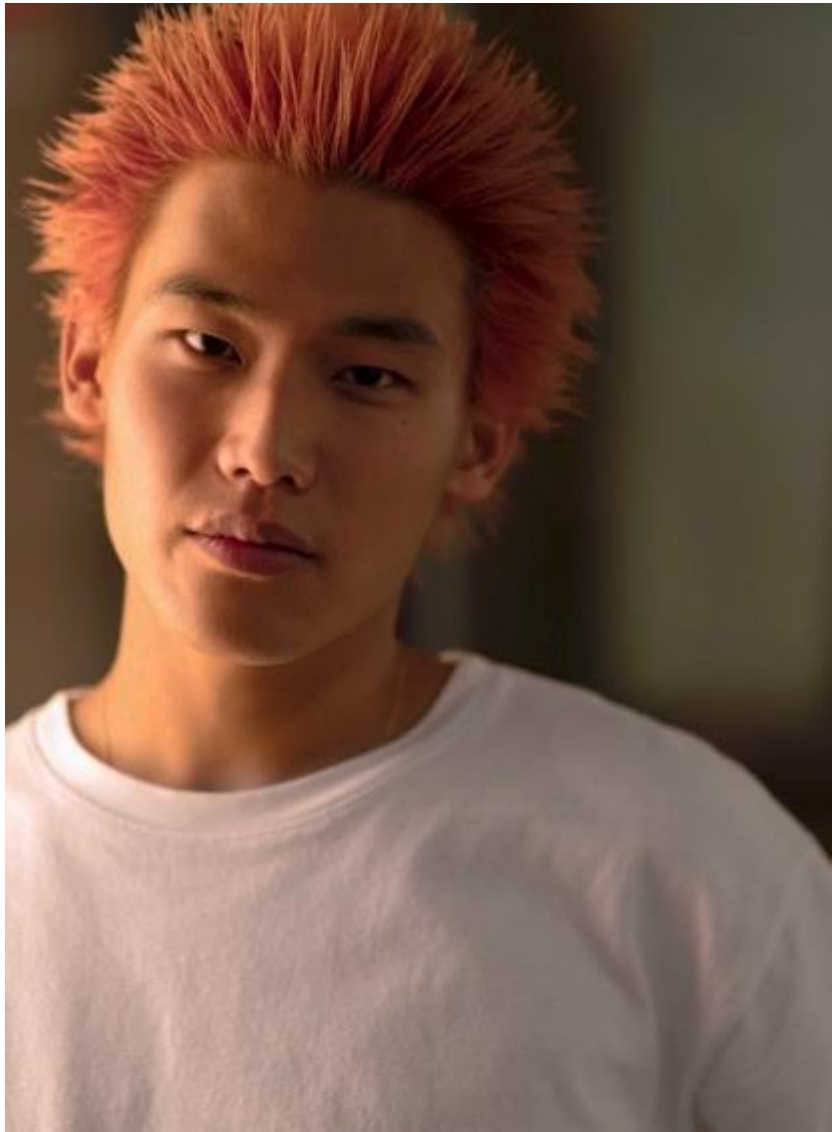
For many, the conversations and terminology surrounding LGBTQ+ issues, especially trans issues, are confusing and somewhat nerve-wracking. A fear of causing offence, and subsequent punishment, may stop employees from engaging with their LGBTQ+ colleagues, potentially leading to isolation and exclusion for the latter. Training and development can be offered to help demystify common concerns (e.g., “what do I do if I accidently misgender someone?”), clarify the terminology used in discussions about LGBTQ+ identities, and in many cases offer a starting point for conversations on LGBTQ+ inclusion in the workplace. Training and policies can also clarify what inappropriate conduct looks like (e.g., the difference between accidental deadnaming and malicious deadnaming), so pleading ignorance is no longer a viable excuse, and employers are more protected from vicarious liability.

Adopt a collaborative policy design

A policy should, where possible, have input from those it seeks to protect or promote inclusion for. Those with lived experience will have naturally have a greater sense of whether the policy will be effective and useable, and whether it addresses the issues those in the LGBTQ+ community commonly face.

There are many LGBTQ+ organisations and individuals around the world that can provide general advice on how to promote inclusion for these employees and may offer consulting services to appraise draft policies.

If available in your organisation, an LGBTQ+ employee resource group/employee network may be able to provide valuable feedback or guidance that naturally considers your unique organisational context. Care should be taken, however, to ensure that members of the employee network do not feel they have to offer feedback – some may not wish to discuss issues surrounding identity with their Human Resources department or managers. Care should also be taken to ensure that network members are not given disproportionate, unrecognised extra work to help facilitate this policy feedback and critique (i.e., a form of minority tax); an allocation of workload/time or extra financial remuneration will most likely render better results.



Communicate and share your policies

While your organisation may have excellent inclusion and anti-discrimination policies, it's important that your employees are made aware (and reminded) of them to ensure that any ambiguity is eliminated. In the case of anti-discrimination policies, this can deter would-be harassers from engaging in, for example, malicious deadnaming or misgendering. Additionally, your LGBTQ+ employees can feel protected and confident in their organisation's support if they are facing harassment, undergoing a transition, unsure about their benefits, or unconfident about engaging in the organisation's social events.

Inclusion policies can help make the lives and careers of LGBTQ+ employees better, but compared to policies regarding other groups, some have only relatively recently become widely known. Consider, for example, how some organisations may not have specific policies regarding trans inclusion and/or transitioning, because of the general lack of research and how new and/or complex it may be to many people. The fear of getting things wrong or being offensive might stop well-meaning policymakers in their tracks. Small to medium enterprises in particular may lack effective and comprehensive inclusion policies and may find themselves scrambling to draw up a policy when an employee begins to transition.

Sharing your policies with other companies (like your suppliers, distributors or even your competitors), as a form of best practice template that others could adapt to their context, would be a very visible and effective act of allyship and inclusion – not just for your employees, but for the LGBTQ+ community in general.

Adopt year-round and world-wide pride

In June of each year, more and more organisations are accused of 'pink-washing' or 'rainbow-washing', i.e., an ostensible show of support for the LGBTQ+ community that is superficial, limited, short-lived or even completely fictitious, for marketing and customer/employee branding purposes. It is a form of performative allyship, and often includes a temporary rebranding of corporate logos in rainbow colours and a large and visible float at the local Pride parade, both of which are placed in storage by the end of June (Pride month). Signalling inclusion like this can be useful in some ways, but consumers and employees alike are more aware now of cynical attempts by organisations to gain favour for minimal effort. There is a growing expectation that these temporary branding exercises are accompanied by genuine, year-round work behind the scenes to effectively improve the lives and careers of those in the LGBTQ+ community.

This may mean facing sometimes uncomfortable scenarios where an organisation will have to decide between two courses of action, both of which may have negative consequences. Some multinational companies have been criticised for changing to rainbow themed logos on all of their social media pages, except for those based in countries or regions where homosexuality is criminalised.[189] This may lead to local disagreements, but such a display of support may have particular value in these countries and demonstrate a strong commitment to inclusion.

About Shape Talent

At Shape Talent, we believe that not only do organisations benefit from having a better gender balance at the top, but families and societies do too.

We look at the whole system to ensure that our work has the biggest impact on the greatest number of people. At Shape Talent we don't just want to make an incremental impact. We want to be part of a fundamental shift towards gender balanced organisations and societies, where individuals of all genders thrive, and where organisations reap the benefits of this.

While our focus is on enabling more women to move into senior leadership roles, we also believe it is important to recognise the prejudice that other under-represented genders encounter and the critical need to dismantle barriers to all genders. Therefore, we simultaneously focus on building inclusive workplace cultures that will positively impact everyone. We achieve this in partnership with our clients, through organisational consulting and development programmes. Without a clear understanding of the underlying causes of gender imbalance, it is easy for organisations to expend wasted time and energy on solving the wrong problems. Our approach begins with a clear understanding of the key barriers unique to your organisation and we identify the priority areas which will have the greatest positive impact on your gender balance. We then design targeted interventions that will address these priority areas. We deliver against this roadmap and support you to evaluate the results of the programme and ensure you achieve your intended objectives.

Founded in 2017, Shape Talent is led by Sharon Peake, and is supported by a team of highly experienced coaches, psychologists, facilitators and consultants.

The Three Barriers Diagnostic Survey™

Our online survey is completed anonymously by employees of all genders. It provides a report which clearly identifies the areas that require the most focus in dismantling the barriers faced by women. The findings provide powerful insights on strengths and gaps across the business, identifying where an organisation needs to focus its efforts, and establishes a baseline for monitoring progress.

INSIGHTS

- Provides powerful insights as to how employee perceptions of career barriers compare with company ambitions
- Uncovers the root causes for gender disparity so EDI investment can be targeted and meaningful
- Delves beneath the superficial to pinpoint the underlying issues requiring attention and shines a light on high-risk areas for gender disparity

TARGETED ACTION

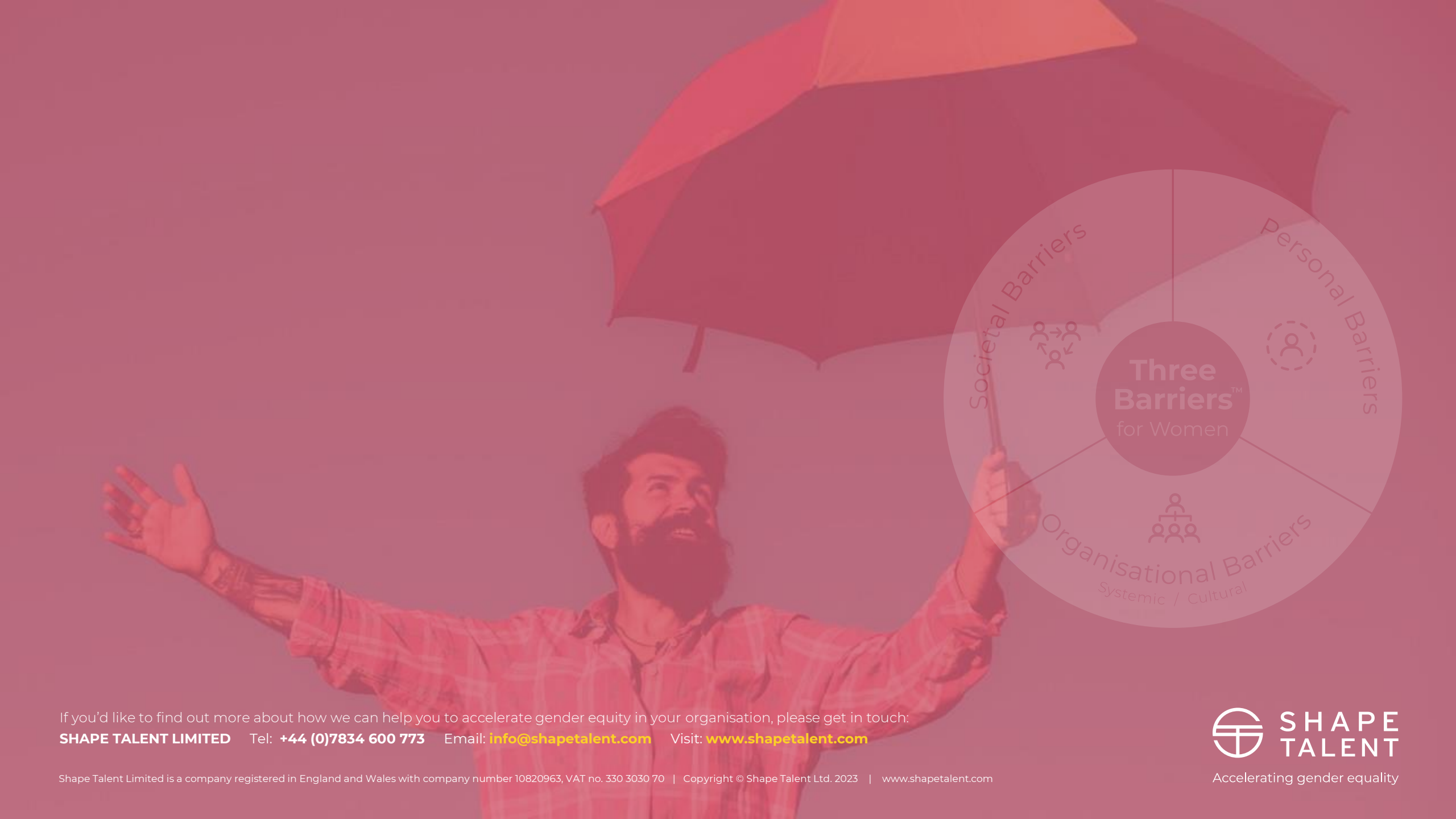
- Allows the creation of a focused gender balance action plan for your business, which is targeted, cost efficient and effective
- The option to analyse different elements of identity (intersectionality) provides you with unparalleled precision in identifying employee segments at risk, further aiding your action planning
- Identifies target segments for focus in accelerating the pipeline of women for leadership roles, in turn helping retain women

References

1. Bachmann, C. L. & Gooch, B. (2018). *LGBT in Britain: Work Report*. London, UK: Stonewall.
2. GLAAD (2022). *Glossary of Terms: LGBTQ*. https://www.glaad.org/reference/terms
3. Stonewall (2022). *List of LGBTQ+ terms*: https://www.stonewall.org.uk/list-lgbtq-terms
4. Hibbs, C. (2014). Cissexism. In: Teo, T. (eds) Encyclopedia of Critical Psychology. Springer, New York, NY.
5. Peake, S. (2022). Three Barriers to Women's Progression. What organisations can do. https://www.shapetalent.com/three-barriers-to-womens-progression-what-organisations-can-do/
6. Han, E., & O'Mahoney, J. (2014). British colonialism and the criminalization of homosexuality, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs, 27*(2), 268-288.
7. Ipsos (2021). *Ipsos 2021 LGBT+ Pride 2021 Survey*: https://www.ipsos.com/en-us/news-polls/ipsos-lgbt-pride-2021-global-survey
8. https://www.thepinknews.com/2019/12/13/uk-gay-parliament-world-2019-general-election-snp-conservatives-labour-lgbt/
9. https://victoryinstitute.org/news/new-lgbtq-gallup-data-reveals-enormous-gaps-in-lgbtq-political-representation-lgbtq-people-hold-just-0-2-of-elected-positions/
10. Ipsos *ab. cit.*
11. Magni, G. & Reynolds, A. (2021). Voter Preferences and the Political Underrepresentation of Minority Groups: Lesbian, Gay, and Transgender Candidates in Advanced Democracies, *The Journal of Politics, 83*(4), 1199-1215.
12. Everitt, J. & Horvath, L. (2021). Public attitudes and private prejudices: assessing voters' willingness to vote for out lesbian and gay candidates. Frontiers in Political Science 3, ISSN 2673-3145.
13. Reynolds, A. (2013). Representation and Rights: The Impact of LGBT Legislators in Comparative Perspective. *The American Political Science Review, 107*(2), 259–274. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43654014
14. Conron, K. J, & Goldberg, S. K. (2020). Adult LGBT Population in the United States. *UCLA: The Williams Institute*. Retrieved from https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1kz2t8c8
15. https://news.gallup.com/poll/329708/lgbt-identification-rises-latest-estimate.aspx
16. https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/bulletins/sexualorientationenglandandwales/census2021
17. McCarthy, N. (2016). *Europe's LGBT population mapped*. Statista, Oct 28 2016 [Online]. https://www.statista.com/chart/6466/europes-lgbt-population-mapped/
18. The Japan Times (2019). *Poll shows 1 in 10 in Japan identify as LGBT or other sexual minorities*. The Japan Times, 11 December 2019 [Online]. https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/12/11/national/social-issues/japan-lgbt-sexual-minority-survey/
19. Bowleg, L., Brooks, K., & Ritz, S. F. (2008). 'Bringing Home More Than a Paycheck:' An Exploratory Analysis of Black Lesbians' Experiences of Stress and Coping in the Workplace. *Journal of Lesbian Studies, 12*(1), 69-84.
20. Sadika, B., Wiebe, E., Morrison, M. A., & Morrison, T. G. (2020). Intersectional Microaggressions and Social Support for LGBTQ Persons of Color: A Systematic Review of the Canadian-Based Empirical Literature, *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, *16*(2), 111-147
21. McFadden, C., & Crowley-Henry, M. (2016). A systematic literature review on trans* careers and workplace experiences. In T. Koellen (Ed.), Sexual orientation and transgender issues in organizations (pp. 63–81). New York, NY: Springer.
22. Herman, J. L., Flores, A., & O'Neill, K. K. (2022). *How Many Adults and Youth Identify as Transgender in the United States?* Los Angeles, California: The Williams Institute.
23. McFadden, C. (2015). Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Careers and Human Resource Development: A Systematic Literature Review. *Human Resource Development Review, 14*(2), 12-162.
24. Stone, A. L. (2018). The Geography of Research on LGBTQ Life: Why sociologists should study the South, rural queers, and ordinary cities. *Sociology Compass, 12*(11).
25. Vongvisitsin, T.B. & Wong, A. K. F. (2021). Organisational change towards LGBTQ+ inclusion in hospitality and tourism: Managerial perspectives. *Tourism Management, 86*.
26. Wang, Y., Hu, Z., Peng, K. et al. (2020) Mapping out a spectrum of the Chinese public's discrimination toward the LGBT community: results from a national survey. *BMC Public Health, 20*(669).
27. https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/lifestyle-culture/article/3109788/japans-lgbt-community-mostly-stays-hiding-work-study
28. McFadden *op. cit.*
29. https://nhm.org/stories/beyond-gender-indigenous-perspectives-faafafine-and-faafatama
30. nytimes.com/2018/02/17/style/india-third-gender-hijras-transgender.html
31. https://rpl.hds.harvard.edu/religion-context/case-studies/gender/third-gender-and-hijras
32. Wilson, E, Pant, S.B., Comfort, M., Ekstrand, M. (2011). Stigma and HIV risk among Metis in Nepal. *Culture, Health & Sexuality,13*(3), 253-66.
33. https://nhm.org/stories/beyond-gender-indigenous-perspectives-muxe
34. https://www.iadb.org/en/improvinglives/celebrating-diversity-meet-mexicos-third-gender
35. https://www.ihs.gov/lgbt/health/twospirit/
36. https://www.theguardian.com/music/2010/oct/11/two-spirit-people-north-america
37. Warner, M., ed. (1991). *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
38. Robinson, B. A. (2016) Heteronormativity and Homonormativity. In: *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Gender and Sexuality Studies*.
39. Hibbs, C. (2014). Cissexism. In: Teo, T. (eds) Encyclopedia of Critical Psychology. Springer, New York, NY. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-5583-7_679
40. Ferrari, F., Imperato, C., & Mancini, T. (2021). Heteronormativity and the Justification of Gender Hierarchy: Investigating the Archival Data From 16 European Countries. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12:686974.
41. Corlett, S., Di Marco, D., Munduate, L., & Arenas, A. (2022). Manifestations and Reinforcement of Heteronormativity in the Workplace: A Systematic Scoping Review, *Journal of Homosexuality*, DOI: 10.1080/00918369.2022.2074334.
42. Robinson, B. A. (2016) Heteronormativity and Homonormativity. In: *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Gender and Sexuality Studies*.
43. Bolino M. C., & Turnley, W. H. (2003). Counternormative impression management, likeability, and performance ratings: the use of intimidation in an organizational setting. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour, 24*(2), 237-250.
44. Ahmed, A. M., Andersson, L. & Hammarstedt, M. (2013). Are Gay Men and Lesbians Discriminated against in the Hiring Process? *Southern Economic Association, 79*(3), 565-585.
45. Blashill, A. J., & Powlishta, K. K. (2009). Gay Stereotypes: The Use of Sexual Orientation as a Cue for Gender-Related Attributes, *Sex Roles, 61*, 783-793.
46. Miller, L. R., & Grollman, E. A. (2015). The Social Costs of Gender Nonconformity for Transgender Adults: Implications for Discrimination and Health. *Sociological Forum, 30*(3), 809-831.
47. Ahmed *et al. op. cit.*
48. Blashill & Powlishta *op. cit.*
49. Kite, M. E., & Deaux, K. (1987). Gender belief systems: Homosexuality and the implicit inversion theory. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 11*(1), 83–96.
50. Ahmed *et al. op. cit.*
51. Steffans, M. C., Niedlich, C., Beschorner, R., & Köhler, M. C. (2019). Do Positive and Negative Stereotypes of Gay and Heterosexual Men Affect Job-Related Impressions? *Sex Roles, 80*, 548-564.
52. Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics. University of Chicago Legal Forum, Vol. 1989, Issue 8.
53. Bowleg, L., Huang, J., Brooks, K., Black, A., Burkholder, G. (2003). Triple Jeopardy and Beyond: Multiple Minority Stress and Resilience Among Black Lesbians. *Journal of Lesbian Studies, 7*(4), 87-108.
54. Bowleg *et al.* (2008) *op. cit.*
55. Ibid.
56. Pedulla, D. S. (2014). The positive consequences of negative stereotypes: Race, sexual orientation, and the job application process. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 77*(1), 75–94.
57. Ibid.
58. Ibid.
59. Petsko, C. D., & Bodenhausen, G. V. (2019). Racial stereotyping of gay men: Can sexual orientation erase race? *Journal of Experimental Sociology, 83*, 37-54.
60. Strinić, A., Carlsson, M. & Agerström, J. Multiple-group membership: warmth and competence perceptions in the workplace. *J Bus Psychol, 36*, 903-920.
61. Ibid.
62. Choi, S. K., & Meyer, I. H. (2016) LGBT Aging: A Review of Research Findings, Needs, and Policy Implications. Los Angeles, California: The Williams Institute.
63. Bouton, L. J. A., Brush, A. M., & Meyer, I. H. (2023) *LGBT Adults aged 50 and Older in the US: During the COVID-19 Pandemic*. Los Angeles, California: The Williams Institute.

64. Crenshaw *op. cit.*
65. Ferguson, L., & Seery, M. K. (2022). Role Models and Inspirations of LGBT+ Scientists. *Journal of Chemical Education, 99*, 444-451.
66. Fassinger, R. E. (1996). Notes from the margins: Integrating lesbian experience into the vocational psychology of women. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 48*, 160-175.
67. Schmidt, C. K., & Nilsson, J. E. (2006). The effects of simultaneous developmental processes: Factors relating to the career development of lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth. *The Career Development Quarterly, 55*, 22-37.
68. Tilcsik, A., Anteby, M., & Knight, C. R. (2015). Concealable stigma and occupational segregation: Toward a theory of gay and lesbian occupations. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 60*(3), 446-481.
69. Morrow, S. L. (1997). Career development of lesbian and gay youth: Effects of sexual orientation, coming out, and homophobia. In M. B. Harris (Ed.), *School experiences of gay and lesbian youth: The invisible minority* (pp. 1-15). Philadelphia, PA: Haworth Press.
70. Gedro, J. (2010). The Lavender Ceiling Atop the Global Closet: Human Resource Development and Lesbian Expatriates. *Human Resource Development Review, 9*(4), 385-404.
71. Madera, J. M. (2010). The Cognitive Effects of Hiding One's Homosexuality in the Workplace. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology-Perspectives on Science and Practice, 3*, 86-89.
72. Paisley, V. & Tayar, M. (2016). Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) expatriates: an intersectionality perspective. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 27*(7), 766-780.
73. McPhail, R., & McNulty, Y. (2015). 'Oh, the places you won't go as an LGBT expat!' A study of HRM's duty of care to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender expatriates in dangerous locations. *European Journal of International Management, 9*(6), 737-765.
74. McPhail, R., McNulty, Y. & Hutchings, K. (2016). Lesbian and gay expatriation: opportunities, barriers and challenges for global mobility, *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 27*(3), 382-406.
75. Baert, S. (2017). Hiring a Gay Man, Taking a Risk?: A Lab Experiment on Employment Discrimination and Risk Aversion. *Journal of Homosexuality, 65*(8), 1015-1031.
76. Flage, A. (2020). Discrimination against gays and lesbians in hiring decisions: a meta-analysis. *International Journal of Manpower, 41(6)*, 671-691.
77. Ibid.
78. Ibid.
79. Tilcsik *op. cit.*
80. Fasoli, F., & Hegarty, P. (2020). A Leader Doesn't Sound Lesbian!: The Impact of Sexual Orientation Vocal Cues on Heterosexual Persons' First Impression and Hiring Decision. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 44*(2), 234–255.
81. Fontenele, A. B. G., Souza, L. E. C. de, & Fasoli, F. (2023). Who Does Discriminate Against gay-Sounding Speakers? The Role of Prejudice on Voice-Based Hiring Decisions in Brazil. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 42*(1), 119–130.
82. Laurent, T., & Mihoubi, F. (2017). Sexual Orientation, Unemployment and Participation: Are Gays Less Employable than Straights? *Journal of Labor Research, 38*, 1-44.
83. Fric, K. (2021). Do gays and lesbians experience more frequent and longer unemployment? *Economics and Sociology, 14*(3), 105-126
84. Ibid.
85. Ibid.
86. Ibid.
87. Sabia, J. J. Wooden, M., & Tguyen, T. T. (2017). Sexual Identity, Same-Sex Relationships, and Labour Market Dynamics: New Evidence from Longitudinal Data in Australia. *Southern Economic Journal, 83*(4), 903-931.
88. Grant, J. M., Mottet, L. A., Tanis, J., Harrison, J., Herman, J. L., & Keisling, M. (2011). Injustice at every turn: A report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey. Washington, DC: National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.
89. Ibid.
90. Gorsuch, M. M. (2019). Gender, Sexual Orientation, and Behavioral Norms in the Labor Market. *ILR Review, 72*(4), 927-954.
91. Ibid.
92. Bryant-Lees, K. B., & Kite, M. E. (2021) Evaluations of LGBT job applicatnts: consequences of applying "out". *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal, 40*(7), 874-891.
93. Carpenter, C. S., Eppink, S. T., & Gonzales, G. (2020). Transgender Status, Gender Identity, and Socioeconomic Outcomes in the United States, *ILR Review, 73*(3), 573-599.
94. Van Borm, H., & Baert, S. (2018). What drives hiring discrimination against transgenders? *International Journal of Manpower, 39*(4), 581–599.
95. Nadal, K. L., Davidoff K. C. & Fujii-Doe, W. (2014). Transgender Women and the Sex Work Industry: Roots in Systemic, Institutional, and Interpersonal Discrimination, *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation, 15*(2), 169-183
96. Klawitter, M. (2015). Meta-Analysis of the Effects of Sexual Orientation on Earnings. *Industrial Relations, 54*: 4-32.
97. Carpenter *et al. op. cit.*
98. Badgett, M. V. L. (1995). The Wage Effects of Sexual Orientation Discrimination. *ILR Review, 48*(4), 726–739.
99. Gorsuch *op. cit.*
100. Klawitter *op. cit.*
101. Yu, W. & Hara, Y. (2021). Motherhood Penalties and Fatherhood Premiums: Effects of Parenthood on Earnings Growth Within and Across Firms. *Demography, 58*(1), 247-272.
102. Sabia, J. J. (2014). Fluidity in Sexual Identity, Unmeasured Heterogeneity, and the Earnings Effects of Sexual Orientation. *Industrial Relations, 54*(1), 33-58.
103. Aksoy, C. G., Carpenter, C. S., Frank, J., & Huffman, M. (2019). Gay glass ceilings: Sexual orientation and workplace authority in the UK, *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization, 159*(2019), 167-180.
104. Giddings, L., Nunley, J. M., Schneebaum, A., & Zietz, J. (2014) Birth cohort and the specialization gap between same-sex and different-sex couples. *Demography, 51*(2), 509-34.
105. Hofmarcher, T. & Plug, E. (2022). Specialization in same-sex and different-sex couples, *Labour Economics*, Elsevier, vol. 77(C).
106. Ibid.
107. Aksoy, C. G., Carpenter, C. S., Frank, J., & Huffman, M. (2019). Gay glass ceilings: Sexual orientation and workplace authority in the UK, *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization, 159*(2019), 167-180.
108. Mize, T. D. (2016). Sexual Orientation in the Labor Market. *American Sociological Review, 81*(6), 1132–1160.
109. Schilt, K., & Wiswall, M. (2008). Before and after: Gender transitions, human capital, and workplace experiences. *The B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis & Policy, 8*, 1935-1682.
110. Geijtenbeek, L. & Plug, E. (2018). Is there a penalty for registered women? Is there a premium for registered men? Evidence from a sample of transsexual workers. *European Economic Review, 109*(2018), 334-347.
111. Ciprikis, K., Cassells, D., & Berrill, J. (2020). Transgender labour market outcomes: Evidence from the United States. *Gender, Work and Organization, 27*(6), 1378–1401.
112. Drydakis, N. (2021). *The Economics of Being LGBT. A Review: 2015-2020*. GLO Discussion Paper, No. 980, Global Labor Organization (GLO), Essen.
113. Ibid.
114. Ibid.
115. Geijtenbeek & Plug *op. cit.*
116. Geijtenbeek & Plug *op. cit.*
117. Moosa, S., & Bhana, D. (2020). 'Troubling men who teach young children': masculinity and the paedophilic threat. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society, 30*(4), 511-528.
118. Ferfolja, T. & Hopkins, L. (2013). The complexities of workplace experience for lesbian and gay teachers, *Critical Studies in Education, 54*(3), 311-324.
119. King, J. R. (2004). The (Im)possibility of Gay Teachers for Young Children. *Theory into Practice, 43*(2), 122-127.
120. https://www.justlikeus.org/blog/2022/04/26/lesbians-delay-coming-out-harmful-stereotypes/
121. Burke, S. E. & LaFrance, M. (2016). Stereotypes of bisexual people: What do bisexual people themselves think? *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity, 3*(2), 247-254.
122. Howansky, K., Wilton, L. S., Young, D. M., Abrams, S., & Clapham, R. (2021). (Trans)gender stereotypes and the self: Content and consequences of gender identity stereotypes. *Self and Identity, 20*(4), 478–495.
123. Armitage, L. (2020). Explaining backlash to trans and non-binary genders in the context of UK Gender Recognition Act reform. *INSEP – Journal of the International Network for Sexual Ethics & Politics, 8*, Special Issue 2020, pp. 11-35
124. Trades Union Congress. (2017). The Cost of Being Out at Work: LGBT+ workers' experiences of harassment and discrimination: https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/LGBTreport17.pdf
125. Bachmann & Gooch *op. cit.*
126. Sue, D. W. (2010). *Microaggressions in everyday life: race, gender, and sexual orientation*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

127. Platt, L. A., & Lenzen, A. L. (2013). Sexual orientation microaggressions and the experience of sexual minorities. *Journal of Homosexuality, 60*, 1011–1034.
128. Nadal, K. L., Issa, M., Leon, J., Meterko, V., Wideman, M., & Wong, Y. (2011). Sexual orientation microaggressions: "Death by a thousand cuts" for lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth. *Journal of LGBTQ Youth, 8*, 234–259.
129. Nadal, K. L., & Corpus, M. J. H. (2013). "Tomboys" and "baklas": Experiences of lesbian and gay Filipino Americans. *Asian American Journal of Psychology, 4*, 166–175.
130. Nadal, K. L. Whitman, C. N. Davis, L. S., Erazo, T. & Davidoff, K. C. (2016). Microaggressions Toward Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Genderqueer People: A Review of the Literature, *The Journal of Sex Research, 53*(4-5), 488-508.
131. Ibid.
132. Dispenza, F., Watson, L. B., Chung, Y. B., & Brack, G. (2012). Experience of career-related discrimination for female-to-male transgender persons: A qualitative study. *The Career Development Quarterly, 60*, 65-81.
133. Ibid.
134. Willis, P. (2012). Witnesses on the periphery: Young lesbian, gay, bisexual and queer employees witnessing homophobic exchanged in Australian workplaces. *Human Relations, 65*(12), 1589-1610.
135. Waite S. (2021). Should I Stay or Should I Go? Employment Discrimination and Workplace Harassment against Transgender and Other Minority Employees in Canada's Federal Public Service. *Journal of homosexuality, 68*(11), 1833–1859.
136. Stonewall *op. cit.*
137. Collins, J. C., McFadden, C., Rocco, T.S., Mathis, M.K. (2015). The Problem of Transgender Marginalization and Exclusion: Critical Actions for Human Resource Development. *Human Resource Development Review, 14*(2), 205-226.
138. Schein, V. E., Mueller, R., Lituchy, T., & Liu, J. (1996). Think manager-think male: a global phenomenon? *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 17*(1), 33-41.
139. Nye, J. L., & Forsyth, D. R. (1991). The Effects of Prototype-Based Biases on Leadership Appraisals: A Test of Leadership Categorization Theory. *Small Group Research, 22*(3), 360-379.
140. Golom, F. D., Liberman, B. E., & Cruz, M. (2019). Gay and Lesbian Managerial Stereotypes: A Ten Year Comparison across Two Studies. *Academy of Management Proceedings, 2019*(1).
141. Salter, N. P. & Liberman, B. (2016). The Influence of Sexual Orientation and Gender on Perceptions of Successful Leadership Characteristics. In: T. Köllen (ed.), *Sexual Orientation and Transgender Issues in Organizations*, 429-449.
142. Shamloo, S. E., De Cristofaro, V., Pellegrini, V., & Salvati, M. (2022). Masculinity and Leadership Effectiveness (Self-)Perceptions: The Case of Lesbian Leaders. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 19*(24): 17026.
143. Golom *et al. op. cit.*
144. Shamloo *et al. op. cit.*
145. Salter, N. P. & Liberman, B. (2016). The Influence of Sexual Orientation and Gender on Perceptions of Successful Leadership Characteristics. In: T. Köllen (ed.), *Sexual Orientation and Transgender Issues in Organizations*, 429-449.
146. Liberman, B.E. & Golom, F.D. (2015). Think manager, think male? Heterosexuals' stereotypes of gay and lesbian managers. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, 34*(7), 566-578.
147. De Cristofaro, V., Pellegrini, V., Giacomantonio, M., & Salvati, M. (2020). Why are gay leaders perceived as ineffective? The role of the type of organization, sexual prejudice and gender stereotypes. *Personality and Individual Differences, 157*(109817).
148. Aksoy, C. G., Carpenter, C. S., & Frank, J. (2018). Sexual Orientation and Earnings: New Evidence from the United Kingdom. *ILR Review, 71*(1), 242-272.
149. Shamloo *et al. op. cit.*
150. Aksoy *et al. op. cit.*
151. Mizzi, R. C. (2013). "There aren't any gays here": encountering heteroprofessionalism in an international development workplace. *Journal of Homosexuality, 60(11)*, 1602-24.
152. Davies, A. W. J., & Neustifter, R. (2021). Heteroprofessionalism in the Academy: The Surveillance and Regulation of Queer Faculty in Higher Education, Journal of Homosexuality, DOI: 10.1080/00918369.2021.2013036
153. Fasoli, F., & Hegarty, P. (2020). A Leader Doesn't Sound Lesbian!: The Impact of Sexual Orientation Vocal Cues on Heterosexual Persons' First Impression and Hiring Decision. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 44*(2), 234–255.
154. Sears, B., & Mallory, C. (2011). Documented Evidence of Employment Discrimination & Its Effects on LGBT People. *UCLA: The Williams Institute*. Retrieved from https://escholarship.org/uc/item/03m1g5sg
155. Aksoy *et al. op. cit.*
156. Mize *op. cit.*
157. Ahmed *et al. op. cit.*
158. Grant *et al. op. cit.*
159. Brewster, M. E., Velez, B., DeBlaere, C. & Moradi, B. (2012). Transgender individuals' workplace experiences: the applicability of sexual minority measures and models. *Journal of Counselling Psychology, 59*: 60-70.
160. Pitcher, E. N. (2017). 'There's stuff that comes with being an unexpected guest': Experiences of trans* academics with microaggressions. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 30(7)*, 688-703.
161. King, E. B., Reilly, C., & Hebl, M. (2008). The best of times, the worst of times: Exploring dual perspectives of "coming out" in the workplace. *Group & Organization Management, 33*(5), 566–601.
162. Madera, J. M. (2010). The Cognitive Effects of Hiding One's Homosexuality in the Workplace. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology-Perspectives on Science and Practice, 3*: 86-89.
163. Sears & Mallory *op. cit.*
164. Drydakis, N. (2011). Women's Sexual Orientation and Labor Market Outcomes in Greece. *Feminist Economics, 17(1)*, 89-117.
165. Drydakis, N. (2019). Sexual orientation and labor market outcomes. *IZA World of Labor 2019: 111v2.*
166. Day, N. E., & Schoenrade, P. (1997). Staying in the closet versus coming out: Relationships between communication about sexual orientation and work attitudes. *Personnel Psychology, 50*(1), 147–163.
167. Button S. B. (2001). Organizational efforts to affirm sexual diversity: a cross-level examination. *The Journal of Applied Psychology, 86*(1), 17–28.
168. Wax, A., Coletti, K. K., & Ogaz, J. W. (2018). The benefit of full disclosure: A meta-analysis of the implications of coming out at work. *Organizational Psychology Review, 8*(1), 3–30.
169. Ragins B. R., Singh R., Cornwell J. M. (2007). Making the invisible visible: Fear and disclosure of sexual orientation at work. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 92*(4), 1103-1118.
170. Wax *et al. op. cit.*
171. Ragins B. R. (2008). Disclosure disconnects: Antecedents and consequences of disclosing invisible stigmas across life domains. *Academy of Management Review, 33*(1), 194-215.
172. Trades Union Congress *op. cit.*
173. Budge, S. L., Tebbe, E. N., & Howard, K. A. S. (2010). The work experiences of transgender individuals: *Negotiating the transition and career decision-making processes. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 57*, 377-393.
174. Sangganjanavanich, V. F. (2009). Career development practitioners as advocates for transgender individuals: understanding gender transition. *Journal of Employment Counseling, 46*(3), 128-135.
175. Dietert, M., & Dentice, D. (2009). Gender identity issues and workplace discrimination: The transgender experience. *Journal of Workplace Rights, 14*, 121-140.
176. Davis, D. (2009). Transgender issues in the workplace: HRD's newest challenge/opportunity. *Advances in Developing Human Resources, 11*, 109-120.
177. Sangganjanavanich *op. cit.*
178. Collins *et al. op. cit.*
179. Sangganjanavanich, V. F. (2009). Career development practitioners as advocates for transgender individuals: understanding gender transition. *Journal of Employment Counseling, 46*(3), 128-135.
180. Budge *et al. op. cit.*
181. Grant *et al. op. cit.*
182. O' Ryan, L. W., & McFarland, W. R. (2010). A phenomenological exploration of the experiences of dual-career lesbian and gay couples. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 88*, 71-79.
183. Parnell, M. K., Lease, S. H., & Green, M. L. (2012). Perceived career barriers for gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals. *Journal of Career Development, 39*, 248-268.
184. Ibid.
185. Egan, M., & Voss, B. (2020). *Exploring LGBTI diversity and inclusion initiatives in the professional services firms.* Sydney, Australia: University of Sydney.
186. O' Ryan & McFarland *op. cit.*
187. McFadden, C. & Crowley-Henry, M. (2019) *How to turn up the LGBT voice in the workplace*: https://www.rte.ie/brainstorm/2019/0121/1024566-how-to-turn-up-the-lgbt-voice-in-the-workplace/
188. McFadden, C. & Crowley-Henry, M. (2018). 'My People': the potential of LGBT employee networks in reducing stigmatization and providing voice. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 29*(5), 1056-1081
189. https://www.indy100.com/identities/pride-logo-middle-east-us



If you'd like to find out more about how we can help you to accelerate gender equity in your organisation, please get in touch:

SHAPE TALENT LIMITED Tel: **+44 (0)7834 600 773** Email: **info@shapetalent.com** Visit: **www.shapetalent.com**

SHAPE TALENT

Accelerating gender equality