



The Imposition of Authoritarian State Sexualism: Theoretical Analysis of State Repression of Sexual Minority Groups Globally

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ABSTRACT

Numerous countries globally have governments who act to repress alternative sexual lifestyle groups. Such governments' motives to rule in this manner are authoritarian, they wish to promote state controlled sexualism. Authoritarian state sexualism is the government's creation of a homogenized population who all think and act the same way, decided by the dominant ideology. This would include conformity with an authoritarian government of the day's choice of sexual preference, which is virtually exclusively heterosexuality. This paper discusses covert and overt social engineering that takes place within authoritarian, socially repressive societies, which effectively drive sexual minority groups underground. Imposition of authoritarian state sexualism on people who live in sexually repressive societies, begins in their early years.

Keywords: Authoritarianism and sexuality, Homophobic and transphobic education, Legislation and the media, LGBT repression, Non-normative sexuality

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

The research topic of this paper is to discuss different state sponsored mechanisms which are used to control the societal consciousness of homosexual communities. Most of the conceptual analysis is of authoritarian states. For the purpose of this paper an authoritarian state is defined as a country which persistently breaches the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 1948 (Office of the High Commissioner United Nations Human Rights (OHCHR), 2024, p. 1; United Nations (UN), 1948 p. 1). The main principles of the UN Universal Declaration are that all human beings: regardless of their culture, ethnicity, gender, language, nationality, race and religion. There is an important omission to consider, the UN Declaration taxonomy does not include sexual lifestyle of preference, because to do so would legitimise paedophilia. States which have rules, regulations and customs that prevent non-mainstream sexual practices that are interpreted as being acceptable by the UN, can be described as authoritarian states. For example, in May 2023 the police in Indonesia arrested 28 men and 29 women, on the grounds they were same sex couples (Human Rights Watch, 2024, p. 307). In Saudi Arabia, a domestic activist was detained between May 2021 and May 2022, for criticising state repression of LGBT people (Amnesty International, 2024, p. 49). Indonesia or Saudi Arabia. The paper reveals that state repression is not limited to authoritarian countries; there is, for example, homophobic and transphobic state apparatus prevalent in orthodox liberal democracies throughout the European Union (EU) (Hodun, 2024, p. 19). For example, Georgia (Shevtsova, 2023, p. 163); and also, the United Kingdom (UK) (University of Birmingham, 29 February 2024). The paper considers the effect of education, legislation, media representation and religion, as agents of social control used to discourage if not prohibit homosexuality. The research questions asked and answered during the course of the conceptual theoretical review are encapsulated as follows: What are the societal mechanisms most commonly utilised by globally by nation states, which enable the repression of people who live alternative sexual lifestyles?

Many such authoritarian countries start indoctrination of zero tolerance of non-normative sexual preferences of their population, with teaching at school. Some repressive countries have discriminatory legislation which expressly forbid members of the homosexual community from certain jobs, alongside exclusion from elected office. Images of transgenderism for example ladyboys are censored, often described in state controlled or state approved media; as anywhere between deviant, up to an abomination, non-people who can be killed by heterosexuals, the dominant sexual ideology, without being charged with murder. In numerous countries in the global north and south, homosexual and transgender people are often depicted in a negative light in the media: they are either a burden on society, expensive, extravagant and flamboyant; something bad happens to them or a significant other; they are abandoned or detached from (mainstream) society; they kill themselves, someone else or both. A significant number of sexually repressive countries practice 'symbolic violence', they simply do not show non-heterosexual images, such people can neither heard nor seen. This paper posits, the societal structural mechanisms by which various authoritarian states repress sexual minority groups, are systemic and widespread.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Maguire's (2004) 'Human Rights of Sexual Minorities in Africa' study helps set the scene, by discussing causal factors which enable state repression of sexual minorities. For example, there has been a perennial failure of domestic and international agencies, to intervene and/or publicly call out states who are repressing sexual minorities. A number of governments globally have introduced essentially surveillance systems, whereby LGBTIQAPK++ groups have to register their locations and who their members are. (LGBTIQAPK++ is an acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or questioning, aromantic or asexual, non-binary, pansexual or polysexual, kink; and other self-identifying choice of sexual lifestyle). This has often created a hostile environment. Many members of the LGBT community will not attend registered groups, for fear of being targeted, or being disadvantaged at home or at work. In some countries, LGBT people turning to agencies organized to help them have found little

advocacy in the face of state repression (Maguire, 2004, pp. 25-26). This has been because the Government would attack them in the form of deregistration or the sudden imposition of registration fees if they were seen to carry out their remit. State repression of sexual minorities occurs in many forms. For example, same-sex relationships are illegal in over 30 of Africa's 40+ individual countries. Uganda has passed some of the most draconian anti-LGBT legislation to be found globally (Bhandari, 2023). In 2023 Russia criminalized the LGBT community in general as extremist, meaning anyone participating or supporting LGBT sexual practice could be imprisoned. The blanket ban of homosexuality goes far beyond deregistration (Human Rights Watch, 2023c). In Europe the Vatican only began to give their blessing to same-sex marriages in 2023. Until relatively recently the Vatican's position was, LGBT (and feminist advocacy) subverted their traditional notion of family (Shaw, 2023).

Tschantret (2020, p. 1459) 'Revolutionary Homophobia' study, informs us that state repression is a recurrent feature within global politics. Sexual minorities are not really able to challenge the dominance of the state in terms of mobilizing an insurgence or some form of national rebellion. Yet in many countries globally, sexual minorities they find themselves subject to collective action alongside the creation of hostile environments. In this sense Tschantret's (2020) study is theoretically underpinned by Maguire's (2004) earlier study. Tschantret (2020, p. 1460) argues states repress vulnerable groups, for example sexual minorities, because they are unreliable, liable to defect and/or be unsupportive of the state agenda. The successful identification and targeting of sexual minorities, enables repressive states to send a clear message to their populations. If we perceive you to be unreliable, unstable, a threat to state, we can locate you and punish you and people like you. Essentially sexual minority groups are targeted for their alternative sexual lifestyle then being punished for not representing the state's perception of a model citizen (Tschantret, 2020, p. 1460). Singh (2021) 'Populism, Nationalism, and Nationalist Populism' study articulates how nationalist states focus on the intensity of political rhetoric delivery whilst extolling their version of populist inclusivity. The political purpose of such often visceral delivery of government messages, is to create the social polarization of an us and them

mentality. People living outside of the scope of what nationalist states decide is acceptable behavior, for example, sexual minorities, should be “subject to heightened hostility and discrimination” (Singh, 2021, p. 250). In comparison, those who are deemed to be conforming with the nationalist state’s views of appropriate sexual practices find themselves benefitting by living free from state-sponsored harassment (Singh, 2021, p. 250). Identity and nationalism play a huge part in shaping the psyche of an “us” and “them” mentality. A politically encouraged mindset, which paves the way to harass sexual minorities who are prevented by social intolerance from integrating in society. Maguire (2004, p. 28), Tschantret (2020, p. 1466) and Singh (2021, p. 257) all resonate on the same issue; LGBT groups often ‘fail’ to give sexual minorities sufficient support due to the fear of or actuality reprisals from state-sponsored agencies.

In the early 2020s with populism stalling, sexually repressive, autocratic nationalistic states or regimes are in the ascendancy (de Burca and Young, 2023, p. 218; Koca, 2023, p. 204). The causal factors of the resurgence of nationalism in authoritarian countries are complex; they appear to stem from deep-seated concerns regarding capitalism and globalization’s inability to support growing numbers of people globally. Nationalism involves a nation’s people being as one, harmonious in support of the state, so the nation acts to preserve its traditional culture. Nationalism becomes a malevolent force, when it imposes a shared vision and belief upon the nation’s people without their true consent. In context, the autocratic, authoritarian version of nationalism believes that a nationalistic government is the only true source of political power.

Pragmatically, autocratic political leaders are able to articulate everyday processes and practices that establish and maintain a sense of national belonging (Mylonas and Tudor, 2021, pp. 109-110). Once installed, either by being genuinely democratically elected, or by some other more questionable to varying degrees undemocratic process; authoritarian governments can rule on a whim. Examples of autocratic countries can be found in critical reports of society in China, Russia, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Uganda and Venezuela (Freedom House, 2023, p. 14; Human Rights Watch (HRW), 2023a, p. 437; V-Dem Institute, 2023, p. 20). America, EU member states, and other non-EU European countries in the ‘‘ global north are not immune from authoritarian state-

imposed sexuality. During the early 2020s there has been a surge of intolerance of towards LGBTIQAPK++ people in Europe and the European Union (EU). Numerous European and EU politicians and public officials have orchestrated and participated in the homophobic activity for their own autocratic ends (Mijatovic, 16 August 2021). Scapegoating and stigmatization have become a common tactic of nationalist politicians as they pursue a cultural traditionalist agenda. This homophobic abusive tactic becomes especially acute, during the run up to an election in a European or EU country. Scapegoating is manifest when attacks against the LGBT community, distract public attention away from EU government's failure's during the previous parliament. *“In Hungary, Italy, Spain, Poland and the United Kingdom – to name but a few – politicians incite and perpetuate transphobia, questioning the “normality” or even the very existence of transgender people”* (Mijatovic, 16 August 2021).

In the early 2020s there were autocracies in power in Hungary, Poland and to a lesser extent until January 2020 America (HRW, 2022a, p. 1). Autocratic, authoritarian countries have a commonality in approach of rule by decree, similarly they often have socially repressive governments who are homophobic. Bangladesh provides such an example (NEWAGE Bangladesh, 24 November 2021), where same-sex conduct has been criminalized. Five years after convicting six men for murdering two gay rights activists; lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender (LGBT) people have little effective legislative protection in Bangladesh (HRW, 2022a, p. 77). On the issue of non-normative sexual lifestyles, Bangladesh pursues an authoritarian state of sexualism; in which every member of Bangladesh's society is required to be heterosexual (Anjum et al., 2021, p. 345). For all intents and purposes Uganda's 2023 Anti-Homosexuality Bill has the same effect (Byarugaba and Burnett, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 3 May 2023).

RESEARCH METHOD

The paper is a conceptual, theoretical review of global empirical studies, which analyze various government activities toward people who live an alternative sexual lifestyle. The scope of the review was comprehensive, critically evaluating literature and information from a broad range of sources which included: Empirical studies, alongside

extant grey literature from: civil society organisations (CSOs), expert by experience stakeholders; government policy briefings and reports; individual country legislation; non-governmental organisations (NGOs), media outputs, newspaper, radio and television; people with lived experiences; social media websites; sexual minority practitioners; Internet search terms included: LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender; anti-LGBT; global north sexual repression; global south sexual repression; homophobia; homosexuality; sexual repression; transphobia; human rights; queer; same-sex; sexual diversity; sexual minorities; transgenderism. There was no inclusion or exclusion criteria, the most common issues which appeared from each search was included. The time period of literary sources to be included was 2010 to 2024. There was one source clearly relevant to the study, which fell outside of the designated period. This was the United Nations (1948) Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Participants

There are no participants in this conceptual theoretical review.

Results

This paper found education, legislation, media representation and religion, were all instrumentalised by the state, in overt or subtle ways, to repress sexual minorities. The “state” here means the governments of many individual countries globally, Authoritarian states use various social policy levers in the government’s arsenal to repress sexual minorities. Authoritarian countries often created hostile environments deliberately designed to exclude people with alternative sexual lifestyles. Asylum seeker and immigration policies were also a source of state-sponsored suppression. Globalization, complete with neoliberalism-induced stress, was also indirectly a causal factor that resulted in the repression of homosexual communities.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

State-Sponsored Oppression of Alternative Non-Heterosexual Sexual Lifestyles

Sexual repression occurs globally in authoritarian states, regardless of the political structure of the individual country where the

sexual repression takes place. Using the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) as a template there are five domains where authoritarian states create a hostile environment for sexual minorities. These domains are civil, cultural, economic, political and social, these domains are the societal architecture by which communities are formed in different countries (UN, 1948, pp. 914-915 and p. 926).

Osborne et al. (2023, p. 225) articulate how right-wing authoritarian states are highly correlated with the imposition of legislation a civil bar to same-sex marriages. Luberti et al. (2023) discuss a cultural driver of sexual repression, detailing that cross-culturally, a number of countries are patriarchal societies. Countries that are patriarchal culturally impose moral codes and values on women's sexual behavior (Chenoweth and Marks, 2022). There is also a high correlation between patriarchal societies where the mandatory veiling of women is customary alongside anti-abortion and anti-LGBT sexual practice legislation. Similarly, cross-culturally numerous patriarchal societies, predominantly in the global south, have adultery laws which enable husbands to punish their wives for infidelity (Luberti et al., 2023, p. 3).

Stein (2023) explains how large swathes of America's population in the global north, also have the cultural driver perpetuating repression of sexual minorities. America has a large proportion of right-wing populists who is against gender ideology on the grounds it enables transgenderism and recognizes transgender people. Culturally, America has a significant Christian authoritarianism movement in the mid-2020s. Some critical observers argue this movement can be construed as providing a spiritual home for white supremacists, whilst others argue this is an ideological misconception (Kleinfeld, 2023, p. 32). Christian authoritarians are opposed to abortion, comprehensive sex education and LGBT sexual practices in America (Stein, 2023, p. 1345). Pacelli et al. (2022) found that there was a higher likelihood of repression of sexual minorities if a country was in an economic recession. During the global recession caused by the COVID19 pandemic, authoritarian leaders in numerous countries, for example, America, Italy and Hungary, oversaw antipathy towards sexual minorities (Reid, 2023).

Economic hardship when intersecting autocratic leaders dispensing authoritarianism, often results in the repression of non-mainstream sexual practices (Pacilli et al., 2022, p. 6). Economic recession operates nascent in the background, when it becomes a causal factor acting to deflect international criticism of authoritarian states. 11.6% of global economic activity comes authoritarian regimes, most of whom practice repression of sexual minorities to varying degrees (Armanios and Adly, 2023, p. 12). At over 10%, this is a sizable chunk of global revenue, which recipient predominantly global north countries are anxious to protect. The economic domain at least indirectly, acts to dumb down ordo liberal international government critique of authoritarian state sexual repression. Paszat (2024, p. 227) argues Rwanda's authoritarian political system prevents same-sex activist from working on LGBT issues. Not only does Rwanda sexually repress non-heterosexual people, they also suppress their citizens who act to support them. Rwandan legislation is politicized and is used as a weapon by the government to penalize LGBT activists who opposes the state's position on homosexuality. Paszat (2024, p. 229) discusses how 'respectability politics' is used by activist to conform with broader society to stay in operation to support non-mainstream sexual minorities.

To help ameliorate the tension resulting from opposing authoritarian states treatment of sexual minorities; LGBT activists work to gain respectability, 'greater social acceptance from the broader population' (Paszat, 2024, p. 229). In this sense, Rwandan LGBT activists don the clothing of societal compliance to mask the reality they are still opposing their authoritarian government. Ayoub and Stoeckl (2024, p59) discuss how various authoritarian governments from different corners of the globe, have all passed legislation which enables sexual repression. Hungary, Russia and Uganda are all facing domestic unrest and political instability; they have each politically responded, by tightening their existing homophobic legislation and introduce more extreme laws. Authoritarian governments strategically scapegoat marginalised groups, who they blame for their own political failings. LGBT communities are prime candidates to be targeted this way, as they can be ostracised for their non-heteronormative sexual practices.

These are examples of how the political domain has been used globally in the repression of sexual minorities.

Acconcia et al. (2024, p. 210) describe how LGBT groups can develop their own social political strategies, to increase their visibility and saliency in the public sphere. In the mid-2020s Egyptian, Tunisian and Turkish LGBT activist groups deploy digital platforms to support their community. Members only WhatsApp type digital platforms, create a safe space for non-heterosexuals to congregate and not be 'outed' without their prior informed consent. Digital platforms have duality. LGBT people are able to deliver strategies, providing a counternarrative to social mainstream negative misrepresentations of homosexuality, alongside implementing safe processes of 'coming out' (Acconcia et al., 2024, p. 211). Lusk et al. (2024) indicate how Poland's authoritarian government are dismissive of social progress, which enables societal acceptance of transgender people. Poland has been using its higher education system to populate numerous nonstate institutions with a credentialed elite, whose activities and discourse will support the authoritarian state.

Not all of Poland's higher education institutions have been prepared to fall in line. The Polish authoritarian government and its supporters vehemently object to the social progress provided by Poland's more independently minded universities. The reason behind such heated opposition, is that non Polish government supporting universities, promote a humanistic social view, tolerant of LGBT communities and students (Lusk et al., 2024, p7). Poland's hold over most of its universities represents an agent of social control. Most of the Polish population can't find long-term stable employment without a university degree. Poland's authoritarian government's political interference of its higher education system has instrumentalised universities, as a social location where sexual minorities can be oppressed.

Authoritarian countries use a variety of covert and overt strategies, to exclude non-conforming sexual practices from their midst. One societal location where sexual repression occurs, is in universities (Unal, 2024, p. 8; see also Rahman, 8 March 2021). The imposition of state sexualism engendered by many authoritarian countries, is a clear breach of their populations' human rights (UNESCO, 2021, p. 54; see

also Martinez et al., 2021, p. 55). (Martinez et al.' (2021) 'Manufacturing Moral Panic' study provides a case study analysis of alternative responses and a counter-narrative to the societal exclusion of non-heterosexual sexual practices). Mendos et al' (2020) 'State-Sponsored Homophobia' study, informs us how many countries overtly enact legislation, which excludes any form of sexualism but heterosexualism. Saudi Arabian public officials condemn homosexuality and extra marital sex using disparaging, antagonistic discourse.

State-sponsored educational material was subsequently released to reinforce this message throughout Saudi Arabia's education system. There is a similar sexually repressive message from Saudi Arabia's Ministry for Education, which advises: *'Homosexuality is one of the most disgusting sins and vilest crimes. [...] It is a vile perversion which goes against sound nature and is one of the most corrupting and hideous sins. The punishment for homosexuality is death. Both the active and passive participants are to be killed whether or not they have previously had sexual intercourse in the context of a legal marriage'* (Mendos et al., ILGA (International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association) World, 2020, p. 73). The position here in Saudi Arabia and in numerous other countries, enables people with non-conforming sexual lifestyles to be killed. In context this is the ultimate in state-sponsored sexual repression, this is state-sponsored murder (Byarugaba and Burnett, 2023; Mendos et al., 2020, p. 85).

Scott Kugle's (2003) 'Sexuality, Diversity, and Ethics in the Agenda of Progressive Muslims' study: explains how the Islamic faith as articulated in the Qur'an, does not specifically prohibit homosexuality. "The Qur'an addresses the question of non-procreative sexual acts and affirms them (in Surat al-Baqara, though interpretation of this verse was always the subject of contest and debate)" (Kugle, 2003, p. 193). Dhal (2022) provides an explanation of the apparent contradiction between religious text and political practice of some religious leaders. When an authoritarian religious government has won an election by a substantial margin, people may not adhere to the country's main religious scriptures. To get the level of compliance required, there would need to be cultural hegemony that the religious government could impose; to enable countrywide; societal acceptance

of their religious scriptures over time. In the intervening period there will be occasions where what is taught in the religious scriptures is not what is practiced politically. Another entirely different reason for the contradiction is not always following the religious texts in practice; is that it may not be politically expedient to do so. In authoritarian religious states, the government controlled judiciary can be manipulated, to interpret the religious scriptures to suit their own ends. Cultural hegemony has been weaponized to impose anti-gender interventions on universities in Turkey (Unal, 2024, p. 11). The contradiction in not following the religious scripts in practice is manifest: when the Turkish Courts side with the authoritarian government against universities who are challenging the forced adoption of anti-genderism.

Religious leaders who are also members of Saudi Arabia's government have chosen to ignore wider definitions of the Qur'an. This intolerant ancient, orthodox, patriarchal, pedantic, dogma by the Saudi Arabian government, acts to exclude same sex sexual lifestyles from society. Rodriguez (2022, p. 98) provides a nuanced indication that Saudi Arabia uses soft power in the form of funding religious education infrastructure and scholarships internationally. Saudi Arabia funding of religious education initiative provides pragmatic policy transfer of their interpretation of Islam which acts to repress sexual minorities. Many Saudi Arabian LGBTIQAPK++ people experience self-inflicted repression, as their choice of sexual lifestyle conflicts with their religious beliefs predominantly the Islam faith. The self-imposed repression is manifest when LGBTIQAPK++ reluctantly make the choice of leaving their religious faith, transferring from Islam to homosexuality (Kugle, 2003, p. 195). State suppression of sexual minorities by archaic interpretations of religious beliefs, for example the Qur'an need to be challenged. Not by asking people to repudiate the Qur'an and abandon their religious beliefs, that's repression against religion. The challenge should be encouraging government religious leaders to tolerate contemporary interpretations of the Qur'an, with their orthodox interpretations of the Qur'an (Zaharin, 2022, p. 2).

Another example of education being used as an instrument to enable the repression of sexual minorities is provided by Jones (2023). Jones' (2023) 'Religious Freedom and LGBTIQA+ Students' study:

discusses Australia, which has multiple religious faiths that use the social location of education to exclude non-mainstream sexual practices. From Australian 2021 census data, the most common religions in Australia are: Christianity 43.9%; No religion 38.9%; Islam 3.2%; Hinduism 2.7%; and Buddhism at 2.4% (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 4 July 2022). In 2023 the Australia government was debating legislation that would enable religious schools to legally discriminate regarding admitting certain applicants. The state-sponsored discrimination would be based upon the applicant's disclosure of their gender identity and/or sexual orientation (Jones, 2023, p. 1133). The only societal landscape which would be allowed to practice such clear discrimination, is the social interface between education and religious schools in Australia. On the diametrically opposite side of the globe the UK implement discriminatory practices, where education is weaponised to create a hostile environment against LGBT people.

Glazzard and Stones (2021) in their 'Running Scared?' study: articulate how the United Kingdom (UK) are another example of a state with multiple religious beliefs that allows education in tandem with religion to repress sexual minorities. The UK's Office for National Statistics (ONS) (2022) 2021 census data informs us, the most common religions in the UK are: Christian 46.2%; No religion 37.2%; Islam (Muslim) 6.5%; and Hindu 1.7% (ONS, 5 December 2022). In the UK, state sponsored discrimination against LGBTIQAPK++ people at education sites are more subtle. Glazzard and Stones (2021, p. 3) conducted a critical analysis of the UK's statutory guidance regarding teaching inclusive relationships and sex education. Glazzard and Stones (2021) found a number of anomalies that enabled state repression of sexual minorities in UK schools. One of the anomalies was schools can opt out of teaching LGBT education due to the religious beliefs of parents. UK schools are also able to teach a distinctive religious faith perspective on relationships, which can prohibit the teaching of same-sex lifestyles (Glazzard and Stones, 2021, p. 3). In practice, UK religious schools are able to exclude teaching regarding sexual minorities practices, especially after public consultation with the local community. Sexual minorities are repressed by UK educational policy, particularly in their religious schools and private schools.

Another societal location that enables state-sponsored repression of sexual minority groups, is the legislature in authoritarian countries. As earlier discussed with Saudi Arabia, there is homophobic discriminatory legislation in many countries where homosexuality is illegal. There is similarly widespread legal exclusion of same-sex people from holding elected office (HRW, 18 January 2022b). In the global north in Poland homosexuality has been branded as an ideology, which is wrongly accepted by the EU (Tilles, 14 May 2020). The Polish Catholic Church has supported the government in Poland and their homophobic messages. More than eighty towns and cities in Poland have declared themselves LGBT free and/or have agreed policies geared towards zero tolerance of sexual minorities (Reid, 13 August 2021). Polish bishops have advocated a policy of provision of counselling centres, to address what they view as non-orthodox sexuality described as “*behaviours that until recently were considered unacceptable and morally reprehensible*” (Strzelecki and Bartyzel, 22 November 2020; see also Meyer Resende and Hennig, 2021, p. 5; Tilles, 14 May 2020).

Once again in the global north, there are other examples of sexually repressive legislation in the pursuit of authoritarian state sexualism. Lithuania’s legislation was amended to ban the dissemination of information that encourages: “*the notion of entry into a marriage and the creation of a family other than stipulated in the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania and the Civil Code of the Republic of Lithuania (Article 4(13))*” (OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development), 2020, p. 144). Lithuania define marriage in dominant sexual ideological terms of man and woman, the Lithuanian Constitution and Civil Code both exclude homosexuality. Freedom of expression of non-conforming sexualities is prevented in public information mediums. An advertisement promoting a ‘Gay Pride’ type event, was forced to be broadcast after the 9pm adult content watershed. The reason being, one t-shirt visible in the advertisement had a message saying, ‘For the diversity of families.’ The distribution of a children’s book by the Lithuanian University of Educational Services was restricted, because it had two tales related to same-sex couples (OECD, 2020, p. 144). These changes in Lithuanian legislation and subsequent policy implementation act mainly to drive

the homosexual community underground, where they cannot be heard or seen. Bourdieu's (1991, p. 153) 'symbolic violence' has taken place, manifest by how the effect of such homophobic legislation has create a sexual underclass. Lithuania has an underground community of excluded persons, non-people who have been disenfranchised by the state because of their non-heterosexual lifestyle.

In the early 2020s under India's patriarchal repressive laws, homosexuality and images promoting same-sex sexual practice are illegal (Chaturvedi, Reuters, 12 March 2023). India's Censor Board has consistently prohibited images of LGBTIQAPK++ communities and people from appearing in India's films (Gill, (n.d.), p. 11; Sabharwal and Sen, 2012, p. 2). (This Gill (n.d.) literary sources 'References' list, details that it accessed a number of sources in January 2017. This gives a reasonable indication this article was published by Towson University online in 2017). The Indian Censor Board is government appointed and approved, so serves mainly as a mouthpiece of the nation state reinforcing the dominant ideology. Once in situ, the Indian Censor Board has been able to instrumentalise the Indian government's desire by excluding images of same-sex relationships from view. The Indian government is able to conflate its paradigmatic view of sexual practice, with imagined middle class family harmony and equally illusory societal success (Gill, (n.d.), p. 5). Media images in film, social media, television and radio, which do not comply with the dominant ideology of the day view of appropriate sexual practice; are presented as a potential threat to the social fabric and Indian way of life (Gill, (n.d.), p. 5-6). India in the 2020s provides a prime example of one nation state sexualism, manifest as systematic state repression of sexual minorities using the media.

Many countries are governed by political leaders who are also religious leaders. An exception to this, are countries where the Christian faith is legitimately accepted and /or practiced by the majority of the populous (Craig, 2019). (Craig (2019) provides a theological discussion of whether a homosexual lifestyle is immoral. The paper has duality, providing an additional overview of the gradual acceptance of homosexuality by Christianity in more countries globally up to the 2020s. This literary item is an online article, it does not have specific date or page numbers, the only indication of publication year is medical

data was updated in 2019). Examples include Australia, Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom (UK) and the US. Indonesia provides an example, where Islam faith is the majority religion, is legitimately accepted by the population, and also where other religions are practiced. In Indonesia both central and local governments have minority religious group elected representation.

With a small electoral presence of non-Islam religious groups, Indonesia can also be regarded as a country governed by political leaders who are also religious leaders. Butt (2020) informs us, Indonesia has a Statute “which establishes six official religions that the state supports and helps administer: Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism” (Butt, 2020, p. 450). The spiritual ideology of Pancasila acts as a social glue that binds Islam and the other religions together, so they all co-exist in harmony (Pohan and Vinatu, 2019, p. 59). The ethos of Pancasila is based on five main principles: Belief in one Almighty God; a just and civilized humanity; unity of Indonesia; democracy from the deliberation of representatives; and social justice for all Indonesians (Widian et al., 2023, p. 359).

Since the fall of an authoritarian regime in 1998, Indonesia has been transitioning into a more democratic state than in the 21st century. But in 2016, Indonesia experienced a spate of anti-LGBT demonstrations and attacks against homosexual people, which spread across the country. Current (in 2016) and former Indonesian politicians were recorded during media interviews, openly expressing homophobic views. They were quite clear, universities should ban LGBTIQAPK++ people from admission, as they represented a threat to the cultural values of Indonesia. This is a political position which completely ignores the ethos of Pancasila. Current (2016) and former Indonesian politicians also said, “the LGBT community is a serious threat to the nation” (Rodriguez and Murtagh, 2022, p. 3). These comments during 2016 continued throughout the period leading up to the Indonesian general elections of 2019. They demonstrate many Indonesian religious and political leaders, actively participate in state suppression of sexual minorities.

Global acceptance of homosexuality by Christianity is patchy, solidifying at differing stages in a development trajectory on a time continuum. Weak religious discrimination legislation has enabled two

Christian schools in Australia to dismiss two teachers for being homosexual (Karp, 21 January 2022). Christianity has lost a significant amount of its influence during the previous sixty years in the post-war period (Miller, 7 February 2022). The Evangelical wing of the Christian faith have become afraid of various manifestations of social change. Christianity having accepted same-sex marriages, lost its cultural ability to exclude homosexuals or, '*...the power to compel the conduct of other people who had different views*' (Douglas, 2022, p. 11; see also Miller, 7 February 2022; Angelo and Bocci, 29 January 2021). Political and religion led countries often have an orthodox, normative approach to their position on alternative sexual preferences. In religiously oppressive countries, people with non-normative sexualities are banned, being described in their decision-making chambers; as the lowest of the low, animals who should be kept separate from other people (Amnesty International, 2021, p. 15; Mosley et al., 2021, p. 6; see also Poushter and Kent, 2020, p. 14; Craig, 2019, p. 6). In religious countries where one nation state sexualism is apparent, the dominant heterosexual ideology conveys a message: such people with deviant sexualities, must be paying the price for sins in a former life; they are now reborn disabled, a burden, less than a whole person due to their alternative sexual practices.

Gordon-Orr's (2021) 'The experience of LGBTQI+ asylum seekers' study, explains critically; how this sexual minority group are dehumanised by UK also in the global north legislation (See also Reid, 2021). The stigmatisation and criminalisation that asylum seekers have often faced, is not readily recognised by the UK immigration system. When same-sex or transgender asylum seekers are assessed, effectively they have to prove they belong to a sexual minority group who are fleeing persecution. Gordon-Orr (2021, p. 3) argues that asylum seekers are often assessed through a normative heterosexual lens, which introduces a homophobic bias into legal decisions made. Many asylum seekers do not have any civil partnership or marriage certification, to indicate they are in a stable same-sex relationship. Requiring such proofs lowers their chance of being granted asylum. There is institutional homophobia in the UK asylum seekers system, which structures policies in such a way that sexual minority groups become non-people. Analysis has revealed that heteronormativity is baked into

the UK asylum and immigration system, which is systematically rigged against LGBTIQAPK++ people (OHCHR, 2023; Liberty Human Rights, 2023, p. 79; Gordon-Orr, 2021, p. 3).

Homophobic and Transphobic Education:

LGBT Populations Made Invisible by State and Non-State Actors

Stonewall (5 March 2023) provides definitions of homophobia, transphobia and bullying, which although specific to the UK education sector, clearly apply in most jurisdictions globally. There are some generic aspects of bullying, which enable state and non-state actors to dumb down and hide homosexual populations (UNDP (United Nations Development Program), PGA (Parliamentarians for Global Actions), 2022, p. 123). Bullying tends to be intentional and repeated, causing physical and emotional harm on the victim of bullying. Typically, the group conducting the bullying behaviours has more societal power than the bullied victims (Stonewall, 2023), as they represent the dominant ideology. It is this latter attribute, which enables bullying and the imposition of one nation state sexualism, by both state and non-state actors against LGBT people.

“Homophobia is the fear or dislike of someone, based on prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about lesbian gay or bi people. This can include denying somebody’s lesbian, gay or bi identity or refusing to accept it. Homophobia may be targeted at people who are, or who are perceived lesbian, gay or bi. [...]. Transphobia is the fear or dislike of someone based on the fact they are trans including denying their gender identity or refusing to accept it. Transphobia may be targeted at people who are, or who may be perceived be, trans.”

(Stonewall, 2023)

Social media is a non-state actor which has multiple interfaces, where homophobic and transphobic education, legislation and the

media interact. The UNIQUE project ‘focuses on integration of LGBTIQ+ topics in institutions for vocational education’ (GALE (Global Alliance for LGBT Education), 21 April 2023). UNIQUE found there is a wider trend between social media platforms, for example Facebook and Twitter, to restrict access to information about gender identity and sexual diversity. The safeguarding policies social platforms providers use, should prevent disclosure of people’s sexual identity. T Occasionally these safeguards breakdown, enabling amongst other things, abusive anti-transgender content to be disseminated, which should have been filtered (GALE, 2023; see also Masnick, techdirt, 15 March 2023). (Masnick (2023) provides a brief explainer regarding the balancing act social media platforms have to conduct; to protect vulnerable minorities on the one hand and freedom of speech on the other). People’s education was damaged by clearly offensive views not being challenged, a deficit that enabled transgenderism, manifest as normalization of anti-LGBT views. UNIQUE also found that Facebook tag some messages which refer to LGBT as ‘sensitive’. Whereas messages where LGBT communities were presented negatively were not tagged as ‘sensitive’ by Facebook. This is clearly discriminatory practice by social media platforms, which facilitates the creation of one-nation sexualism in some countries globally.

Roy (Feminism in India, 25 April 2023) harmonizes with GALE (2023) in highlighting how education institutions are a vehicle for homophobia, transphobia, and bullying (Stonewall, 2023). Roy (2023) informs us, *‘Bullying, harassment, and exclusion of LGBTQIA+ individuals in educational institutions is a global problem.’* Patriarchal, religious puritanical societies of various persuasions globally often have deep-rooted cultural beliefs. Such orthodox, traditional societies often prohibit the practice and recognition of same-sex relationships and/or non-binary sexual identities. Schools and universities, places of education in these societies, are expected to uphold the dominant ideology’s views, regarding gender roles (HRW, 2023b, p. 117). Bullying is manifest in many forms, abusive misrepresentation of alternative genders, cyberbullying, societal ostracization and/or exclusion. LGBT discrimination and transgenderism continues at the nascent level in educational institutions. When pupils and students are allowed to sit or feel comfortable sitting in class or lectures, is

influenced by their homosexuality and/or alternative sexual lifestyle; that is an indication of discriminatory teaching practices against LGBT people on the basis of their sexuality, at the educational institution. Non-state actors who also disseminate a dominant ideology of homophobic and transphobic behavior in educational institutions are social media influencers, for example, Andrew Tate (Weale, *The Guardian*, 2 February 2023).

The basic infrastructure of the buildings where many people are taught in the global north and south, often discriminate against LGBT and transgender people. School uniforms only being available in the two main binary genders provides one example, the lack of single-sex toilets being another. Education (also employment, housing, and wider societal documentation) does not recognize any other gender identity, but male and female provide a third example. These education practice deficits which are commonplace in the global north as well as the global south, demonstrate systemic policy failure in many education systems globally (Moore, 2023, p. 9; see also World Economic Forum, 2023, p. 37). LGBT communities, transgender and other non-normative gender diverse people, find themselves dumbed down by a hostile anti-gay environment. On a fait accompli basis, homosexual people often find they have to agree to become invisible, there's just no other way they can exist.

Schlieff et al., (2023) 'Rapid realist review' study found there are five broad categories of common pro-LGBT and transgender people interventions in schools. The interventions identified are - create and maintain a 'student pride club'; formulate and adopt 'inclusive anti-bullying and harassment policies'; provide and teach students an 'inclusive curricula'; provide 'workshops and staff training', so all workers are enabled to deliver an education service on a non-discriminatory basis, to pupils and students with diverse sexualities and gender identities (See also McDermott et al., 2023, p. 3). Student pride clubs work really well with older pupils and students. They provide a safe space for people who may only just recently be recognising their gender identity and sexuality.

Another benefit of student pride clubs is they act as a conduit to enable greater opportunities to forge links with the larger normative straight population. Student pride clubs breaks down social barriers manifest as lack of communication and/or fear of the unknown, for fellow learners and teaching staff alike (GSA (Genders & Sexualities Alliances) Network, 14 April 2023; Natanson, *The Washington Post*, 28 June 2022). Forming of anti-bullying and harassment policies will be enhanced by student pride clubs. People with lived experience of homophobic incidents and/or transphobic attitudes, are best placed to inform policy discussions describing what societal responses should look like (International Labour Organization, 2022, p. 55). Critical evaluation of policy efficacy will help in the delivery of inclusive curricula. Key to curricula content are positive representations of LGBT people with diverse sexual lifestyles and gender identities. Inclusive curricula would validate homosexuality, informing pupils and students, alternative non-mainstream lifestyles are equally as valid as heteronormative sexual relationships (New Social Covenant Unit, 2022, p. 50).

Schlief et al., mirror Roy's (2023) position; educational institutions are in the frontline, helping to provide societal responses to combat the imposition of one nation state sexualism. LGBTQIA+ staff training as the last universal intervention follows on from implementation of the first four. Due to better staff knowledge, they can identify and reduce incidents of reported homophobic and transphobic bullying. Staff can implement inclusive curricula, so more LGBT and non-LGBT people can work together on shared learning projects (Stonewall, 2022, p10; UK Government, Department of Education, 2021, p. 15). Staff LGBT ally or kinship training will equip educational staff to understand and use the right language. This enables LGBT learners to feel safe and confident in their learning environment. The education establishment becomes even more diverse sexualities and gender identity orientated; when LGBT and transgender people have the confidence to approach their teaching staff with educational and/or social concerns. Both anti-bullying and harassment policies and inclusive curriculum content can be effected, using codesign, co-learning and coproduction. Staff training can be enhanced when

sessions are delivered jointly by teaching staff and LGBT+ students.

Coproduction introduces the benefits of peer learning, teaching other LGBT+ students and educators how to respond, when they encounter homophobia and transphobia in all its forms (Marzetti et al., 2022, p. 7). Good practice builds up for both teachers and students as they discuss and critically evaluate the efficacy of policy formulation. When progressive, educational management methods are applied, learning locations should experience higher level of educational attainment in their LGBTQIA+ students. Societally most countries in the global north and south will benefit from diverse sexuality and gender diverse populations. A change in psyche regarding LGBT and transgender communities, will also help bring forward societal tolerance towards minority religions and female elected representatives. This is the enlightened, secular approach that is missing from sexually repressive autocratic states, who implement anti-LGBT policies designed to achieve authoritarian sexualism.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The media has a significant role in the repression of non-heterosexual lifestyles, deciding what can and cannot be seen, how non-conforming sexualities are presented (Murtagh, 2022, p. 123). Images of transgenderism or transvestitism for example ladyboys, are often banned by state controlled or state approved media (Beemyn, 2022). Media interviews legitimise, members of the homosexual community can be killed by heterosexuals, the dominant sexual ideology, without being charged with murder (Spizzirri et al., 2021, p. 2; Irujo, 2020, p. 15). In numerous countries globally, many homosexual and transgender people are presented negatively by their media: as a burden to other people, inappropriately flamboyant, or voluntarily hiding from society, due to their illegality, shame and self-loathing; as a suicide danger to themselves or the ruin of others (Medina et al., 2021, p. 6; see also Eichert and Luedicke, 2022, p. 2). (Eichert and Luedicke's (2022) 'Almost Equal' study discusses a stigmatised sexuality group, and the effects of facing a normalised negative societal representation of homosexuals in their daily lives). The structural mechanisms of sexual oppression, education, legislation, religious political leaders and the media, are complex, multiple and interlocking (British Sociological

Association, 2023; see also Jensen, 8 February 2022). They often operate at the nascent level, an internecine dominant ideology consciousness, normalising intolerance of gender diverse non-heterosexual lifestyles.

The UK provides an example of how one nation state sexualism is enabled, often accidentally, without thought of the unintentional consequences of policy formulation. One of the UK's own independent experts on violence motivated by sexual orientation and identity; supports pending UK legislation (when this paper was completed May 2024), which in practice will enable the non-recognition of some aspects of gender identity. This same leading UK expert has been critical of the UK Equalities and Human Rights Commission; for providing the UK government with advice, which will result in the diminution of human rights of trans people after gender conversion (OHCHR, 2023).

There is an urgent need to have more open, transparent discussions about diverse gender identities and sexual lifestyles, than societally has taken place to date. The best place for these discussions to happen are places of educational learning, primarily, schools, colleges and universities. Policies devised need to be all inclusive, using an expert by experience approach. By listening to LGBT and transgender people who have lived experiences of, for example, education, employment or health policies, alongside how they work in practice for people with alternative lifestyles; policy makers will be able to become better informed, of how their policy suggestions will affect different sections of their homosexual communities (Vicars and Wolfe, 2023, p. 219).

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Manuscript submitted: **June 15, 2023**

Manuscript revised: **May 16, 2024**

Accepted for publication: **July 15, 2024**