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"BEING OK IS NOT ENOUGH FOR ME, MY LIFE NEEDS TO BE SPECTACULAR":

TRANS-FRIENDLY? A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES FOR TRANSGENDER PEOPLE IN SCOTTISH AND BRAZILIAN UNIVERSITIES.

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Porra, Linn botou pressão
E eu vou cair pra cima
Tá funcionando a ilusão
Me fiz feminina
Dá pra ver na cara dessa bixa o que ela tem
Além de bela e perigosa
Não deve nada a ninguém
Ela é raivosa, sedenta e vai amaldiçoar você
Não tá bonita, nem engraçada, tá boca de se fuder
Olha pra cara da mona que fala, das mana que trava batalha
Puxando navalha na vala da rua tomou bordoada
Que ela não se cala, se vinga na vara e não para
Bumbum não para
Afeminada, bonita e folgada
Lugar de fala, ela quem fala
Pegou verdade e jogou na sua cara
E disse: Ai que bixa, ai que baixa, ai que bruxa
Isso aqui é bixaria
Eu faço necomancia
E disse: Ai que bixa, ai que baixa, ai que bruxa
Isso aqui é bixaria
Eu faço necomancia, vai
Com minhas garras postiças esmaltadas
A maquiagem borrada
Eu ando pronta pra assustar
Mas isso não é Halloween
A gente tá tão bonita
Só porque é Drag Queen
Ai que bixa, ai que baixa, ai que bruxa
Isso aqui é bixaria
Eu faço necomancia
Eu disse: Ai que bixa, ai que baixa, ai que bruxa
Isso aqui é bixaria
Eu faço necomancia
Então deixa a sua piroca bem guardada na cueca
Se você encostar em mim
Faço picadinho de neca
Deixa a sua piroca bem guardada na cueca
Se você encostar em mim
Faço picadinho de neca
Ai
E aí, o machão ficou com medo?
Mas pra que eu quero sua pica
Se eu tenho todo esses dedo?
Eu disse: E aí, o machão ficou com medo?
Mas pra que eu quero sua pica
Se eu tenho todo esses dedo?
Eu disse: Ai que bixa, ai que baixa, ai que bruxa
Isso aqui é bixaria
Eu faço necomancia

Eu disse: Ai que bixa, ai que baixa, ai que bruxa
Isso aqui é bixaria
Eu faço necomancia
Eu tenho fogo no rabo, melanina, poucos reais
Eu sou tão misteriosa
Oculta sendo voraz, oculta sendo voraz, oculta tá sendo
Eu sou tão misteriosa
Oculta sendo voraz
Oculta sendo voraz
Voraz
Voraz
Voraz
Voraz
(Necomancia. song by Linn da Quebrada, 2017)

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study is to investigate inclusion policies through a comparative study of transgender students at two universities, the University of Glasgow, in Scotland, and a Brazilian Higher Education Institution in the city of Porto Alegre. It aims to ascertain whether transgender students feel included or not within the framework of the policies of those higher education institutions. Since the author is an international trans student from Brazil, this dissertation takes a Feminist Standpoint approach to connect authors from Global North and Global South. These authors range from post-modern queer and trans theorists to materialists. For this dissertation, an on-line questionnaire was applied using a Snowball Sample Method, followed by semi-structured interviews carried out via Zoom with some students from both locations. There was a total of 9 participants from Brazil and 9 from Glasgow University. Afterwards, 3 students from Brazil and 2 from Glasgow University were interviewed. The coding of the results was carried out through a thematic analysis that revealed in the end three main themes. Several similarities and differences were observed regarding these themes, including toilet use, an issue only mentioned by Brazilian students; power relationships, which were similar among trans students from both universities; and "passing" as a means of mitigating transphobia. Overall, due to the small sample of this study, it cannot be considered as a reflection of the entire experience trans students face in their respective higher education institutions. As a result, the level of inclusiveness perception varies. The students at the University of Glasgow asked for more concrete actions, more representativeness, and the improvement of existing policies. On the other hand, the Brazilian students feel less included and ask for more inclusion regarding their university's policies, stating that what has already been implemented, such as using their social name or the preferential placement system in some post-graduate courses, is not enough anymore.

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1 INTRODUCTION

This work is a comparative study of inclusion policies and practices focusing on transgender students at the University of Glasgow (UofG) in Scotland and a Higher Education Institution (HEI) in the city of Porto Alegre in Brazil. By analysing institutional documents, questionnaires, and interviews with students from the two Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), I have reviewed policies and institutional practices to ensure the inclusion of trans students and collect insights into their day-to-day experiences at the two universities. This is a qualitative project that highlights the similarities and the differences between the institutions in Scotland and Brazil, providing suggestions on how good examples may be taken from these two different contexts and used to find ways in which, through learning acquired from other contexts, HEIs can improve their tools and practices for the effective inclusion of trans students.

Existing literature produced in Brazil and the UK points to the issue of violence against transgender people. In less physically violent but still deeply affecting ways, transgender people suffer from limited access to higher education (HE) spaces that are regularly available to cisgender people. The literature consulted highlights a lack of effective policies for the inclusion of transgender people in Scottish universities (Mckendry and Lawrence, 2017; Lawrence and Mckendry, 2019), leading to a third of transgender students dropping out of courses. Likewise, dropout rates for transgender students in Brazil are worryingly high (Araujo, 2021; Tavares, 2022). More generally, the literature highlights a lack of studies on the experiences of trans people in HE (Pereira, 2020). The UK Government's LGBT Action Plan (GEO, 2018, p. 1) warns of "difficult findings in other areas, such as safety, health, education and employment". That is why this research is necessary: to investigate how this population is being served in the education field since it is possible to find more writings about transgender people in other areas where little is done to ensure their voices are heard.

The data was collected through a questionnaire and individual interviews, with 9 questionnaires being filled out and 2 interviews carried out with students from the University of Glasgow and one from a private HEI from Porto Alegre. The online questionnaire collected quantitative and some qualitative information from trans students from Porto Alegre (Brazil) and the University of Glasgow (Scotland). Then,

some of these students were contacted for an in-depth conversation about the topics discussed in the questionnaires. Next, I carried out semi-structured interviews online (via Zoom) to accommodate the needs of the students based in Brazil. Finally, a thematic analysis highlighted the similarities and the differences emerging from the data gathered via the two methods (questionnaires and semi-structured interviews).

The first chapter of this dissertation briefly focuses on the education system in Brazil and Scotland, focusing on the HE. Then, the second chapter consists of a brief discussion about gender and decoloniality of transgender identities to present a gender identity that is peculiar to Brazil: the travesti, functioning as a third, original gender, a gender identity created from a Latin American context (Ferreira, 2015; Nascimento, 2021). Next, the literature review will include a survey carried out in Brazil and the UK on transgender people in HEIs, focusing on works published from 2015 onwards in both places.

The following findings chapter is organised around themes that emerged from the analysis of the data collected, with some excerpts of the interviews carried out with students to include their voices. These thematic sections cover (1) toilet use, (2) power relations between trans students and their HEI; and (3) 'passing' as transgender. In conclusion, I will make some suggestions for HEIs in both countries, reflecting on what they should improve to increase the quality of life of their students and how to understand these human beings within their particularities.

As the gender section in the second chapter takes a decoloniality approach, I feel that it is essential that you, the reader (likely to be white and European, indirectly enjoy a quality of life that is also the result of the exploitation of the Global South), to understand that you are the outsider in my study, the foreigner in this dissertation. This work is made by a travesti discussing transgender people throughout the dissertation. When cisgender people appear, they are mentioned marked by their difference as cis/cisgender. Suppose I do not always identify/specify the people. In that case, I am talking about by adding "trans(gender), and if it becomes unclear whether I am talking about trans people, I will probably be talking about them because they are the norm here and for me. The assumption that cisgender is the norm means that I found myself adding an average of the qualifier "trans" 364 times while using the term "cis" only 34 times. I was compelled to do this for you, likely to be a cis person, to make it clear that I, a travesti, am talking

about trans people. When writing this dissertation, I experienced this as an imposition as I felt that, by constantly having to add the qualifier "trans", I was othering friends and fellow students. I also want to acknowledge that, as a travesti, I am white and middle-class in my home country - Brazil - and that I have had the privilege to finish my compulsory studies and enrol in a master's course at the UofG. However, facing all kinds of transphobia, my country can offer a travesti, except for death. This drives my insights and my research, and that is why this work makes use of a (trans)feminist standpoint paradigm that seeks to give credibility to those who are marginalized, think critically and take their position in academia and society (Mosedale, 2014; Steiner, 2018).

2 CHAPTER ONE – Educational Systems

2.1 The Brazilian and Scottish Educational Systems

Before tackling the challenges faced by transgender people in Scottish and Brazilian education, it is essential to understand these two educational systems. Therefore, a brief description of the Brazilian and Scottish *HE* systems, will be made to clarify and draw a comparison between them. Then, a section about the UofG and the university in Brazil chosen by this study focusing on the policies and services aims to contextualize the reader for future discussions.

2.2 Scottish HE

The Scottish HE is composed of 4 types of institution: Ancient universities, grouping together universities founded in the 15th and 16th centuries; Old universities, created in the 1960s, 70s and 80s; and New universities, which were created from 1992 onwards. Post-compulsory education also includes Further Education (FE) Colleges, which were founded mostly in the 1950s (Duta, An and Iannelli, 2018). With the establishment of the Scottish Parliament, the differences between Scotland and other UK constituent countries in terms of how HE is funded has increased. One main difference is that Scottish students do not pay any tuition for undergraduate courses (Riddell, 2015).

To enter a university institution in Scotland, students are expected to take two exams during the final 2 years of secondary school (S5 and S6), the Highers and the Advanced Highers. There are no compulsory subjects to take, and universities tend to look for students high performance in three, five or even more entry requirements depending on the prestige of the university (Duta, An and Iannelli, 2018). Further education (FE) is considered a form of HE and is meant for people who reached the mandatory S1 up to S4 from Secondary school, being responsible for providing vocational qualifications to young and (older) adults.

2.3 Brazilian HE

Admission to Brazilian HE is optional and depends on passing admission exams (MEC, 2022). Currently, Brazil has two main exams: the ENEM (national secondary school exam) and the traditional Vestibular (Barros, 2014). The ENEM exam was created in 1998 to evaluate students in the final year of secondary school in Brazil, but thanks to the recent expansion of universities around the country it can be used for admission to public or private HEIs or as a complement to the traditional

Vestibular exam (Barros, 2014; Bravo, 2017). Brazilians HEIs offer studies up to PhD levels (MEC, 2022).

Brazil, unlike Scotland, does not have an educational policy according to which LGBT issues are explicitly part of the curriculum. Historically, the country has implemented advanced policies in relation to the LGBT population, but in recent years this initiative has decreased in educational policies. For instance, the very mention of sexuality or gender identity has been erased from national education plans (da Silva and Barbosa, 2018). In 2010, the country launched the "School without Homophobia" project, but this was soon rolled back by conservative parliamentarians (Sousa Júnior and Mendes, 2021). In 2014, progress was made with national guidelines on education, gender, and sexual diversity, in addition to resolutions, issued in the following year, that supported the permanence of trans people in education. However, in 2017 the terms "gender identity" and "sexual orientation" were removed from the new PNE[1] list of prejudices to be fought in education (da Silva and Barbosa, 2018).

2.4 Transgender HE policies: UofG and Brazilian HEI

Both universities in this study provide many services that can be accessed by students to help them have the best HE experiences and reach their full academic potential. In the case of the Brazilian HEI, it has implemented programmes providing financial support for those from socioeconomic disadvantaged backgrounds, called PRAE. This allows access to student accommodation, transport assistance or free access to the university's restaurant, just to mention a few benefits. Other services are available to all students, such as paid scientific research opportunities, course tutoring, participation in sporting events, financial assistance for national or international events. In addition to this, all students can access the university restaurants, where they pay a very small fee to eat. Also, for all undergraduate courses and some post-graduation courses the HEI offers a racial, ethnic and disability-based quota system. Moreover, mental health services are provided. All these services can be accessed by students, regardless of their gender identity.

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[1]The PNE (Education National Plan) is drawn up by the Federal Government and includes the "guidelines, goals and strategies" the country should follow, beingreviewed every ten years (Sabia and Alaniz, 2015; MEC, no date).

However, over the years a lack of government investments in public HE[2] has made those services more precarious and much harder to access than they should be (Alves and Gonçalves, 2019). Forbye, Brazil is the most dangerous place for a transgender person to live, and data on access to education show that most transgender people do not complete their secondary school studies, with less than 1% accessing public HE institutions around the country (FONAPRACE, 2019). For example, transgender people tend to suffer more from mental health issues due to discrimination (Silva *et al.*, 2021), and this must be taken into account when seeking university-provided mental health services. Then, intersectional treatment with other minority groups already covered by affirmative actions should be made, since "policies for the inclusion of the trans population must be attentive to the specific needs of this community so that permanence is a reality" (Machado, 2021, p. 84).

Similarly, the UofG also provides many services to students that can be accessed regardless of gender identity. Additionally, there are some affirmative actions specifically designed for transgender people, such as support through transition, clear gender-neutral toilets around campus, pathways for name change according to gender identity, accessible LGBTQI+ representatives and associations, and recommendations for other external Scottish transgender organisations. The university also provides a clear statement in its polices according to which it seeks to ban any kind of discrimination, offering specific training to staff members around LGB&T issues. Nonetheless, no data on trans population could be found in the UofG website in the section Planning, Insight & Analytics – Gender data (UofG, 2022a).

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[2] According to Agência Câmara de Notícias at Câmara dos Deputados website (2022), "discretionary higher education spending in Brazil was BRL 14.9 billion in 2014, reached BRL 15.67 billion in 2015 and since then it has been dropping. In 2021, it was BRL 5.5 billion. See, I'm talking from BRL 15 billion to BRL 5.5 billion, a drop of more than 60% of the discretionary budget". Accessed at 14/07/2022

3 CHAPTER TWO – Gender from the North to the South

3.1 Gender as colonized production

Understanding gender is hard for a mind that is not open to the possibilities of being. Because, gender possibilities vary beyond male or female due to culture and that create power relationships at the same time that tries to organise the societies (Ferreira, 2018). The gender knowledge from today is different from the gender knowledge that has been studied, constructed and organised in Europe and the USA in the late 19th century (Pearce, 2018; Zanela, 2019). To perceive the other sides of gender is to decolonize ourselves; otherwise, we cannot move forward in this discussion. So, to have an understanding about gender is to dismantle values based on binary gender and racism (Cardoso, 2014; Lugones, 2020).

Flirting with ontologies from the Global South and the Global North is not easy since the production of our gender differs and blends after the Second World War. For example, we have the *Hijra* in India, the *Muxe* in Mexico, and the *Travesti* in Brazil. These are some examples of possibilities on how we can exist in the world beyond the male/female gender binary widely spread in the Global North that we will call cis/cisgender. Being cisgender put yourself in the centre of power over other gender expressions. Cis people are recognized as the norm, the natural (Pearce, 2018), man or woman, while other gender possibilities beyond the European production over transgender people are not (Connell, 2012). As a common and silent agreement (Pearce, 2018), we tend to talk about these Global South expressions of gender as "transgender". However, "transgender" is a Eurocentric label given to all people who escape the norm imposed by a widespread understanding of binarism and sexual differentiation.

What does the trans labels truly mean, and why do we address some people using these names? In an interview, Butler (Ahmed, 2016) argues that it is common for us to address and be addressed, and that the problem lies in how others will address us. For example, for trans people it is how those addressing terms were re-signified to make their identity look dysfunctional to the rest of society (Ahmed, 2016; Pearce, 2018). Also, Pearce (2018) explains how the umbrella term "trans" links not only diverse gender possibilities but also medical and social discourse, which she understands - following Foucault (1978, cited in Pearce, (2018)) - as the way in which a dominant discourse not only describes the world but also constructs it,

noting, moreover, that discourses emerges not only from institutions or people in charge but also from the margins. Structure by itself is not enough to explain these relations of power among the discourse, as they happen at another levels, such as social and individual. Ferreira (2018) discusses intersectionality from many perspectives because the concept of intersectionality is not unique. But, in essence, intersectionality aims to understand the power relations that cross or meet subjects depending on their differentiation categories, such as race, social class, body or gender. For that, multidimensional theories should be used to understand those power relations.

Therefore, the Brazilian trans movement and intellectuals inverted the Eurocentric logic (Connell, 2014) and coined their equivalent of the *transgender* word to try to bring it all together, which is *transvestigênere,* a mix of the words *travesti*, transexual, non-binary people and other genders possibilities that can emerge, a term that is linked to a Brazilian decolonial transfeminism (Rodrigues, 2020). So, from now on, when referring to trans people/ movement from Brazil, I shall use this term because of the difference it causes and to decolonise my writing by naming it properly, showing we are more than what it is said by the Global North about us (Connell, 2014; Lugones, 2020). Otherwise, I will use the common word trans/ transgender when speaking in general.

3.2 Brief (coloniser) transgender history

During the late 19th century, the world goes through a phase defined by the white European division of sex, male and female, and their roles in society, in addition to heterosexual desire. Everything that would destabilize this binary norm was not only seen as Other but also a mental and moral issue that needed to be fixed (Pearce, 2018; Slagstad, 2021). For example, hormones were administered to cure what were called the inverted people, since there was not a common word that would describe what we understand as transgender gender identity nowadays (Pearce, 2018). In sum, what it is understood today as gender as a human socio-cultural addressing term (Ahmed, 2016) started to be treated as a pathology, a deviation from the norm that medicine could handle at that time (Slagstad, 2021).

So, the Other (trans) was categorized by scientists in such a way since the today's binary gender matrix (cisgender) by itself could work without reference to a peripheric Other (Butler, 2006). Trans identities were vivisected and dissected by

the white guardians of the new knowledge and, as Pearce (2018, p. 16) points out, "this attitude towards perceived gender deviance can be understood as just one part of a wider pathologizing of each and every gendered behaviour that departed from upper- and middle-class white male norms". This is when the terms *transvestite, transexual* and *transgender* were designed to address those people who did not identify themselves as male or female as they were assigned at birth (Pearce, 2018). So, this medical discourse made us possible since we were addressed by them (Ahmed, 2016). But, by what authority does this western medical discourse authorize transgender people to exist when they have existed since much earlier? Decolonial authors such as Lugones (2020) attest the resistance and existence of (gender) identities of enslaved indigenous or African peoples prior to the arrival of European settlers that were erased by them through a dehumanization process well illustrated by Hooks in *Ain't I a Woman* (2014) when describing torture methods used against Black women in slave ships.

3.3 Trans bodies and biopower

Recognizing this as just a very summary of transgender history in Europe/ USA, it is important to say that a whole modern transgender industry was built upon this medical knowledge around the world. An industry that is created to control trans bodies and profit off of them. This ranges from psychotherapy, hormones and plastic surgery to genital intervention, all of which having one 'good' intention: to cure a sick body, a troubled mind, as they say (Pereira, 2019). The Other is not only seen as deficient, but can be cured by gender inversion-intervention, never going beyond the male and female possibilities. This can been seen by politics that still deny non-binary people the option of choosing third gender in their documents like in the UK (The Week (2018) and Scotland (2021), and in 2021 some Brazilian states such as Rio Grande do Sul, Rio de Janeiro, Santa Catarina, Piauí and Bahia allowed birth certificates to be amended in order to include non-binary gender (DPRS, 2021; G1, 2022; MPBA, 2022).

When referring to transgender bodies, we have to talk about "biopolitics", which Pereira (2019) defined as the result of the conjunction of many institutions that have the power to let some bodies live while others are left to die or perish, as they were never seen as living entities in the first place. This biopower not only tells us who is allowed to blossom but unveils at some point how the cisgender and

heterosexual society deals with bodies that do not conform. Since some States are not allowed to kill by their laws, they create legal instruments of segregation between "us" and "them" (transgender (us) versus cisgender people (them)), where being "us" always marks the difference, the margin, and marginals.

When we analyse the creation of trans bodies, we come across science, which claims that those bodies are sick and need treatment, this treatment seeking to domesticate bodies and desires, and to punish them by denying their transformations (Pearce, 2018; Pereira, 2019). Unlike cisgender people, who can modify their bodies at will, the same self-determination does not apply to transgender bodies, since this depends on a medical panel approval and the goodwill of surgeons. This shows not only how the Global North still dictates the directions in terms of other forms of gender around the world (Lugones, 2020) but also how this logic is economic as well.

3.4 The Brazilian travesti gender identity issue

Connel (2014, p. 119) says: "the overall narrative is the same: a system of ideas generated in the global North gains political influence in the North and is then imposed on the global South". For many years in Brazil, *travestis* were excluded from the transexual body process in Brazil's public health care system. Moreover, they did not have the right to change their legal names since they did not want to undergo sex reassignment surgery and "cure" their bodies. Thanks to the Brazilian *transvestigênere* movement, and their years of struggle, not only is it possible for *travestis* to change their legal name now, but also their gender/ sex in their birth certificate if they so wish.

Here we must draw a distinction between the word *travesti,* which, as mentioned before, is a Brazilian and Latin American gender identity, and the English word *transvestite,* which is a product of medical studies that were found to be different from transexual, as this can lead to a false cognate. However, I do not believe that the psychiatric manuals and even the reflections made by some transgender thinkers from the North like Prince (2005) differ from the way *travestis* in the south refer and see themselves, as Pearce (Pearce, 2018) contextualizes by arguing that by 1950 Dr. Benjamin said *transvestite* people do not see themselves as women but portray themselves as one, with the same being stated by Brazilian authors with regard to *travestis*: they do not see themselves as either women or

men, but portray femininity and want to be referred to using female pronouns (Pereira, 2019; Zanela, 2019).

What can be perceived by these Brazilian authors is that the *travesti* body is linked with medicine technological development, not fitting into one binary model but to create themselves. In other words, *travesti* bodies come from creation and not from the emulation of cisgender women (Ferreira, 2015; Zanela, 2019). And for this creation, words such as beauty, pain and trick are mostly used by them (Pereira, 2019).

Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that medical knowledge exported from the North turned out to be a weapon used by Southern States to deny other gender categories beyond male or female access to their citizen rights such as name change or health care. Even if we think that transsexual persons suffer from the same transphobia as *travestis,* still, only the former had the right to change their bodies and documents after the transitioning process was complete. Moreover, Global North science has made *transvestite* people identity sicker than transsexuals, that is very much shared by the *travestis* in Brazil some years ago. Creating a citizen bridge that only *transexual* could cross since they shared a desire of adapting their bodies and gender discourse to the gender binarism of men and women (Prince, 2005; Pearce, 2018).

4 LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1 Searching for the literature

It was hard to find articles related to transgender people and HEIs. To narrow this search, the keywords used to find literature in both Brazil and the UK were: transgender, travesti, LGBT, education, HE, Brazil, and UK (both in Portuguese and English). The platforms used were Google Scholar, ProQuest, and the virtual UofG Library, with Google Scholar offering more abundant literature for Brazil. A great amount of research based /focusing on transgender, and HE were in the United States, but I only focused on literature addressing a Brazilian and/or UK context. Since the bulk of the articles on the situation in Brazil were mainly published from 2015 onwards, I also chose to select literature from that same period for UK productions on the subject, to ensure a similar timeframe.

In the past few years, Brazil started to recognize transgender lives in the public sphere, guaranteeing us some rights, even if they are not fulfilled, and it seems that access to HEIs is linked to these minimal civil rights. I say this because it is not a coincidence that studies about trans people and educational institutions became more fruitful over the second decade of the 21st century when *transvestigêneres* were guaranteed the right to make use of their *social name*.

Regarding Brazil, the studies carried out during the 2015-2017 period are few in comparison to later years. I found 8 articles from this period, one of which addresses LGB&T people in general. From 2018 onwards, 17 articles were found that mostly addressed issues faced by trans people. The total number of articles analysed was 25. Most of the studies regarding trans people were qualitative ones and addressed issues like *social name,* harassment, and toilet use as the most common obstacles for transgender students in Brazilian HEIs.

In relation to the situation in the UK, from 2015 to date there are few publications, and I found a total of 11 articles, half of which addressing LGB&T people in general. Besides, literature focusing on the UK published since 2015 features less studies addressing trans people in HEIs, and the references reviewed in the selected articles show that the production on transgender students in the UK is a little higher than in Brazil, and I can only hypothesize that this occurs because the UK is a developed country and an English-speaking one, and that social organizations

there receive more funding for studies relating to the LGB&T community, which results in better data, as well as because of its traditional universities.

Although most articles address issues faced by LGBT people, they do not treat the LGBT acronym, but rather separate the LGB (Lesbians, Gays, and Bisexuals) and the Trans peoples. For this reason, I will address in this literature review the LGBT community as LGB&T to emphasise transgender students.

4.2 Brazilian HEIs

a) Exclusion/inclusion of transvestigêneres students

In the early studies about transgender in HEIs (Franco and Cicillini, 2015; Dias, Carvalho, and Oliveira, 2016; Paiva and Pereira, 2016; Polak, 2016), we look at the situation of transgender pupils in compulsory school in order to create a bridge with gender structures of power that influence the whole educational system, up to HE. According to dos Santos (2017), there is no educational level where heteronormativity and LGB&Tphobia do not exist, and gender and sexual norms reinforced by heteronormativity at an early age will lead to transphobia and other forms of discrimination, as claimed by Costa et al. (2015). As a consequence of the hostility they experience from an early age, few trans people do not face prejudice and go on to complete their studies up to HE (Franco and Cicillini, 2015). *Transvestigênere* people face ostracism as they subvert and destabilize normativity with their transgressive bodies (Dias, Carvalho and Oliveira, 2016). Franco and Cicillini (2015) state that a study conducted in 2004 by Sérgio Carrara and Sílvia Ramos found that *transvestigênere* people did not suffer much discrimination in educational institutions; however, it was later discovered - and reinforced by further studies - that this low discrimination rate was due to the low number of trans people in school and university spaces and that in Brazil an average of 25% of *transvestigênere* people had completed their secondary degree and 5% had completed their HE.

Silva (2017) notes that while older studies designated social class as crucial in determining academic failure or success, current studies recognise that other markers of difference such as gender and race also play a crucial role. Additionally, da Silva and Barbosa (2018) allocate educational institutions to the historical device of power, stating that, while they facilitate subjective and identity development,

they also operate to deconstruct them through the interaction between subjects, institutional structures and many other heterogeneous social actors that takes place in these institutions. Furthermore, Correa (2017) argues that transphobia is enacted by Brazilian university structures when they neglect to recognise trans students and to make debates on sexuality feasible. To illustrate this, there is a scarce number of academic studies on *transvestigênere* themes in educational spaces (Conopca, 2018) or on how *transvestigênere* people are never featured on 'the main pages HEIs websites, thus making them invisible (Correa, 2017).

Dimenstein et al. (2018) indicate how precarious and violent Brazilian university campuses are with regard to *transvestigênere* bodies, whose movement is more unrestrained only in more specific, safer campus spaces. In other spaces, however, the judgmental eyes of cisgender people can make trans people uncomfortable. Consequently, *transvestigêneres* may avoid socialization and even mundane, necessary activities, such as eating and drinking, in these spaces. For this reason, dos Santos et al. (2019), when thinking about Brazilian HEIs spaces, identify the existence of "insiders" and "outsiders", in which the first group is made it up those who follow gender rules, while the second is made up of those who blur the lines and are, therefore, "barred" from accessing specific common spaces. Dias et al (2016) show how a *transvestigênere* person they interviewed felt more discriminated against in her HEI than in her secondary school years. While not as strongly, other works that included interviews with trans people in HEIs highlight practices that exclude trans people due to their specificities inside HEIs in Brazil (Paiva and Pereira, 2016; Polak, 2016; Correa, 2017; dos Santos, 2017; Silva, 2017; dos Santos et al., 2019).

The university is thus a territory of contradictions. We have the democratisation of access to HE in Brazil in the past few decades with an increasing number of *transvestigênere* people that now openly question the dominant heteronormativity binary gender discourse of HEIs, while, at the same time, other people try to resist new concepts that go beyond conceptions of man and woman gender as established by heteronormativity (Dimenstein *et al.*, 2018). Moreover, the number of *transvestigênere* students in Brazil has grown in the last few years, even if this number still much less when compared to cisgender people, with this group now

being 0,3% of the university population studying at federal public universities (Silva, 2017; FONAPRACE, 2019; UFMG, 2021).

b) *Transphobia and acts of violence*

The previous section presented a general panorama of how universities in Brazil as social institutions produce and reproduce violent discourse against transvestigênere bodies. In most studies, two main acts of violence take place: the use of a social name and access to toilets.

The most common violent act transvestigênere people experience in Brazilian HEI spaces is denying the use of their social name. According to Polak (2016), the social name is how transvestigênere people in Brazil choose to be known and recognised by society, matching their gender identity. Compared to Pereira (2020), the legal recognition of this name in Brazil began in the first decade of the 21st century when Brazilian LGB&T social movements claimed educational institutions as a space of belonging. The Federal University of Amapá (UNIFAP) was the first Brazilian university to introduce a social name policy, and the others that followed were driven mainly by pressure from social movements representing transvestigênere people from outside and inside universities (Lages et al., 2021).

Polak (2016) states that the name is how society individualises and marks a person collectively. Therefore, there is no subject without a name. Also, people's names provide rights and generate stability for the State. Therefore, when implementing policies such as recognising social names, the institution seeks to respect the identification of transvestigênere people and their subjectivities (Pereira, 2020). However, the legality of the social name is contradictory since no law recognises it on a national level, leaving it to the Federal States, cities and other institutions to legislate on the matter (Correa, 2017). Therefore, a conflict between civil registration and social names simultaneously makes trans people feel included and apart (Scote, 2020).

For example, the right to use the social name at Brazilian HEIs is recognised only inside their walls, in their internal documentation, but this right does not extend outside the institution (Correa, 2017). In other publications, the problem lies with the HEI system, such as when transvestigênere students fail classes because their names were not found on the system by the professor, even if they have attended

classes (Lages et al., 2021). Moreover, the social name and the civil one are sometimes sided by side, thus exposing the student (Scote, 2020). In addition, to Pereira (2020 the right to have the social name recognised by institutions engendered precariousness for transvestigênere students who feel threatened by the constant reminder that they are the outcasts (Correa, 2017). Therefore, the Brazilian State slowly and erratically recognises a precarious right as the right to a whole existence (Pereira, 2020).

In addition to the denial of a social name, there are several studies about transvestigênere people in Brazilian HEIs showing how they often struggle with toilet use in the institutions they attend (Dias et al., 2016; Silva, 2017; Dimenstein, 2018; dos Santos et al., 2019; Pereira, 2020). For example, Silva (2017) says, toilets are a "gendered technology" because people affirm their assigned gender by accessing them. So Pereira (2020) argues that binary toilets are part of a disciplinary technology that regulates, through an invisible discourse, how certain bodies should behave, what to use and so on. As a result, when *transvestigênere* bodies access these places, they can generate violent feelings of aversion: on the one hand the denial of the identity by other users, and on the other hand the feeling of embarrassment for being considered an outsider (Dimenstein, 2018). Additionally, Pereira (2020) characterizes the experience of *transvestigênere* people as one where using the facilities is perceived as something wrong, where they should be vigilant for their safety, often resorting to friends to look out for them as they use the space.

For example, some radical feminists at a prestigious Brazilian university painted the toilets with transphobic messages, blending identity and biology as one and the same (M. J. A. Pereira, 2020), thus denying the development of masculinity and femininity as subjectively, culturally, and socially constructed since there is no biological determinism between reproductive organs and the person (Polak, 2016). Moreover, this kind of action universalises women's oppression by the act of oppressing others by reducing the female identity to the reproductive organs rather than addressing women's oppression as part of a much wider and more complex system (Pereira, 2020).

The difficulties regarding toilet use collide with Brazilian regulations created to allow *transvestigênere* students to use these spaces at educational institutions (Polak, 2016). Additionally, Pereira (2020) also includes the notion of "bio-necro-

power", that is, power that seeks to eliminate some bodies by denying their existence. This can be seen in the example, reported in the literature, of individuals in a Brazilian HEI pointing to a *transvestigênere* woman and saying that she was in the wrong place and that she should be in the streets doing sex-work like the others (Dias et al., 2016). Likewise, a police officer approached a *transvestigênere* woman student and questioned if she was a student rather than, as they assumed, a prostitute on campus, deeply scaring her (Pereira, 2020). These two reports show how *travestis'* lives are excluded from social spaces in HEIs despite inclusive policies, and how *transvestigêneres* are subjected to violence due to the repercussions of what remains a transphobic society (Paiva and Pereira, 2016).

4.3 Transphobia in UK HEIs

The literature consulted about transgender students in UK HEIs highlights a lack of studies relating to transgender people and HEIs, along with the fact that transphobia is better documented in school studies (Grimwood, 2017). In addition, Hudson-Sharp and Metcalf (2016) state that inequalities are more evident in compulsory education than in other areas, and that transgender inequalities in education institutions are well described but are still not very representative of this population due to the lack of robust studies. Moreover, some articles end up conflating LGB experiences with those of the T community, but at the same time focus on the differences between LGB and Trans people issues (Reisz, 2015; Hudson-Sharp and Metcalf, 2016; Formby, 2017; Grimwood, 2017; English and Fenby-Hulse, 2019).

While visible in popular culture, the transgender identity issue is less discussed in further education (Hafford-Letchfield *et al.*, 2017). An article by Formby (2015) about LGB&T people in UK HEIs states how this population feels that the university is a safer place when compared to other social spheres. Although transphobia occurs in spaces other than HE and is beyond the HEIs' power, universities can offer services to help trans people deal with these situations (Lawrence and Mckendry, 2019). For example, despite being seen as a diverse space, 6% of LGBT people have allegedly dropped out of university due to their sexuality and gender identity (Formby, 2015). Additionally, 29% of transgender students have temporally left HEIs due to transphobia and other trans-related issues, and a study from the NUS (National Union

of Students) states that LGB&T students are more likely to abandon their studies due to homophobic and transphobic harassment, while 51% of trans people think about dropping out (Formby, 2017). Aside from this safety issue, UK HEIs are not perceived as free of contradictions because the university environment is still a place where cis-heteronormativity is performed and perpetuated (Hudson-Sharp and Metcalf, 2016). To illustrate this, an article by Grimwood (2017) shows that only 35 UK universities were monitoring their students' sexual orientation and due to the lack of knowledge of the LGB&T subjects the HEIs could miss potential talents for the lack of specific policies aimed at this population.

However, according to Hudson-Sharp and Metcalf (2016), the HEIs time-out from LGB&T people is not precise, and maybe LGB&Tphobia is not the main reason. Formby (2015) also notes that one should be careful with generalizations and that studies in this field are fragile since the data collected only captures what is said at the moment, while experiences can vary over time.

a) Addressing transphobia areas

One of the ways HEIs maintain cis heteronormativity is through curriculum. For instance, addressing LGB&T people in the curriculum as different or only discussing them during specific time of the year are actions of segregation (Formby, 2017) that preserve the binary system (cis/ trans, hetero/ homo and so on). In addition, only 18% of LGB&T material is perceived as being well addressed (Hudson-Sharp and Metcalf, 2016).

The UK HEIs have issues with transgender names, which is something that Formby (2015) identifies as a barrier faced by trans people. Some articles point out that UK HEIs have decentralized systems in the same university, with students being required to change their names repeatedly in different departments and the lack of staff trained to deal with these changes, resulting in trans students having to expose themselves several times, thus diminishing their privacy (Storrie and Rohleder, 2018; English and Fenby-Hulse, 2019; Mearns et al., 2019). This lack of clear "trans policies" (English and Fenby-Hulse, 2019) means that some trans students avoid seeking help, in addition to the fact that 31% of LGB&T students are not aware of their rights inside UK HEIs (Grimwood, 2017).

Another issue UK transgender people face is the use of facilities such as toilets, which are technologies used/employed to discipline bodies into a binary system through surveillance that is carried out over these bodies (Mearns et al., 2019). One of the criticisms when it comes to non-gendered toilets is that these toilets often are the same ones used by people with disabilities, something that transgender feel uncomfortable because being trans is not the same as having a disability. As a consequence, some trans people do not use these toilets because they fear discrimination (Mearns et al., 2019; Bonner-Thompson et al., 2021).

Accommodation is another isue that transgender people face, since many start their transition during their further education years (Formby, 2015; Hafford-Letchfield *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, they are worried about what others will think and how they will manage it, which can result in in-transition students hiding themselves to avoid transphobia (Mearns et al., 2019). The segregation of gender-based university accommodation is another tool that perpetuates the binary system (Formby, 2017), since some institutions still do not offer a mixed-gender option (Lawrence and Mckendry, 2019). For example, some students report that LGBTphobic messages are written on bedroom doors, forcing trans people to avoid socialization and even coming out (Formby, 2015). Overall, these divisions between male and female gender lead to a feeling of precariousness, since some lives appear more valuable than others due to way they are produced and reproduced by policies at UK HEIs. To avoid this, student accommodation services should develop guidance policies (Mearns et al., 2019; Bonner-Thompson et al., 2021).

Another way to perpetuate the binary gender standard consists of how UK HEIs deal with sports, separating recreational activities on the basis of gender assumption, following rules that put pressure on in-transition transgender people, therefore excluding those people from sporting activities (Phipps, 2021). When universities do that, they reinforce the male and female structures of society and prevent trans people from participating (Formby, 2017). Furthermore, Phipps (2021) highlights the importance of practicing sports in university because it entails physical activity, the acquisition of skills and employability factors. Hence, the university must be inclusive to all.

Moreover, academic career counselling is not aligned with transgender experiences, such as how to balance previous experiences when trans people used

to be addressed by their birth name and then by their new one, the letters of reference for it, and so on (Formby, 2017), all of which is still geared towards a binary system. Therefore, Lawrence and Mckendry (2019) advise that career counselling services should be more trans-inclusive. In sum, while UK universities claim that they have LGB&T policies in place and show how they are committed to diversity and equality, the picture looks quite different from the perspective of LGB&T students, who do not see the practical improvements allegedly resulting from these policies and commitments (Formby, 2017).

According to a study by Storrie and Rohleder (2018) on trans experiences at UK Universities, microaggressions are subtle actions and discourses that intentionally or unintentionally antagonize non-hetero-normative people, leading to negative consequences, such as minority stress, and causing mental health distress. Consequently, the binary gender is the cause of a "gender tyranny" based on microaggressions that deny the transgender status, unless it does not disturb the binary system (Mearns et al., 2019).

Overall, to avoid discrimination on campus, many trans people create self-censorship or identity management strategies, and to prevent attracting hatred from students and staff (tutors, teachers, and so on), they end uphiding their gender identity. A study by Hudson-Sharp and Metcalf (2016) shows some evidence of the differences between LGB&T people in HEIs at some English institutions, revealing a 200% disparity in violent episodes experienced by trans students when compared to their LGB peers. Another study by Grimwood (2017) points out that 78% of the UK universities researched were not collecting data about the sexual orientation or gender identity of their students when measuring the satisfaction level of this population in their institutions, also indicating that very few HEIs had LGB&T inclusion policies.

4.5 Conclusion

It seems that in Brazil as well as in the UK transgender issues for HEI students share some similarities, such as issues regarding the use of their social name, the lack of gender-neutral facilities like toilets, and other (micro)aggressions transgender students face such insults and violence by colleagues, teachers, and other staff members, not to mention violence outside campus.

Conversely, while trans people in these two countries seem to suffer from the same violence in these spaces, there are also differences, in the literature review chapter, violence seems greater for trans people in Brazil, thus resulting in a low numbers of trans people completing compulsory education and a greater occurrence of more extreme situations, such as being perceived and approached by the police as sex workers within HE spaces just for being transgender. No UK papers reported from students' insights the same violence. However, on a positive note, Brazilian studies look at the intersectionality between gender and race, which is not observable in the articles published in the UK, which deal exclusively with trans people in HE, giving the impression that all of them are European white people.

Nonetheless, Brazilian studies fail to go deeper into the issues faced by trans students in HEI spaces, focusing on the use of social names and toilet use, mentioning other experiences only on a superficial level. However, whilst the UK has produced fewer articles relating to transgender people in HEIs, it seems that these studies cover a lot more issues trans people face in the UK, such as career counselling, sports, and accommodation, elements that could be better explored by Brazilians researchers.

Trans students in both countries must ensure their political engagement through LGB&T associations or organizations so that their rights may be heard by their respective HEIs, which shows that educational institutions in both countries are not proactive and need to be instigated to make changes to their structures. Furthermore, associations are better addressed by UK HEIs, and they seem to play a positive role in helping to change structures, while there is almost no mention of university LGB&T organizations in the articles on Brazilian HEIs analysed.

5 METHODOLOGY

This project consists of 2 phases, the first being a questionnaire while the second are individual interviews. The participants will be transgender HE students from the UofG (Scotland) and a HEI in Porto Alegre City (Brazil). Two similar online surveys have been designed for the first phase (one in English for UofG students and the other in Portuguese for students in Porto Alegre, addressing their peculiarities) to collect answers from transgender HE students to 23 questions (in each survey). The questions revolve around issues such as gender identity and racial / ethnic self-declaration; questions on these students' lives and their knowledge of trans policies in their universities. The full English version of the questionnaire and it results are available in Appendix section. Since Porto Alegre has over ten universities, the selection for the interviews focused on the university with most of the selected students.

Since the survey involves a vulnerable and hard-to-reach population in two very different countries, I have adopted a Snowball Sampling Method (SMS) (Cohen and Arieli, 2011) as the most appropriate way to seek participants for the survey. Therefore, taking into account the nature of this study, the SMS is the best method to reach hard subjects (Browne, 2005), such as transgender people in two different countries. Also, since I am a trans person, it would be easier to approach them and send them the questionnaires, because according to Baltar and Brunet (2012) subject trust is sometimes important in order to successfully make contact with them. Next, according to the Brunet and Baltar (2012) study using virtual networking, the use of SMS in conjunction with an online platform to send out the questionnaires means that this can be done quickly and be less expensive, when compared to mail posting. Furthermore, this results in an increased sense of confidentiality due to the anonymity allowed by this online platform (Baltar and Brunet, 2012).

Afterwards, I planned semi-structured interviews according to Marconi and Lakatos (2003) in order to hear what additional comments the students had to the questionnaire and to carry out a more in-depth investigation on some of the answers given. For this purpose, I followed several orientations given by Boni and Quaresma (2005), such as: creating a bond with the subjects and replying the emails they sent me or their messages sent through social media; trying to personalise the interviews by asking specific questions that only that person can answer, based on their answers

and on the information I had already collected from other subjects, avoiding biases and predictable reactions from them (Simão, 1989). Regarding the interviews, I am well aware of the need to formulate the questions with the utmost care, being attentive so that I do not pose or or insist upon harmful questions, which could potentially make painful experiences resurface, thus ensuring confidentiality and anonymity (Allmark *et al.*, 2009; Sabar and Sabar Ben-Yehoshua, 2017).

I opted for an interview format as I needed to give trans people an active voice and ensure their own voices are heard in this study and not always treating them in third person; I am trans and I position myself within a transfeminism approach, so I believe that a transfeminist methodology not only agrees with a feminist method as a self-reflection and social transformation goal (Hill *et al.*, 2000) but goes beyond that, engendering a real *TRANS*formation of the research process itself, in a reaction to the male white *CIS*tem[3] dominance (Nascimento, 2021).

Finally, the coding of the interviews will be carried out through a qualitative thematic analysis. According to Given (2008), it is a way in which the interviews can be categorized in order to find common categories as a result of the patterns that will emerge from the subjects. Since it is a comparative study, I chose this method of analysis with the purpose of finding the similarities and the differences that seem to emerge from the students' insights. The themes were organised into toilet use (Brazil only); power relationships; and passing to survive.

Overall, the number of participants in the first phase on this study was 18 in total, with 9 subjects for each country. For the interview phase, there were only 2 participants from the UK and 3 from Brazil. This number should not be taken as a universal view on trans people in HE, but only a partial perspective, the results still being in line with what is found in the literature. Additionally, I have taken the liberty of deliberately omitting passages from the transcripts to protect the identity of the participants.

For the literature review, the platforms consulted were Google Scholar, ProQuest and the virtual UofG Library. There were 25 useful publications from and the 11 from the UK. The timeframe chosen for the academic papers from both countries was from 2015 onwards. The keywords varied because of the language

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[3] A word plays with "cis" from cisgender people and the word system.

(Portuguese and English), but the consisted of the following: transgender; *travesti*; LGBT; education; HE; Brazil; and UK.

A Feminist Standpoint [Epistemology/ Theory] (FSE/ FST) will be used in this study; I will be using the first person on some occasions because this is a study developed by a Brazilian *travesti* about trans people, and Steiner (2018, p. 1856) says that "FSE argues that knowledge comes from someplace: a standpoint, which is partly grounded in, inter alia, embodied experience"; however, this kind of partiality (me) is not acritical since it is not about an individualist experience, but rather aims to decentralize the hegemonic discourse revolving around a group with less social power (Ribeiro, 2017), because "a central tenet of FST is that the experience of oppression itself potentially privileges people in terms of their knowledge" (Mosedale, 2014, p. 1117), and even though I refer to some decolonial authors, this is not a decolonial study.

6 FINDINGS

6.1 Objective questions - summary of questionnaires (Brazil and Scotland)

The questionnaires were sent out to 18 people in total, 9 from Brazilian HE transgender students and 9 from UofG, in Scotland. Regarding the Brazilian students, 7 participants were from the same university, so the interviews and policy analysis mainly refer to one HEI located in Porto Alegre. The questionnaires comprised 23 (UofG) and 25 (Brazil) questions, divided into closed- and open-ended (textual) questions. Subsequently, I carried out an interview with the questionnaire respondents who indicated in their questionnaires their willingness to talk to me. As a result, interviews were carried out with 2 UofG students and 3 students from one university in Brazil. For more detailed information about the questionnaire outcomes, see the Appendix. Lastly, to not disclose students from this research, they will be referred using neutral gender pronouns whenever possible and by alphabetic letters as I promised them the highest possible level of anonymity.

6.2 Background overview of the interviews

The participants interviewed were, in their majority, perceived and self-declared white, with only one Brazilian student declaring themselves non-white. Additionally, this student said they experienced less racial issues due to their skin colour. Another noteworthy aspect was their social class, with some of them possibly being middle-class due to their discourse, while others being working-class due to self-declaration. The intersectionality of many categories already described in chapter two will affect how transphobia is experienced; then, due to the participants' insights, the intersectionality in this study must be seem as a constructionist element because "where the axes of difference advance in different directions that may, contextually, lead to discrimination or privilege" (Ferreira, 2018, p. 60).

6.3 Transgender HEI students' insights – between open questions and interviews (Brazil – Scotland)

The open-ended answers and interviews given by Brazilian students were very concise, demonstrating that there are policies aimed at the transgender university population, but they are still insufficient. The analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaires and the interviews can be divided into three main elements. The first one refers to toilet accessibility, highlighting how this is still an issue for transgender

non-binary students in Brazilian HEIs. Although there were similarities in the issues highlighted by both the students in Brazil and Scotland, UofG students did not explicitly mention toilet use as an issue, nor did they discuss experiences of openly transphobic acts. The second element concerns a lack of affirmative actions taken by HEIs to ensure the inclusion of transgender people, which can be associated with the fact that policies and services remain "hidden" and that the awareness regarding these initiatives is not widespread among trans students in both countries. Finally, the third one refers to how important it is for a trans person to pass as cisgender to experience less discrimination.

6.4 Toilet use – (Brazil)

Toilet use in Brazilian universities is an issue not only for non-binary people but even for binary ones, as the following extract from a student response indicates:

> I've already had a problem with the toilet, so I never go to the toilet alone [...] only at the faculty of education, which has gender-neutral toilets. (Student E; Brazil)

Brazilian students do not feel safe using gendered toilets and one of them claims that there is a lack of gender-neutral toilets in the other university colleges. During the interview, student F also revealed that when radical feminists were trying to bully trans woman for using the female toilet, they were soon stopped by other students. Thus, transphobia occurs in this space, which makes then uncomfortable.

> [I do] not feel comfortable going to the toilet at university. [You can end up] feeling sick from holding yourself back and not going to the toilet. (Student F; Brazil)

Consequently, what the Brazilian students highlight is the need for wider awareness and training of the university's staff members because some places lack proper training, making it hard for *transvestigêneres* to exercise their rights (Bonassi *et al.*, 2015). To potentially redress this lack of awareness, one of the Brazilian students suggested that the HEI they attend can take practical steps to help, such as organising

more events spread across/throughout the university about these issues. Subjects for scientific initiation. Having a stall with information (Student C; Brazil)

Scientific initiation (SI) is a programme that allows students to develop their research and academic skills, which was inspired by the way the US and French HEIs were producing knowledge. Therefore, Brazilian HEIs noted that teaching and researching could be strengthened, thus allowing the classroom to be a place where knowledge could be actively built (Massi and Queiroz, 2010). So, student C was saying that SI could be used as a way of producing and distributing knowledge about *transvestigênere* issues and toilet use so that it could be broadcast to people all around campus.

Overall, Lawrence and McKendry (2019) have already suggested that the availability of a greater number of gender-neutral toilets is a key policy to be introduced in HEIs to facilitate the inclusion of transgender students. But, limiting this initiative to the more common option, which is to turn facilities destined for people with disabilities into gender-neutral toilets, which conflates transgender people and people with disabilities is a problem (a criticism also expressed by Lawrence and McKendry, 2019). In comparison, the UofG (2022b) has an average of 25[4] gender-neutral toilets that can be found at the HEI website and during the interviews any toilet issue faced by Brazilians students were pointed by UofG transgender students. This may be because the UofG seems to have clear policies around this matter and students do not feel threatened there as Brazilian ones do.

6.5 Power relationships - (Brazil and Scotland)

a) HEI affirmative actions

Affirmative actions are tools of social balance that aim, among other goals, to guarantee that minority groups have access to segments of society in which they do not have the same opportunities as the dominant class, such as access to higher education (Basso-Poletto *et al.*, 2020). In general, countries that adopt affirmative

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[4] (*University of Glasgow - MyGlasgow - LGBTQ+ Staff Network*, no date) accessed 06/07/2022

actions have a history of discrimination against certain social groups (Warikoo and Allen, 2020), which needs to be redressed though specific strategies to increase inclusion. As Park (2013, p. 144) states, diversity within HE not only benefits excluded groups, but everyone, favouring "[…] enhanced critical thinking, respect for diverse viewpoints, empathy, and prejudice reduction".

For this reason, Brazilian students pointed out that their HEI should have quotas for transgender people in all undergraduate and postgraduate levels, with one student giving an example on how their HEI can handle these issues:

> the most obvious thing to me is quotas, the same way racial quotas work, you know? Not a difficult thing. Did you study at a public school and are you a trans person? You may use the quota system. Quotas for low-income trans people [as well]. (Student F; Brazil).

Moreover, according to the Brazilian students, transgender people should have access to other affirmative university policies because transgenders are a particularly vulnerable group in Brazil due to lack of access to educational, health care and job opportunities (Bonassi *et al.*, 2015). Student E, for example, notes a need for trans students to have contact with the HEI and the financial agency,

> some sort of channel exclusively for trans students. I think trans students should have the right to PRAE[5] (Student 05; Brazil)

Accordingly to Duarte (2022), affirmative actions like quotas alone will not solve the social issues trans people face in Brazil; however, this is a strong tool, since access to HE would allow transgender people to have/achieve visibility in academia because, according to Borges (2020) "there is a very big gap between talking about representation and actual representation", referring to black women representativeness, which can be linked to what student F says during their interview about the importance of trans presence in HEIs,

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[5] Pró-Reitoria de Assuntos Estudantis (PRAE) comes from Decree No. 7,234 of 2010, which aims to expand the conditions for young people to stay in federal public higher education (*Decreto nº 7234*, 2010).

I think the academic transgender movement is more vocal in the US.
(Student 06; Brazil; interview)

While students in Brazil are advocating for affirmative action, an interview with a UofG student revealed that policies aimed to support transgender students are very superficial. This person suggested that UofG should ensure more scrutiny regarding staff who are tasked with implementing these policies asthis can be undermined by the staff's attitude, even if the policies are supportive. This student said that the university should

double check the staff who are in charge of these policies […] who are gender-critical and who isn't […] the few times I engaged with those policies the people who are meant to support you in line of those policies, they haven't been supportive (Student 12; UofG; interview)

However, this is not a concern shared by all students interviewed, with two other students replying to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire stating that the university seems to be very attentive about transgender students. For instance, they noted that some of these policies allow time off for a trans person to go through with their gender affirmative surgery, although the UofG sometimes uses outdated terms, like Student Maternity, Maternity Support and Adoption Policy documents that assume only women can get pregnant, when trans men and non-binary persons can also. Then, students perceived that there is diversity training for all staff members and that it accommodates name change, even though the UofG can be very bureaucratic when implementing new actions. Moreover, when comparing how life was for trans people in the past, even if we still face transphobia, and how things are now, the student understands that their life should be much more than worrying about transphobia, which themselves from doing other things

It is not good enough for me that I can't do everything everyone else can do […]. Being able to transition safely, and get medication, and

feel accepted and safe from violence. This is something that couldn't

have happened 30 or 50 years ago […]. I want to live and be myself

[…]. Being ok is not enough for me, my life needs to be spectacular.

(Student N; UofG; interview)

For that, the university seems willing to change and improve their actions/policies for trans people; however, as stated before, it is a long process due to bureaucracy, something that will discuss further in this chapter. Conversely, another student highlighted issues with transphobic professors and stressed that university should pay more attention to potential discrimination from staff. The student was showing the complicated power relationship they had with their supervisor, who they claim was transphobic, but not openly:

[in] my dealings with professors and staff, the majority of them are

very outwardly supportive […] my primary supervisor […] whenever I

talk about trans inclusiveness […] he just laughs (Student L; UofG;

interview).

b) Academic relationships

HEIs are places where power relationships among students, staff, professors and the institution itself emerge because of a long tradition of unequal power relations that put teachers as the gatekeeper of knowledge and students as seekers, creating skewed power dynamics (Symonds, 2021). Additionally, as one of the participants noted, this can affect all students, including trans students, who set out to build an academic career, because

the people who work with the professors or the main researchers,

the people you have to be nice to in order to get a job […] the

majority of them in the university are gender critical [6](Student L;

UofG; interview)

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[6] According to Cowan and Morris paper on *Forstater, Mackereth and Higgs* case (2022, p. 2) gender critical are the ones that "belief that sex is biologically determined, binary and immutable".

Furthermore, the Brazilian student who suggested in the past section the implementation of exclusive channels so that trans people are to file complaints against transphobic acts at the HEI had to deal with an openly transphobic act, according to them. They were telling a staff member that their LGB&T study should be in the library for academic consultations and that the deadline for for this to happen had already elapsed; they say that

> at the beginning of 2021, an employee […] deleted my resume from the university system, erased my academic records and said that I had to prove that I'd taken the subjects that I claimed to have taken (Student E; Brazil; interview)

A traditional approach to file a complaint could take a long time, but the problem was solved thanks to the student's connections. Because of the nature of the student's academic study and their notoriety, they claimed that was a transphobic act. This action shows that power relationship in HEIs as it has been founded has many layers: of colour, ethnicity, social class, position and gender (Roth and Ritter, 2021; White and O'Connor, 2021). Furthermore, a transphobic act on the part of a staff member that has access to academic (and personal since it is a single system) data can lead to mental health issues. Again, this is why proper awareness and training of all staff at HEIs is crucial (Mizock *et al.*, 2017).

Overall, maintaining the traditional dynamics of academic power hinders pedagogical and learning changes thanks to a "hidden curriculum" that transmits unwritten and unofficial norms and values that are not part of the official curriculum. The laughing case presented by student L about the notes brought by their supervisor denotes not only a power relationship based on mentor and mentee, but also on the non-recognition of non-cisgender identities (Magalhães and Ruiz, 2011; Lawrence and Mckendry, 2019; Symonds, 2021). This behaviour can be perceived as a "banter" by othering or hurting through language, or how having LGB&T friend/ student as exotic thing, all forms of subtle discrimination that create a space of "inclusive exclusion" (Formby, 2017).

c) Services and (mis)communication

According to Ali et al. (2016), in most studies the quality and services offered by universities see the student as a consumer. Then, with the expansion of access to HE worldwide, this quality service becomes a fundamental part in the relationship between learning and student growth opportunities. Consequently, it is a way to attract new students and retain those who have studied there previously, thus promoting and increasing the quality of the university.

For this quality service, we can input clear communication between HEIs and their students, since students should be aware of what or where to look up (services, policies, events and so on) when necessary. In her study, Peruzzo (2007) talked about how social organisations appropriate communication tools. For her, access to communication amplifies people's power, especially when at the service of community development, which, in this study, concerns HE trans students. To illustrate this, most of the participants did not know about channels to report violence, and less than half did not know about where to seek mental health support. When questioned about how service accessibility, the participant explained how hard it was for them to handle the bureaucracy, considering what they were facing at the time, feeling discouraged, and having to seek help in the private sector:

> I've heard from other people that had appointments with [psychology] interns and that was just a usual [mental health] treatment… but for me it was very hard, with many bureaucratic obstacles like "try another day", "call this number", "send an email to […]" (Student F; Brazil; interview)

At the same time, another participant did not find it hard to access these services that are not only intended to help students but the general low-income population as well. This happened by the different relationship they had with their university. They showed to be closer to the HEI, having a wider networking to seek help also.

> What I know is the "School", right? The "School clinic" that it is available to the community. I know how it works because I had appointments for four years. Basically, you go there, sign up, speak

to the person coordinating it and that person will schedule an appointment for you with a student [intern] that is undergoing [professional] training, as they are already trained professionals [graduated psychologists] (Student E; Brazil; interview)

While many students' services at the UofG are perceived as positive by participants, services dedicated solely to transgender students appear to have some gaps, as one of the students reported when they enquired about a research opportunity abroad, in an area that was potentially unsafe for transgender people. As the student noted, they had expressed

[...] safety concerns when I asked a question: how do I go to these places? Will you support me going to these places and how do I stay safe? (Student N; UofG; interview)

The response from the UofG at the time was that the student should figure this out by themself, showing the HEI did not have a proper answer to the question the student had asked. While the UofG did not have an answer for the student at the time, the student received a proper answer regarding the lack of a transgender policy, which only exists/occurs because there are no transgender representatives in strategic places at the UofG; if they existed, trivial issues like that would not exist. The university as a space for empowerment is a place where visibility and activism take place (Storrie and Rohleder, 2018). The answer the university should offer to their trans students should have been the same answer they gave me:

I think there should be more opportunities to ask questions and get skills. Or get processes or get practice. Because I think that self-advocacy is a skill, knowing how to keep yourself safe and make decisions is a skill. [...] I think that something the university could do is provide skills to people that will face situations that might be more stressful [...] (Student N; UofG; interview)

When talking about their satisfaction regarding the opportunities UofG gives students to make networking connections, having practical experiences that will help them achieve personal and professional growth, the student also believes that, due to the background of some students, this can be harder to reach.

> […] a lot of staff in my degree have put in a lot of effort into giving people opportunities to get hands-on […] making the students feel welcome […] (Student N; UofG; interview)

Even with these adversities concerning trans issues, the student believed the UofG to a good educational place, even if we think university sees students as a customer (Ali *et al.*, 2016). For the reason, "educational services play a central role in the students' lives and students require huge amounts of motivation and intellectual skills to attain their goals" (Gruber *et al.*, 2010, p. 107). Nevertheless, Brazilians students perceive their HEI with potential regarding lack of transgender services access as the tools for transvestigêneres are already exist, based in other affirmative actions and services for other minority groups.

6.6 Passing to survive – (Brazil and Scotland)

Passing is a term historically used to address enslaved black people who would run away from their masters and break social conventions based on race to achieve privileges, since others would perceive them as white, thus being conferred the many privileges that come with it (Cutter, 2016; Anton, 2022) . Besides this historical meaning, *passing* can be used in many other aspects of people's lives, on grounds of their "race, ethnicity, caste, social class, gender, sexuality and disability", as noted in a 2016 study by Sandon (cited in Anton, 2022, p. 3).According to this study, *passing* is the ability one has to be perceived as 'the other', either intentionally or not, making their body intelligible to society and being able to be read in a certain way so as not to suffer the misfortunes of socially-excluded and marginalized bodies (Anton, 2022).

In the interviews and the questionnaire's responses, *passing* as a cis person, or at least living in their gender identity, was important to participants not only to to prevent them from going through transphobic situations that trans people often

experience but also to establish positive relationships with colleagues, staff members and supervisors. When asked about the application of support policies (or the lack of it) for trans students at the UofG, one participant answered:

> I have never had to think about it because I transitioned socially and legally before attending university. During my whole experience, I have only focused on my studies and felt I was treated as any other student. (Student N; UofG; open-ended question)

Another student, now from Brazil (whose identity I will not disclose herein through any alias) said how important it is for them to be able to create themselves and how having a modified trans body and reaching the gender binarism is important for safety:

> I took it out my breasts. Write that down. I have a moustache and with these things I feel safer to go other places, and I intend to go abroad to study for my PhD. These procedures for gender affirmation, these modifications, they end up protecting you and indicating where to go and where not to go. (Student; Brazil; interview)

To understand these statements, it is essential to address the backgrounds of the UofG participants. One is white and an immigrant from a developed country, who had family and medical support during their transition. The other one is also white, but from working-class family and a developing country. The hegemonic cisgender and heterosexual culture will demand transgender bodies to adjust - and pass – in order to be socially-accepted (Argyriou, 2021; Dias *et al.*, 2021)since micro-aggressions such as misgendering make *passing* a critical element to avoid transphobic abuse (Storrie and Rohleder, 2018).

The societal pressure trans bodies face to adjust to standardised male or female characteristics means that it is not uncommon for those who have trouble *passing* to have to deny their gender identities momentarily and insert themselves in other

spaces, such as their workplace, as student L sometimes had to do in order to avoid being evaluated under a negative light for a job position,

> I've had to hide a lot of that aspect of myself when I recently interviewed for a job last year; I was very careful to dress as femme-presenting as I could, used the title of miss and used the pronouns she/her just because I was so frightened to show any non-binary aspects [...] which would cost me the job. (Student L; UofG; interview)

During the interview, student L reported how they sometimes had to *cisplay* to avoid confrontation and discrimination inside their university or when searching for job opportunities. The *cisplay* concept comes from the trans masculine world. In contrast to *passing* in order to authenticate and subject trans bodies into a binary/gendered social system, *cisplay* is the denial of trans identities in order to conquer spaces (Martinelli *et al.*, 2018; Argyriou, 2021), a strategy used by trans people who either have trouble *passing* or do not want to *pass* (Martinelli *et al.*, 2018).

7 DISCUSSION

Before starting the discussion, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study. The methodological approach had limitations such as the small number of participants for each context, in relation to the number of questionnaires completed. The answers and interviews given cannot be taken as universal experience of transgender students in HE, but they can provide a snapshot of the experiences of those who answered the questionnaires and agreed to take part in the interviews, both in Brazil and in Glasgow. There is still a lot to be explored in relation to HE and transgender students within the two contexts, since there still is little research on the experiences of transgender students, despite the progressive advances this population has been making over the years. Among the differences that can be observed between students from the UofG and Brazilian HEIs there are two important similarities that emerged from the data within both contexts: one concerns issues of power relations between students and institutions (which includes peers, academic staff, administrators, management, etc.) that was divided into three segments: affirmative actions; academic relationships; and services and (mis)communication. The other similarity concerns 'passing' as a strategy to avoid transphobia and access spaces commonly denied to trans people.

7.1 Affirmative actions, Communication and Services

In both countries, students mentioned turbulent power relations with cisgender people in their HEIs. Professors without knowledge of transgender issues or even contemporary discussions on gender matters sometimes fail to learn from transgender students and their feeling. Some academic staff members use their power to prevent students from accessing physical and academic spaces, while some cisgender peers can appropriate transgender academic production without giving them proper credit. To illustrate the consequences of these power relationships, a study by English and Fenby-Hulse (2019) with LGB&T PhD students shows that many end up saying they have a good relationship with their supervisors, although for some there remains great concern about revealing themselves and how this could affect their career. According to a study, one-quarter of UK HEI students and staff do not disclose themselves to their institutions and, because of this, institutions need to be proactive instead of waiting for issues to arise (Lawrence and Mckendry, 2019).

A case reported by one of the participants, when their supervisor laughed when the topic of transgender inclusion was discussed in their work, can lead to minority stress (already discussed in the literature review chapter). Minority stress will cause mental health issues as it is a clear act of transphobia. coming especially from gender-critical persons that see gender as immutable and, because of this, forget that knowledge is something to be built and that flows (freely). Authors such as Butler have already disclosed how gender addressed we are (Ahmed, 2016), while Connel (Connell, 2012) shows other gender possibilities. Any scholar that refuses to understands this malleability that inscribes itself at different times in different places also probably refuses to address other peoples by their respective names (Lugones, 2020), thus maintaining a white and colonizing discourse, instead of deconstructing themselves.

The data show a clear concern expressed by the Brazilian students for affirmative actions for transgender people at their HEIs, with a limitation of right to access spaces due to their gender identity. For example, one's right to use their *social name* is not enough anymore, and students now demand an increase of quota access for transgender people on all levels (graduate and postgraduate studies) and in all courses. For now, universities offer quota access for transgender people that wish to enrol in specific post-graduate courses, such as humanities. In addition, they demand access, due to their gender identity, to financial support and to better mental health services that understand their issues. Having these policies amplified to trans people would prevent them from dropping out or even thinking about it, as shown by the data collected among the Brazilian students.

Besides both HEIs having different policies such as a quota system for minority groups, the UofG seems to have more trans-directed policies than its Brazilian counterpart. These LGB&T polices, which can be easily accessed using the search bar on its website, seem to have a positive impact on UofG students and that is arguably the reason why students at the UofG may rate their university higher than the Brazilian participants. For example, the presence of an LGB&T association makes them feel safe when seeking help. Lawrence and Mckendry (2019) point out how LGB&T associations play an important role in welcoming students and making them feel good, as well as providing opportunities for developing a social network with people who are similar. Furthermore, it seems that students feel more comfortable

starting to express their gender identity during their time at HEIs (Storrie and Rohleder, 2018; Lawrence and Mckendry, 2019). This would be in line with the findings from another study, which shows that LGB&T people at UK HEIs feel that the university is a safer place when compared to other social environments (Formby, 2015)

However, as stated in answers in the questionnaires given to the UofG students, the university still uses old terms, such as 'maternity support', even though some transgender men and non-binary people can get pregnant as well. A recommendation stemming from this is that the university should adjust its *Student Maternity, Maternity Support and Adoption Policy* to ensure it is more inclusive. An additional concern raised by UofG participants refers to career counselling for transgender people and academic opportunities in fields that are not trans-friendly - such as other countries, occupations, or territories - as a way of developing agency. The lack of awareness around the challenges transgender students may experience in fieldworks that are potentially hostile raises the question of whether the UofG has any idea of how many transgender students are enrolled there. Because if the HEI has knowledge of the students' racial, financial, disability or ethnic background, courses, publications or internships taken, it becomes easier to develop affirmative actions and that is why it is important to collect explicitly transgender institutional feedback (Lawrence and Mckendry, 2019). In sum, the students give the UofG a good rating but seem to have a feeling that their HEI can do much more for them.

7.2 Toilets

Brazilian participants are very critical of their university due to the lack of a policy on gender-neutral toilets. It is crucial to remember, as discussed previously, that toilets are an instrument of body regulation, through which you can clearly define who is male or female in our society, thus reinforcing biological human aspects and turning them into something universal, the "ultimate gender-segregated spaces" (Colliver and Coyle, 2020, p. 361). In the example of the Brazilian trans student who was prevented from accessing the toilet of their choice, in the obstacles faced with using this facility is an example of biopower over trans bodies, one that is exercised in order to put those bodies in their "right" places (Dias, Carvalho and Oliveira, 2016). Other students in the Brazilian HEI do not feel comfortable using the toilets, which

forces them to resort to alternatives strategies such as holding up much as they can or tagging along with friends, so they do not suffer any violence. Additionally, it was clear during the interview that the university does not have the power to impose changes but could collaborate with the HEI's Colleges to implement this change in their facilities, since each College from the HEI enjoys agency, which can be higher depending on their grades. If the HEI is indeed concerned about gender equality, it should take this matter into account since it is a crucial part of an inclusive policy.

If toilets are necessary for our basic needs, then the matter of who goes to which toilet should not be an issue. Binary toilets can be very dangerous places for transgender people, and it is not unusual to find newspaper articles reporting on how transgender women are prevented from accessing other spaces besides educational institutions. This is a way of telling transgender people that they are not welcome, that their body is unacceptable. It is therefore not surprising when Brazilian participants say they feel that having access to appropriate facilities is crucial to their wellbeing, rather than being an accessory issue to be dealt with to appease criticism. As Correa (2017) argues, transphobia is revealed by the Brazilian university structures when they neglect to recognise trans students and to render the debate on sexuality feasible. To illustrate this, we only need to look at the scarcity of academic studies on trans-related themes in educational spaces (Conopca, 2018) or at how trans people are never shown on the main pages of HEI websites', making them invisible (Correa, 2017). The contrast between UofG, with its gender-neutral mapping, and the Brazilian HEI validate these arguments.

7.3 Support

The data collected shows that both universities face issues with regard to their respective transgender communities. Furthermore, both universities offer a comprehensive range of services for all students, regardless of gender identity, which can be found on their websites. However, the ones offered by the Brazilian HEI are a little harder to find, and maybe that is why participants were not aware that they could file a complaint regarding transphobia or other issues they may face. Besides, the Brazilian HEI offers more spaces for students from vulnerable backgrounds, so they can continue their studies. The students feel that their identities should be considered when accessing policies, along with other difference makers such as race,

income or disability because, in order to strengthen affirmative actions, intersectionality must envision all the power relationships that arise and can affect students and use that in a strategic way.

Although some of the UofG participants claimed they did not know about any policies aimed at transgender people, I can only reinforce what was said in the findings, that it is important to develop self-advocacy, especially if you belong to a minority group. Echoing what student N said, as a skill that can be developed, it is important to know what policies there are for your on how to keep safe. UofG's website, although not perfect, has very clear guidelines, and even a page that trans people can access and send an email for LGBT+ representatives to see if they can help with appropriate information.

In sum, students from the UofG have demonstrated a more positive view of their university, whilst the Brazilian ones have highlighted many concerns and are more critical than their UofG counterparts. This is clearly indicated by the number of students who thought about dropping out in Brazil due to transphobia, while no UofG students raised this issue. Although most participants had quite a positive perspective, the UofG should focus on more concrete actions to mitigate transphobia on campus since it received a low score in the questionnaire, even if its policies in general were well rated. Additionally, both universities fail to pay sufficient attention to ensuring full representation in their materials (e.g., website). Despite the UofG having a section dedicated to its LGBTQ+ staff members, in the interview there were complaints about the lack of people from other ethnic and racialized groups. In sum, they are all white. On the other hand, the student association (GULGBTQ+) is little more colourful. Because talking about representativeness is not the same as having it, as Borges (2020) says ,and whiteness is a force that encourages and privileges those who are perceived as white[7] through discourse and inside HEIs, which still continues to privilege certain specific subjects, even in the face of affirmative policies (Roth and Ritter, 2021).

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[7] Here we can once again use the concept of *passing* as an important element to access some places, and we must not ignore thet fact that whiteness is a force that privilegez some while also operating in an intersectional way (gender identity, age, social class, job position and so on) (Ferreira, 2018). So, cisgenderism "also operates as a means by which non-trans privilege can be named – that is, if you are not trans, you hold a form of cis privilege" (Pearce, 2018, p. 17)

8 CONCLUSION

This endeavour was initiated after coming across a study by Mckendry and Lawrence (2017) about the issues of transgender students in HEIs in Scotland, and the findings from this study corroborate what had already been perceived by the authors at the time. Their research drove me to collect primary data from a university in Brazil and from the UofG to try to compare both contexts. Brazil is the country with the largest number of trans people murdered in the world and also has a great drop-out compulsory school history in my personal experience the UK seems to be a less violent country and the average drop-out number of compulsory education is less than Brazil (19% in Scotland against 74% in Brazil). The number of participants in each place was small (9 each), but the findings were similar for both the Brazilian and the UofG contexts. Additionally, both countries have little literature on transgender students in HE. While UK literature covers various issues faced by transgender students, such accommodation, name change, sports, toilets use and career counselling, Brazilian literature generally focuses more on name change and toilets, this being the reason why I believe the Brazilian literature could benefit from this and expand, since Brazilian HEIs offer many more services to their students. On the other hand, the Brazilian literature takes considerably more into account the intersection of race and ethnicity when compared to UK studies, which is something that needs to be addressed since my own research shows that there are trans migrant students at the UofG, including myself.

The similarities in these key findings demonstrate that transphobia is still a problem in HE, especially when it comes to power relations between HEIs and their trans students, although the space for the expression of their gender identity has expanded recently. As the data show, in both Brazil and the UofG students may feel insecure when applying for academic opportunities due to fear of transphobia. This may be because universities in the UK still do not monitor their trans students in order to provide better services for this population (Grimwood, 2017), the same applying for the Brazilian HEI analysed in this study, as emerged from the findings discussed. For this reason, transgender people should occupy strategic places in HEI decision-making bodies so that the specificities of this population are taken into consideration, both in Brazil's HEI and the UofG. While the UofG has an LGBT+ webpage (something the Brazilian university analysed does not have) that includes

representation of transgender students, the same is not true when it comes to its Court photography. For this reason, both universities should think about strategies to make transgender people fill this representative gap (Lawrence and Mckendry, 2019). One of the strategies the Brazilian HEI has adopted, which the *transvestigênere* participants wish was expanded, was the quota system as an affirmative action specifically targeted towards them.

In relation to difference between the two contexts, the Brazilian context is still more violent than the one in the UofG, or even the one in the whole of the UK, as discussed in the literature review. Therefore, stories of trans people being denied access to the toilet of their choice, the use of power against transgender students/staff to erase their academic records, the usurpation transgender academic knowledge and verbal violence are among the issues raised in the interviews and questionnaires with Brazilian participants. None of this was highlighted by UofG students. Since universities are one of the institutional powers of our society, it is no surprise that Brazilian transphobic behaviour will be also found in HEIs. Maybe that is why one third - or a little more than that - *travestigênere* students said in their questionnaires that they have already thought about dropping out, with some of them having already. None of this was reported by UofG students, except in relation to Further Education colleges. Again, the students' suggestions consisted of not only a quota system to increase representativeness, but also more academic events, the use of stalls to raise awareness of gender identity and the trans community within the HEI environment. I would suggest mandatory gender studies disciplines over all the Brazilian HEI and UofG courses for future professionals to be aware of gender issues (from STEM up to Humanities).

In sum, UofG participants in general rated their university higher than the Brazilian students, having emphasised what their institution has been offering them, such as staff training and a gender transition plan for both students and staff members. In turn, the Brazilian HEI offers the use of social name on HEI documents and some quota in post-graduation courses.

Finally, I would like to mention that was able to reach fewer participants than I had anticipated at the beginning, and, for this reason, the study cannot be deemed a comprehensive representation of the whole experience of trans students in HE in both countries. Nevertheless, I would like to point out that there is a need for more

actions from the UofG aimed to better understand its trans students and to ensure that their policies are updated to reflect gender identity studies and realities, as in the case of policies mentioning maternity. As for Brazil, more research is needed on as many areas as possible to collect concrete data about issues *transvestigêneres* face in HEIs, to expand already-existing policies and services and to create new ones according to students' realities.

APPENDIX

01 - Age of participants

	18-24	25-34	35-44
■ Brazil	3	4	2
■ UK	6	3	0

Table a – question number 01

02 - Immigrant status of participants

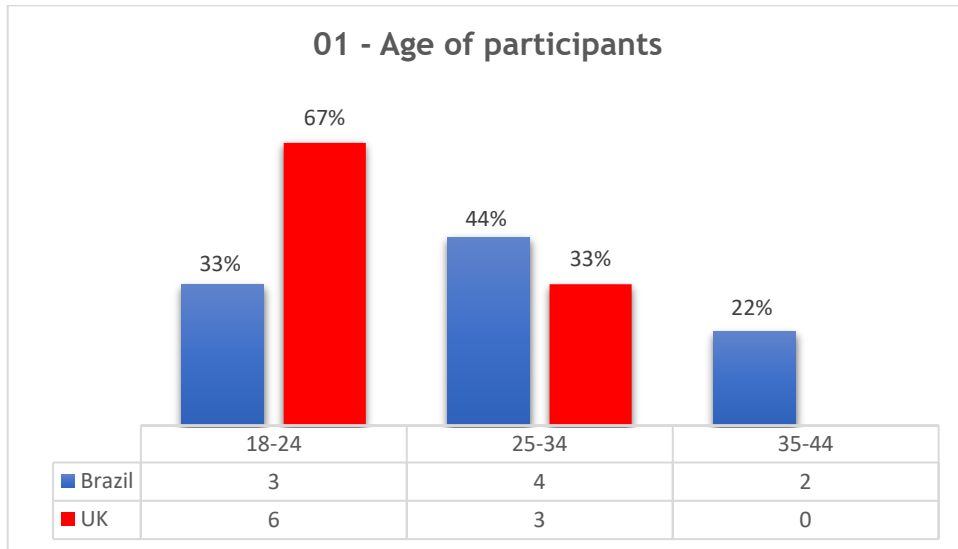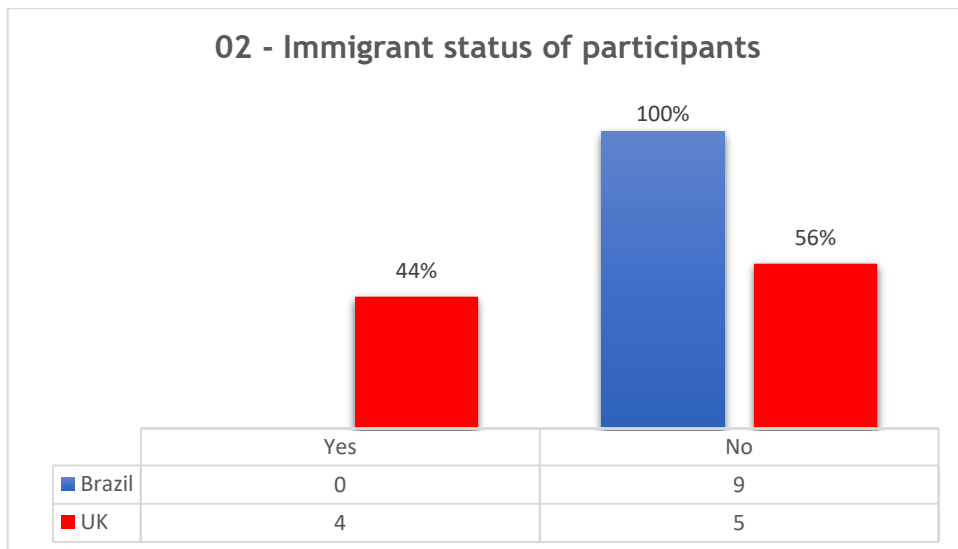|	Yes	No
■ Brazil	0	9
■ UK	4	5

Table b – question number 02
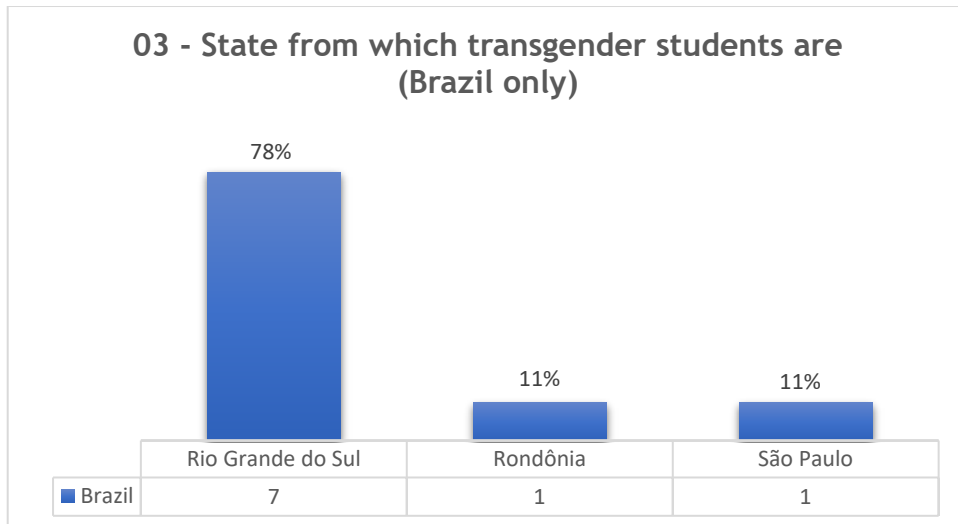
Table c – question number 03
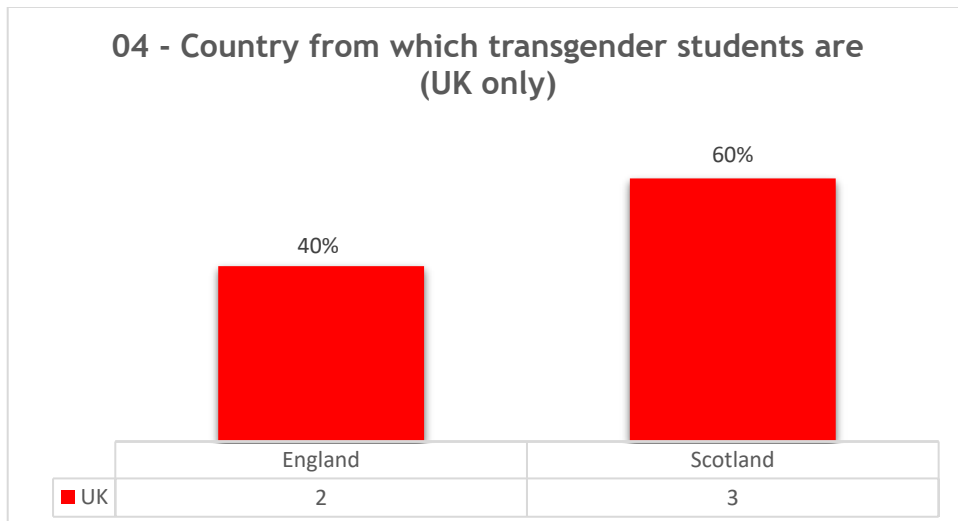
Table d – question number 04

05 - Race/ ethnicity
(Brazil only)

	White	Parda	Black
Brazil	5	2	2

Chart data: White 56%; 5, Parda 22%; 2, Black 22%; 2
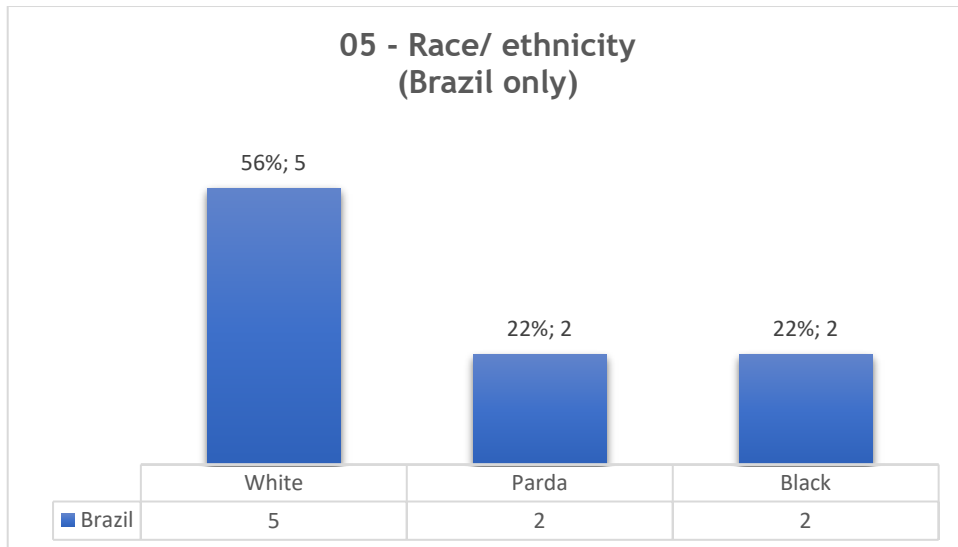
Table e – question number 05

06 - Race/ ethnicity
(UK only)

	White: Other Western European	Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	White: Gypsy/ Traveller	Indian
UK	5	2	1	1

Chart data: White: Other Western European 56%, Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups 22%, White: Gypsy/ Traveller 11%, Indian 11%
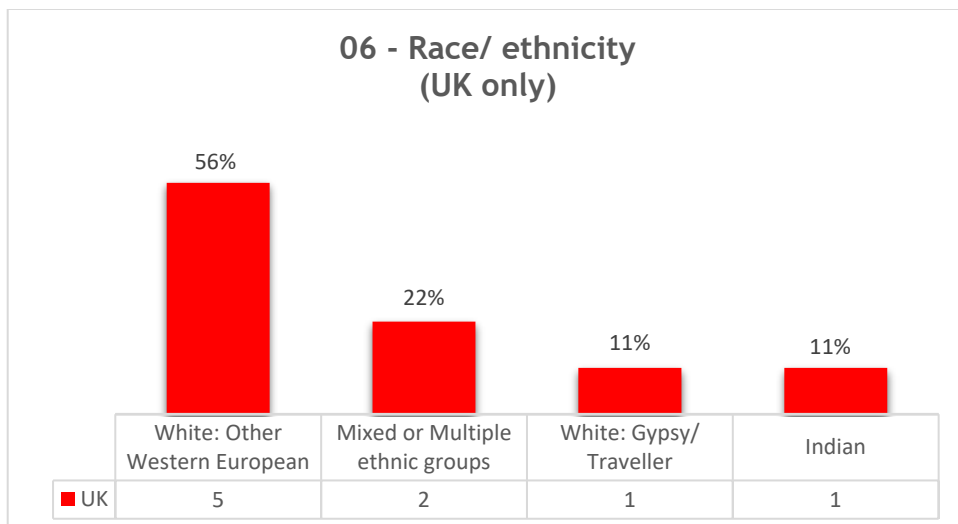
Table f – question number 06

07 - Gender identity of participants

	Woman	Travesti	Man	Non-binary	Other
Brazil	2	1	1	5	0
UK	3		1	3	2
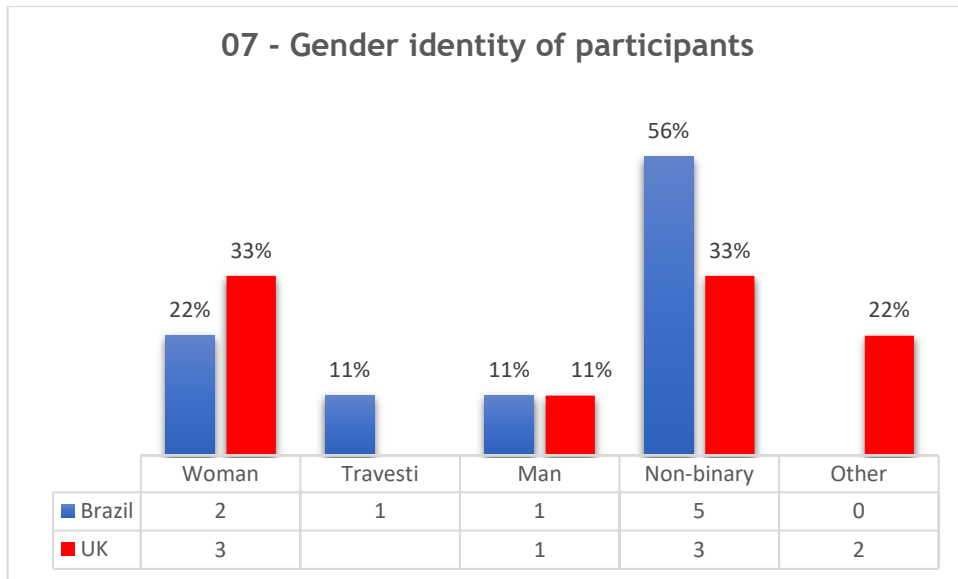
Table g – question number 07

08 - Education level of participants

	Undergraduate	Master	PhD
Brazil	7	2	0
UK	5	2	2
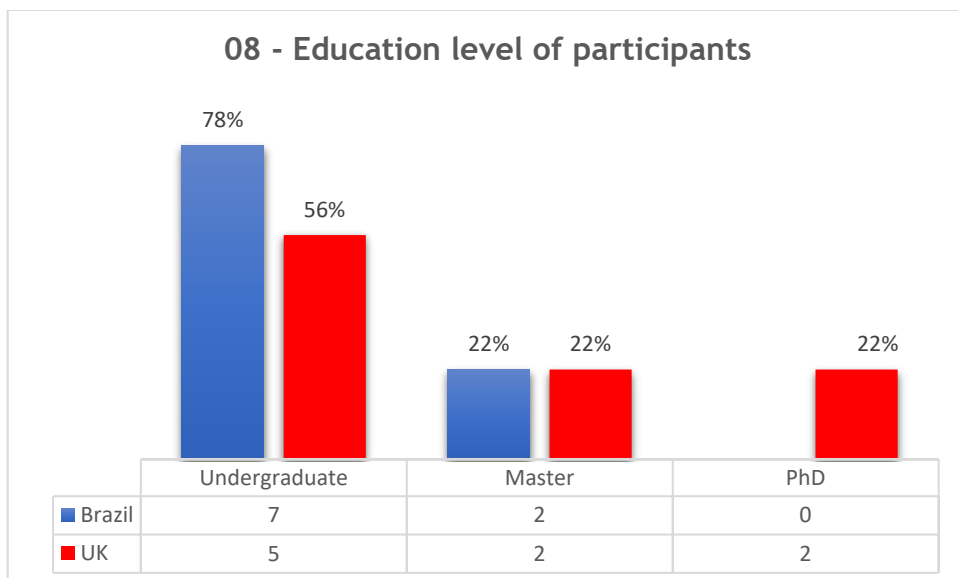
Table h – question number 08

09 - Use of Social Name/ Chosen Name in the University

	Yes	No
Brazil	6	3
UK	8	1
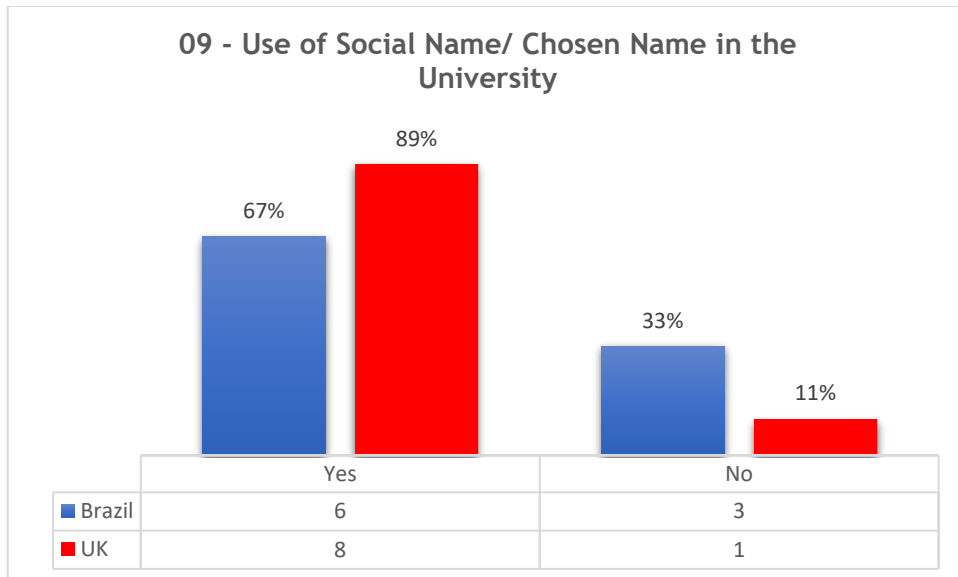
Table i – question number 09

10 - Gender Identity Respected by Professors and Staff Members

	Yes	No
Brazil	8	1
UK	7	2
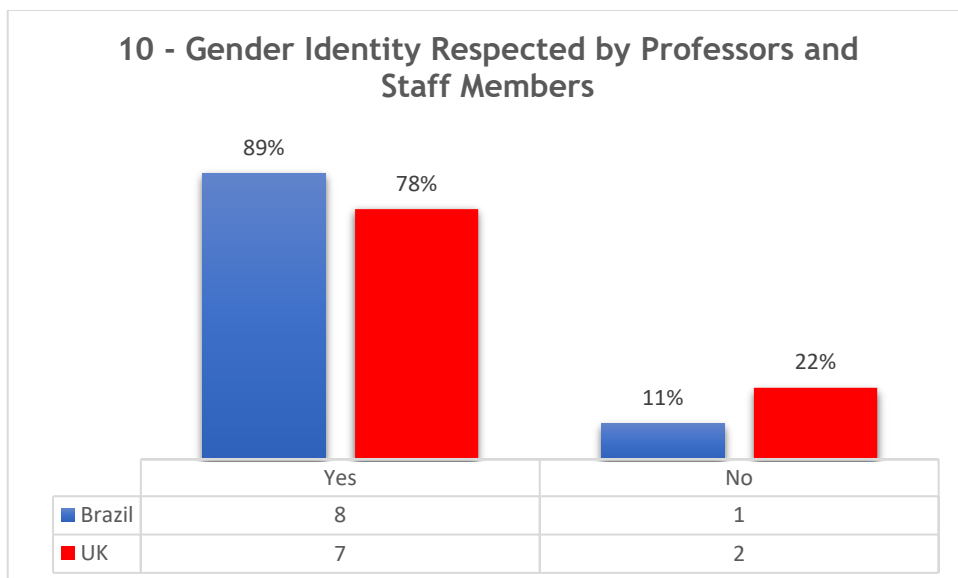
Table j – question number 10

11 - Gender Identity Respected by Peers

	Yes	No
Brazil	8	1
UK	8	1

Brazil Yes 89%, UK Yes 89%, Brazil No 11%, UK No 11%
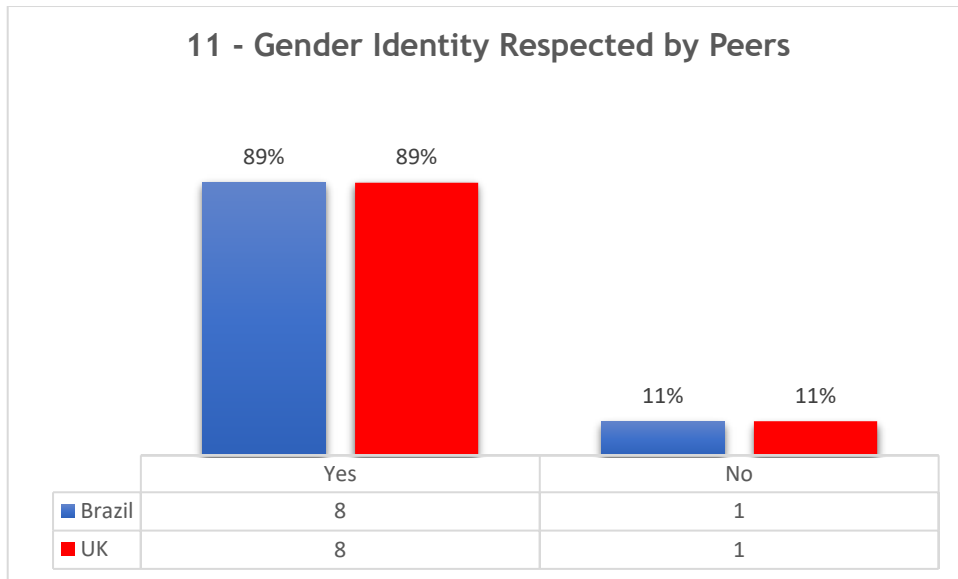
Table k – question number 11

12 - General Safety when Expressing Gender Identity in the University

	Yes	No
Brazil	6	3
UK	7	2

Brazil Yes 67%, UK Yes 78%, Brazil No 33%, UK No 22%
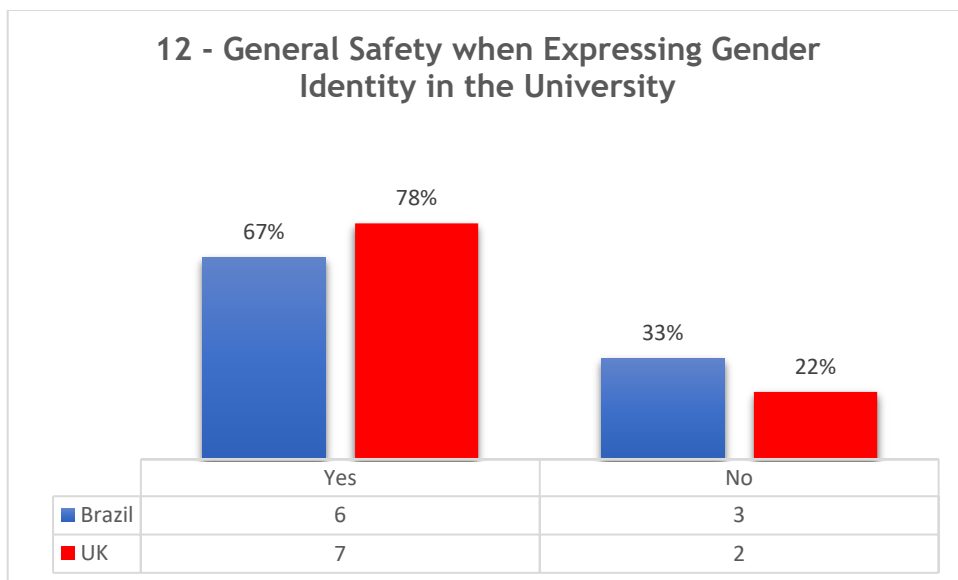
Table l – question number 12

13 - Have Suffered Transphobia in the University

	Yes	No
Brazil	6	3
UK	3	6

Brazil: Yes 67%, No 33%
UK: Yes 33%, No 67%

Table m – question number 13

14 - Peers who Suffered Transphobia in the University

	Yes	No
Brazil	7	2
UK	6	3

Brazil: Yes 78%, No 22%
UK: Yes 67%, No 33%
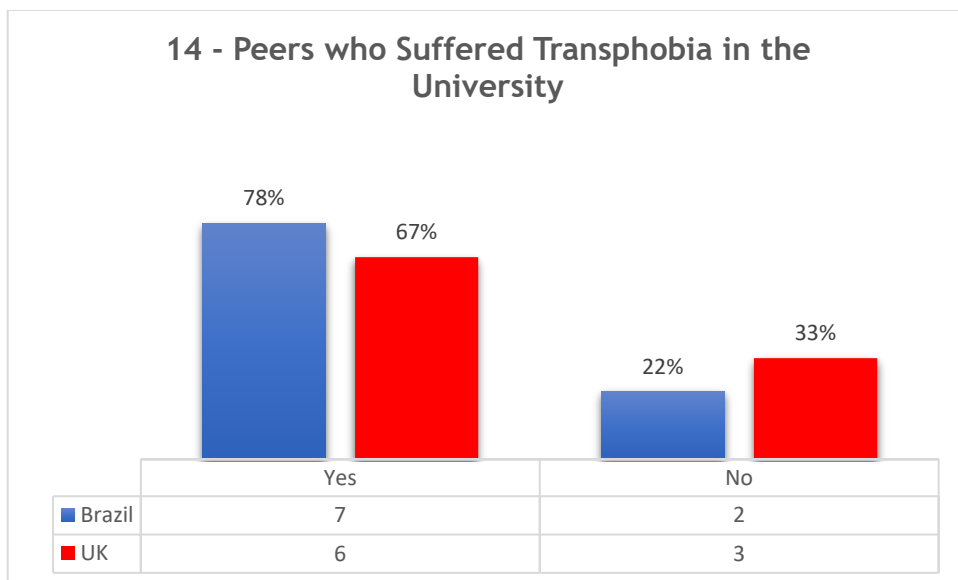
Table n – question number 14

15 - Channels to Report Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment
(if yes, are they accessible?)

64%

38%

31%

18%

50%   50%

	Yes	I do not Know	Accessible Channel Yes	Accessible Channel No
Brazil	2	7	1	1
UK	4	5	4	0
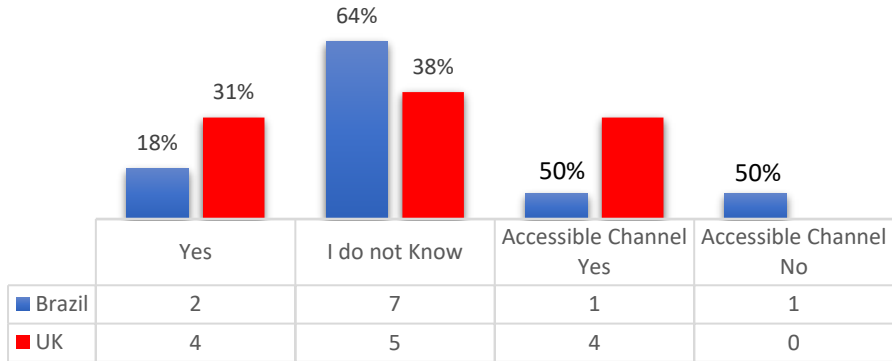
Table o – question number 15

16 - Does the University Has Mental Health Support?
(if yes, is it accessible?)

47%

36%

29%

6%

40%

60%

	Yes	I do not Know	Accessible Channel Yes	Accessible Channel No
Brazil	5	4	2	3
UK	8	1	3	5
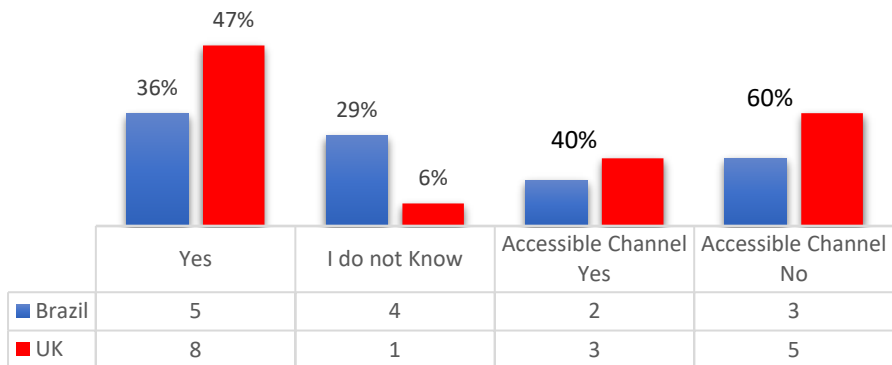
Table p – question number 16

17 - Did not Apply for Academic Opportunities due to Transphobia

	Yes	No
Brazil	6	3
UK	6	3
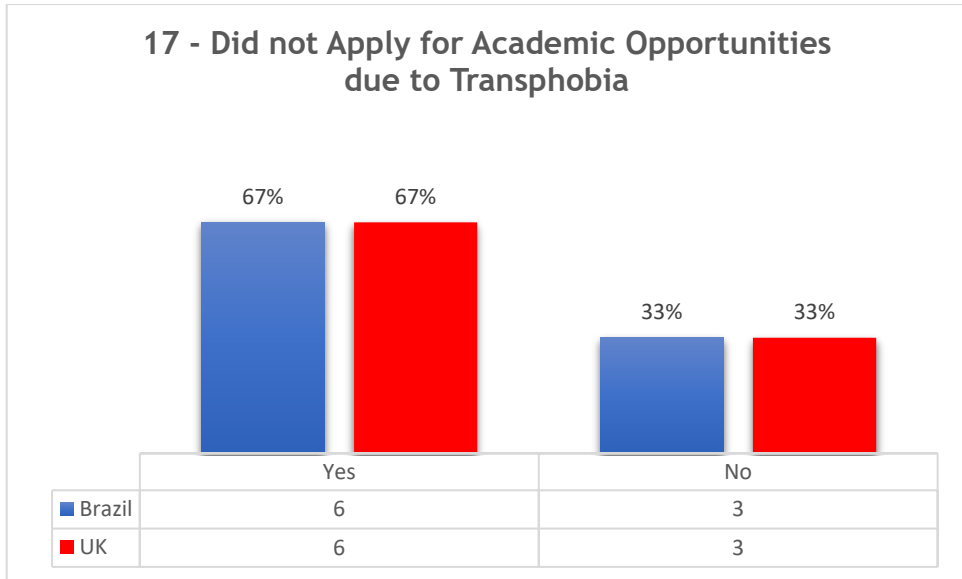
Table q – question number 17

18 - Was Prevented by Someone inside the University from Applying for Academic Opportunities due to Transphobia
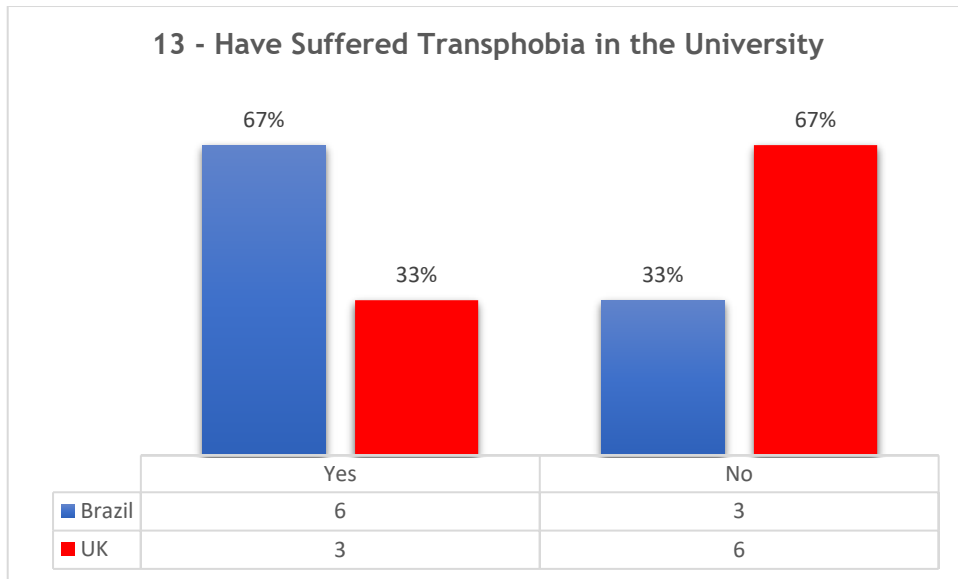

	Yes	No
Brazil	1	8
UK	1	8
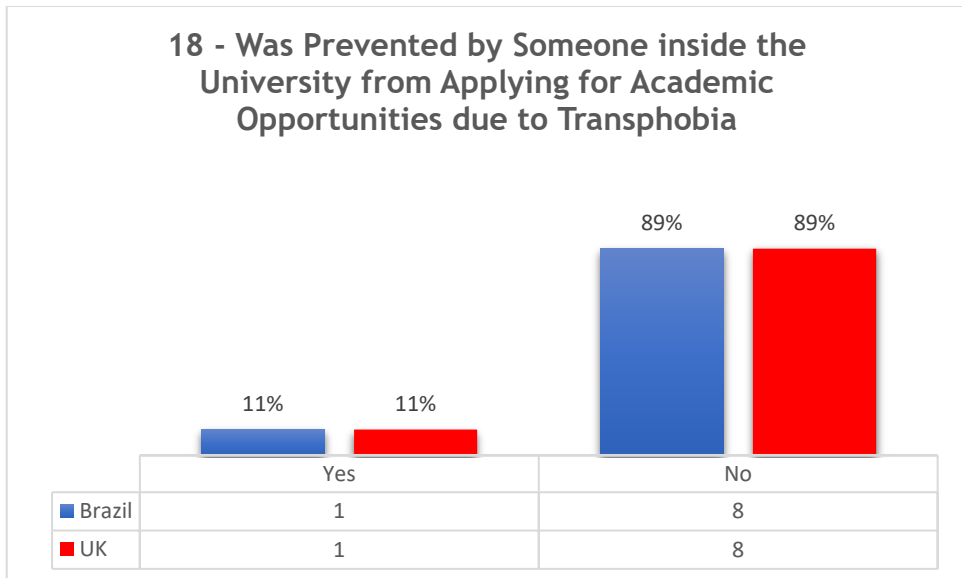
Table r – question number 18

Table s – question number 19

19 - Thought About dropping out	Yes	No
Brazil	4	5
UK	0	9

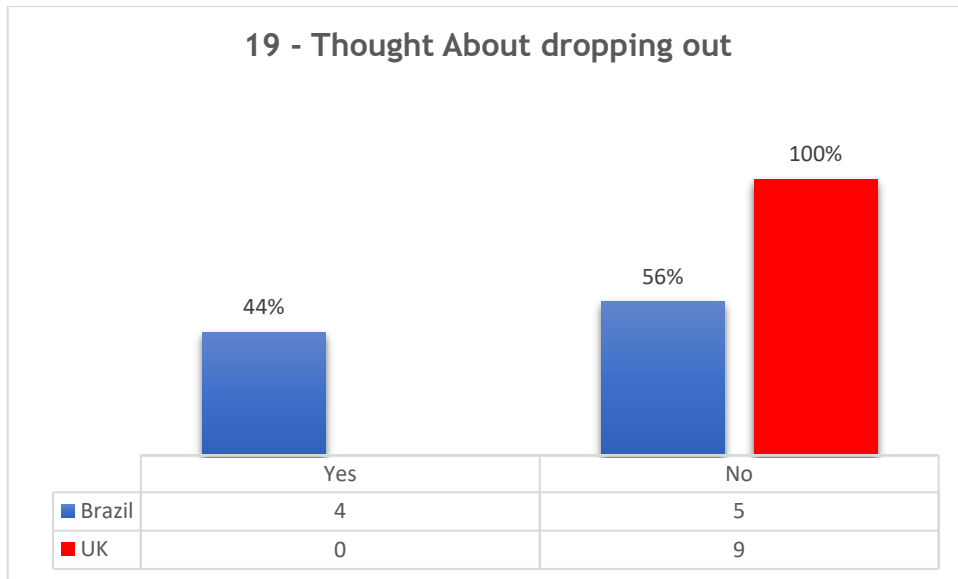| **19b - Have you ever thought about dropping out of higher education due to discrimination for being trans? If YES to the previous question, could you list the discriminations?**	
Student 01	How a fag like you thinks? that might have a place here for you
Student 02	Before rectifying my name, I was studying law. I felt persecuted by conservative students ever since Nazi graffiti was found on campus.
Student 03	Failure to meet the expectations of teachers and colleagues. Very indirect.
Student 06	Colleagues who were against me belonging to all-female groups, or people who were against me using the women's bathroom.

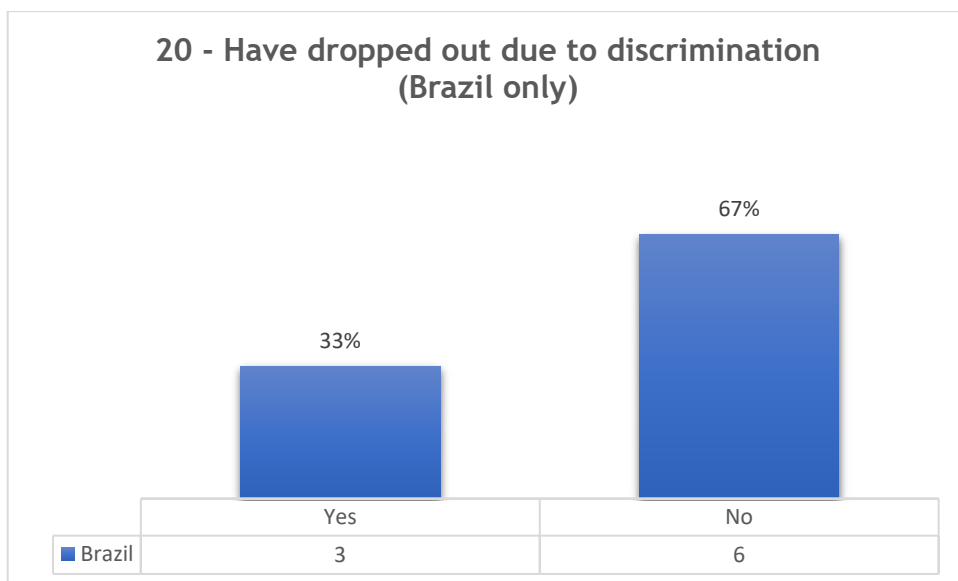*Table t – open/ discursive question number 19b*

20 - Have dropped out due to discrimination (Brazil only)	Yes	No
Brazil	3	6

Table u – question number 20

21 - Have dropped out of Compulsory School

	Yes	No
Brazil	3	6
UK	0	9
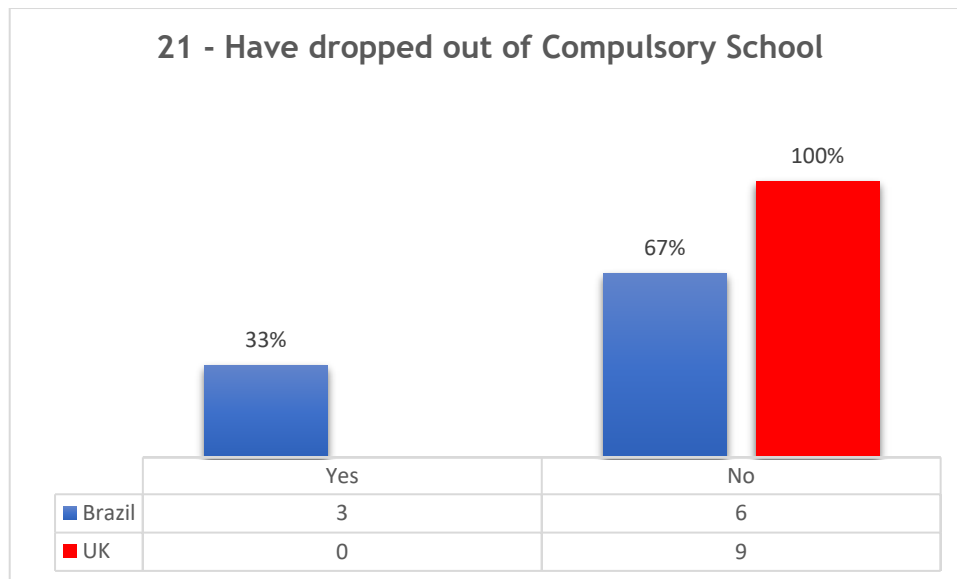
Table v – question number 21

21b - Have you ever dropped out school due to discrimination? If YES to the previous question, could you name the discriminations?	
Student 01	Well, I suffered discrimination on the basis of my gender and had depression and multiple suicide attempts, having been hospitalized for 16 hours in the ICU for abusively ingesting medication
Student 06	When I was 18 years old, I was able to take the ENEM and complete high school through it, without finishing the second and third years through school. I didn't want to live with transphobia and homophobia and my few LGBT+ friends had already left
Student 07	In high school, I didn't understand my transgenderism, and I had to miss class for a long time and failed.

Table w – open/discursive question number 21b

22 - Have dropped out of College (FE) due to discrimination (UK only)

	Yes	No
UK	1	8
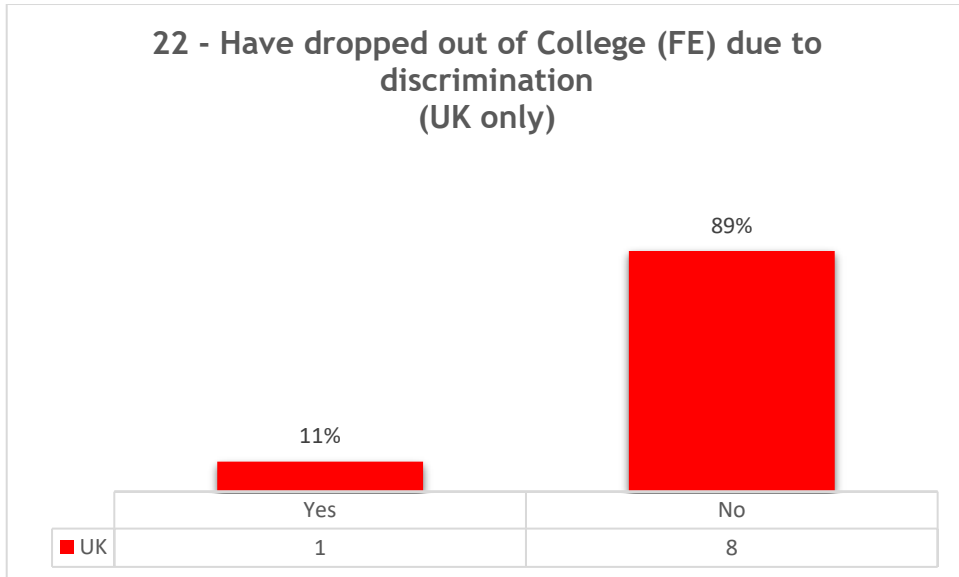
Table x – question number 22

23 - University Safety Ratings (from 0-10)

	0	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Brazil	1	1	1	0	1	2	0	1	2
UK	0	0	0	1	1	2	4	0	1
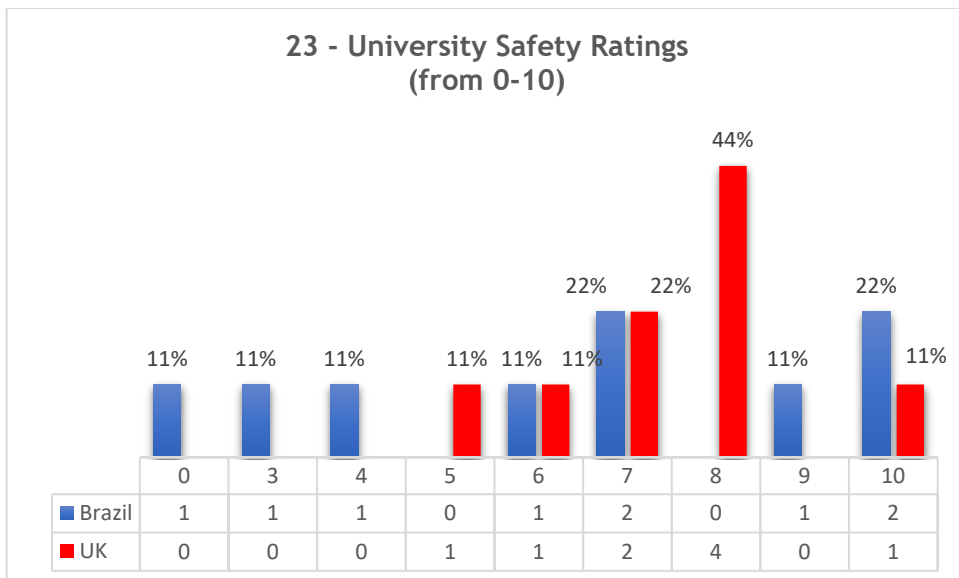
Table y – question number 23

24 - University Transgender Policy Ratings (from 0-10)

	0	1	2	3	5	6	7	8	10
Brazil	2	1	0	1	2	1	0	1	1
UK	0	0	1	0	3	0	4	0	1

Table z – question number 24

25 - University Ratings - Actions Against Transphobia (from 0-10)

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Brazil	1	1	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
UK	0	1	0	2	1	3	0	1	1	0	0
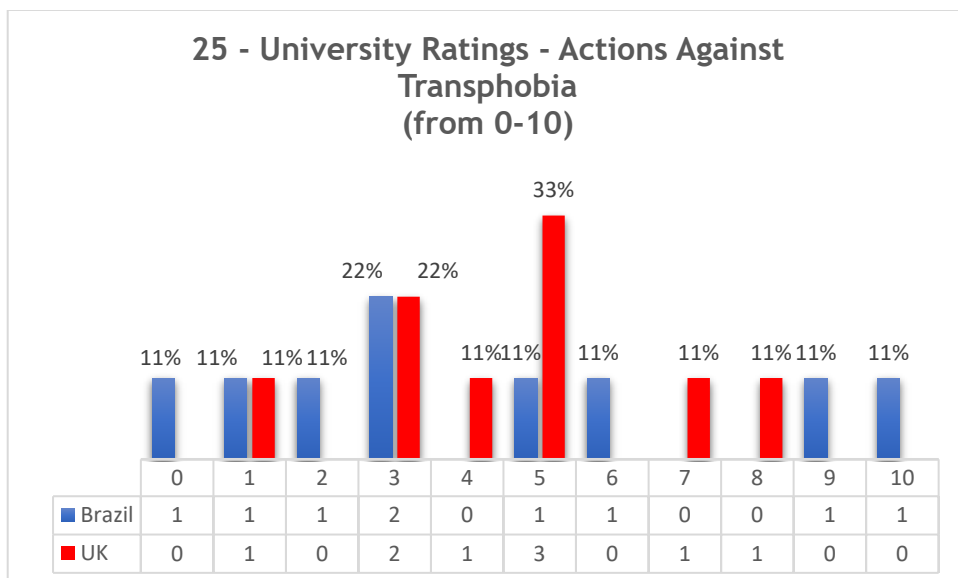
Table aa – question number 25

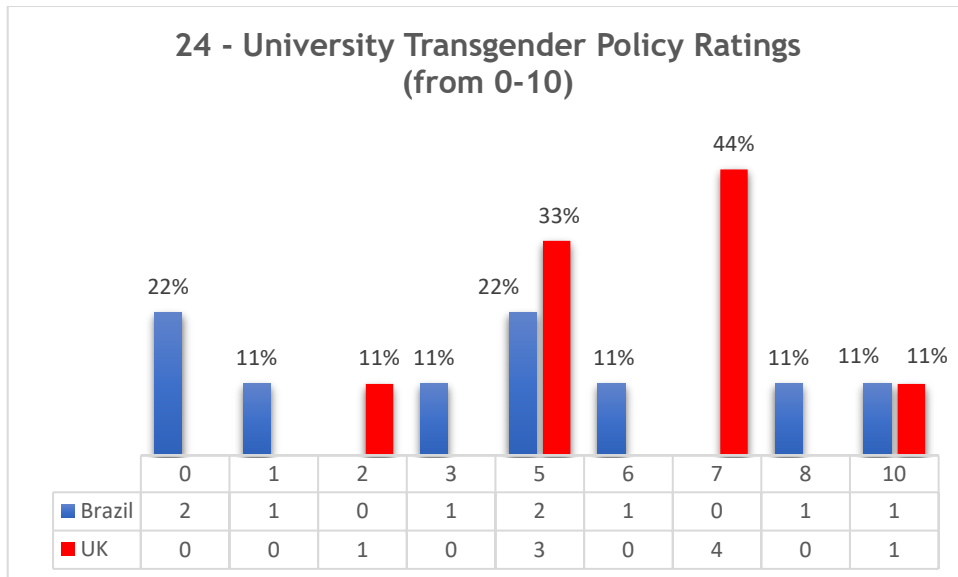| 26 - How do you describe the policies (or lack thereof) for Trans people at your university in Brazil?	
Student B	I only stopped passing on certain things because I literally abandoned all traces of my previous campus life after officially changing my name. The social name procedures are designed for you not to go after them. There is a gatekeeping.
Student C	Non-existent in undergraduate courses, there is no policies follow-up, there is no quota, it is as if there was nothing.

Student D	I started externalizing my non-binary gender identity recently. I have rectified my documents yet, and during the pandemic contact with the university was very limited. As I am in the militancy, I know that there are rights that have been won, but I see a lack of dissemination of this, both in terms of means to achieve and to guarantee the confrontation of prejudice and discrimination in relation to the entire academic community.
Student E	I believe we now have only the very basic, such as the right to use a social name and quotas in some postgraduate programs. However, in many of the University's colleges and institutes there are no bathrooms for non-binary people and there are no policies that ensure that trans people can move freely without fear, for example. I myself have been prevented from using the bathroom according to my gender identity by campus security. Thus, despite having some inclusion policies, there is a lack of an education policy for gender relations directed towards employees and perofessors so they are able to welcome and respect us, and there is a lack of affirmative actions at all levels (undergraduate AND all postgraduate programs), as well as a lack of permanence policies.
Student F	It's absurd. There should be a quota policy associated with income for trans people, whether binary or not. Allowing social name use is the least they can do and they should be ashamed to just do that.
Student H	Although the general atmosphere in my university is welcoming, we are often invisible. There is no bathroom for me on my campus. I think it's valid, quotas for trans in PPGs
Student I	They are still ineffective for the admission and permanence of this group.

Table bb – open/ discursive question number 26

27 - How do you describe the policies (or lack thereof) for Trans people at UofG?	
Student J	I don't really know what they are.
Student K	Nothing tangible in terms of bringing action towards professors who are transphobic.
Student L	Very surface level
Student M	Like the bare minimum, feel more supported by the LGBTQ+ student society than the actual university or student union
Student N	I have never had to think about it because I transitioned socially and legally before attending university. During my whole experience, I have only focused on my studies and felt I was treated as any other student.
Student O	In my opinion the University of Glasgow does try to help the trans community through their LGBTQ+ Equality Group. However, the process can be very bureaucratic and can

	take years to create change. The most recent change that they've made is make it easy for trans and non-binary folks to change their first name and gender on the university system and have an equality and diversity training for all staff. However, they should have more specific training for all staff around the trans and non-binary community to make sure all environments at uni are safe for those groups; especially when it comes to intersectionality.
Student P	They exist, and cover a wide range of situations, like time off for reassignment surgeries and name changes etc, but often use outdated terms such as 'transsexual' and 'acquired gender', which to me suggests a lack of understanding of modern language used when referring to trans people, or that the policies are outdated.
Student 17	Comparatively good but not as good as they could be. Some way to consistently communicate pronouns to lecturers and tutors would be lovely, as would a more specified mental health support system for trans people.
Student 18	I don't really know about what the policies are

Table cc – open/ discursive question number 27

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