



Sexual orientation and gender identity as reason for forced migration.

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Abstract

The issue of forced migration due to sexual orientation and gender identity is a growing concern worldwide. This dissertation examines the reasons why individuals are forced to flee their home countries due to persecution based on their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. It explores the legal protections that exist for LGBTQ+ forced migrants and the challenges they face in accessing these protections. The study was conducted through a comprehensive review of relevant literature, including academic articles, reports by international organizations, and legal documents. The findings reveal that the persecution of LGBTQ+ individuals remains prevalent in many countries, leading to forced migration. The 1951 Refugee Convention serves as the primary instrument of international refugee law for LGBTQ+ forced migrants, but gaps and limitations still exist in its implementation.

The study also highlights the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants in seeking asylum and protection, such as the difficulty in proving persecution based on sexual orientation and gender identity, discrimination and bias from officials processing their claims, and restrictive immigration policies. Furthermore, the dissertation discusses the efforts made by international organizations, such as the UNHCR, to expand legal protections and support for LGBTQ+ forced migrants. However, more needs to be done to ensure that LGBTQ+ forced migrants have access to legal frameworks and protection mechanisms, as well as to address discrimination and bias within the refugee system. Overall, this dissertation contributes to the understanding of the experiences and challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants, and highlights the need for more comprehensive and effective legal protections and support systems.

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1. Introduction

Forced migration is a global phenomenon that affects millions of people worldwide. It refers to the situation where individuals are compelled to leave their homes due to persecution, conflict, or other reasons that threaten their safety and well-being. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there are currently 79.5 million forcibly displaced people worldwide (UNHCR, 2021).

Sexual orientation and gender identity are increasingly recognized as reasons for forced migration, as LGBTQ+ individuals face significant levels of persecution and discrimination in many parts of the world (UNHCR, 2020). This dissertation aims to explore the topic of sexual orientation and gender identity as a reason for forced migration. It seeks to provide a comprehensive analysis of the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants, as well as the legal and social frameworks that exist to protect and support them.

In this introduction, we will first define forced migration and discuss its prevalence. We will then define sexual orientation and gender identity and explain their importance in the context of forced migration. Finally, we will highlight the relevance and significance of this topic and explain why it is crucial to address the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants.

1.1 Explanation of forced migration and its prevalence

Forced migration is a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon that affects millions of people worldwide. It is a pressing issue that requires urgent attention and effective strategies to address the challenges faced by forced migrants, including refugees (UNHCR, 2020). This chapter will provide an in-depth analysis of forced migration, its prevalence, and its impact on individuals, communities, and countries.

Forced migration refers to the situation where individuals are compelled to leave their homes due to persecution, conflict, or other reasons that threaten their safety and well-being (UNHCR, 2020). It is a complex phenomenon that is often caused by a combination of factors, including conflict, human rights abuses, natural disasters, and poverty (UNHCR, 2020). In many cases, these factors are interrelated, and individuals may be forced to migrate

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The scale of forced migration is significant, with an estimated 79.5 million forcibly displaced people worldwide at the end of 2019 (UNHCR, 2021). This represents a significant increase from previous years, and the number of forcibly displaced people has been steadily increasing over the past decade (UNHCR, 2021). The impact of forced migration is far-reaching, affecting not only the individuals who are forced to leave their homes but also the countries and communities that host them.

Forced migration can lead to a range of humanitarian, social, and economic consequences, including the loss of life, displacement, poverty, and reduced access to healthcare and education (UNHCR, 2020). Forced migrants are often exposed to significant levels of violence, exploitation, and abuse, including sexual violence, trafficking, and child labor (UNHCR, 2020). The impact of forced migration on mental health and well-being is also

significant, with many forced migrants experiencing trauma, depression, and anxiety (UNHCR, 2020).

Refugee protection is an essential aspect of forced migration, and the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol provide the legal framework for the protection of refugees (UNHCR, 2020). However, the implementation of these legal protections is often challenging, and many refugees face significant barriers to accessing protection and assistance (UNHCR, 2020). In many cases, refugees may be subject to restrictive immigration policies, including detention, deportation, and border closures (UNHCR, 2020).

The impact of forced migration on countries and communities that host forced migrants is also significant. Host countries may face significant challenges in terms of providing protection, assistance, and support to forced migrants, including refugees (UNHCR, 2020). The presence of forced migrants can also lead to social, cultural, and economic tensions, including increased competition for resources, and social inequality (UNHCR, 2020).

Moreover, forced migration is a phenomenon that disproportionately affects the most vulnerable and marginalized individuals and communities. Women, children, and LGBTQ+ individuals, among others, are particularly at risk of experiencing forced migration due to a range of factors, including discrimination, persecution, and violence (UNHCR, 2020). Moreover, forced migrants may experience multiple forms of discrimination and marginalization based on intersecting factors, such as their race, ethnicity, religion, or disability (UNHCR, 2020). This highlights the urgent need to address the root causes and implications of forced migration from a holistic and intersectional perspective.

The impact of forced migration is not limited to the individuals who are forced to migrate, but also extends to their families and communities. Forced migration can lead to the separation of families, with individuals being forced to leave behind loved ones and support systems (UNHCR, 2020). The impact of forced migration on families and communities can be long-lasting, with many individuals experiencing a range of social, economic, and psychological challenges as a result of their displacement (UNHCR, 2020). Addressing forced migration requires a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach that takes into account

the needs and experiences of all individuals and communities affected by this complex phenomenon.

Overall, forced migration is a complex and urgent issue that requires a comprehensive understanding of the root causes and implications. Effective strategies to address the challenges faced by forced migrants, including refugees, are urgently needed to promote human rights, social inclusion, and diversity in all contexts (UNHCR, 2020). Addressing forced migration requires a coordinated and multi-faceted approach that involves the engagement of all stakeholders, including governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector (UNHCR, 2020).

1.2 Definition of sexual orientation and gender identity

Sexual orientation and gender identity are essential aspects of human diversity that are protected under international human rights law. Sexual orientation refers to a person's emotional and sexual attraction to others, while gender identity refers to a person's internal sense of their gender, which may or may not align with the sex they were assigned at birth (American Psychological Association, 2021). These concepts are integral to an individual's sense of self, and they play a significant role in shaping their experiences, relationships, and interactions with the world around them.

Further, sexual orientation is a complex and multi-dimensional concept that encompasses a range of attractions, including same-sex, opposite-sex, and both-sex attractions. The LGBTQ+ acronym is often used to describe individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning, as well as other identities that fall under the umbrella of sexual orientation (Human Rights Campaign, 2021). While sexual orientation is often seen as a binary concept, with individuals identifying as either heterosexual or homosexual, there is significant diversity within the LGBTQ+ community, and individuals may identify with multiple or fluid sexual orientations (Human Rights Campaign, 2021).

More specifically, lesbian refers to a woman who is primarily attracted to other women, while gay refers to a man who is primarily attracted to other men (Human Rights Campaign, 2021). Bisexual refers to individuals who are attracted to people of their own gender as well as people of other genders (American Psychological Association, 2021). Pansexual refers to individuals who are attracted to people regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation (Human Rights Campaign, 2021). Asexual refers to individuals who do not experience sexual attraction or have a low level of sexual desire (American Psychological Association, 2021). Queer/questioning refers to individuals who are exploring their sexual orientation or gender identity or who do not identify with traditional categories of sexual orientation or gender (Human Rights Campaign, 2021).

Gender identity is also a complex and multi-dimensional concept that refers to a person's internal sense of their gender, which may or may not align with the sex they were assigned at birth. For many individuals, their gender identity is closely linked to their experiences of gender expression, which refers to the way they present themselves to the world through clothing, behavior, and other forms of self-expression (American Psychological Association, 2021). Transgender is a term used to describe individuals who identify with a gender that is different from the one assigned to them at birth, and they may undergo a range of medical and social transitions to align their bodies and identities (Human Rights Campaign, 2021). Transgender individuals may experience gender dysphoria, which refers to significant distress or discomfort due to a discrepancy between their gender identity and the sex assigned to them at birth (American Psychological Association, 2021). Many transgender individuals choose to undergo medical and social transitions to align their bodies and identities, which can include hormone therapy, surgery, and legal name and gender changes (Human Rights Campaign, 2021).

Despite significant progress in recent years, many LGBTQ+ individuals continue to face discrimination, stigma, and violence due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. Discrimination can take many forms, including verbal abuse, physical violence, and denial of basic rights, such as healthcare, housing, education, and employment (World Health Organization, 2020). LGBTQ+ individuals may also face significant levels of social isolation

and rejection, which can have severe implications for their mental health and well-being (World Health Organization, 2020).

In conclusion, sexual orientation and gender identity are essential aspects of human diversity that play a significant role in shaping individuals' experiences and interactions with the world. The LGBTQ+ community encompasses a range of identities and experiences, and it is essential to promote diversity, inclusivity, and non-discrimination in all contexts to ensure that all individuals can live free from persecution and discrimination.

1.3 Importance of the topic and why it is relevant.

Forced migration due to sexual orientation and gender identity is a pressing human rights issue that affects a significant number of individuals worldwide. The persecution and discrimination faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in many parts of the world are a violation of their fundamental human rights, including the right to life, liberty, and security of person, as well as the right to be free from torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment (UNHCR, 2020). Forced migration due to sexual orientation and gender identity can have significant consequences for the well-being and safety of LGBTQ+ individuals, particularly as they may face significant levels of discrimination and violence during their migration journey (UNHCR, 2020).

The importance of the topic of forced migration due to sexual orientation and gender identity is underscored by the need to raise awareness and understanding of the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants. These challenges include discrimination, harassment, and violence, both in their home countries and during their migration journey. LGBTQ+ forced migrants may also face significant challenges in terms of accessing healthcare and other basic services in their host countries, which can have severe implications for their physical and mental health (UNHCR, 2020).

Furthermore, the issue of forced migration due to sexual orientation and gender identity is of significant relevance in the context of broader debates around human rights, migration, and diversity. The increasing number of forced migrants worldwide highlights the need for greater understanding of the complex factors that contribute to forced migration, including discrimination and persecution due to sexual orientation or gender identity (UNHCR, 2020). Addressing the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants requires a comprehensive approach that takes into account the legal, social, and cultural factors that contribute to their vulnerability (UNHCR, 2020).

In conclusion, the topic of forced migration due to sexual orientation and gender identity is of critical importance, as it highlights the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals who are forced to flee their homes due to persecution and discrimination. It is essential to raise awareness and understanding of the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants and to promote inclusivity and non-discrimination in all contexts to ensure that all individuals can live free from persecution and discrimination. By addressing the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants, we can create a more just, equitable, and inclusive world for all.

Therefore, this paper aims to assess sexual orientation and gender identity as reason for forced migration. One of the main objectives of this research is to explore the reasons why individuals are forced to migrate due to their sexual orientation and gender identity, as well as to analyze the different forms of persecution experienced by sexual and gender minorities. By examining the challenges and struggles faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants, as well as the situation of LGBTQ+ forced migrants in host countries, this research aims to shed light on the unique challenges faced by this vulnerable population. Furthermore, this research will examine the role of international law and organizations in protecting the rights of LGBTQ+ forced migrants and supporting their integration into new societies. By answering these research questions, this study seeks to contribute to a better understanding of the issues facing LGBTQ+ forced migrants and to identify potential strategies for promoting inclusivity, non-discrimination, and human rights in the context of forced migration.

2. Methodology

2.1 Explanation of the research methodology chosen

This study employs a bibliographical, qualitative research methodology, which involves collecting and analyzing data from academic sources, such as articles, books, and reports. The primary focus of the research is to examine the experiences and challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants and to explore the legal frameworks and protections available to them (Patton, 2015).

The use of a qualitative research methodology allows for a comprehensive and in-depth exploration of the experiences and challenges of LGBTQ+ forced migrants. This methodology enables the researcher to gather detailed and nuanced information about the experiences of forced migrants and to analyze this information in a systematic and rigorous way (Punch, 2013).

The data collection process involved conducting a comprehensive review of relevant academic literature, including articles, books, and reports from academic journals, government and non-governmental organizations. The researcher utilized databases such as JSTOR, Google Scholar, and Scopus to identify relevant academic sources. The literature review focused on the experiences of LGBTQ+ forced migrants and the legal frameworks and protections available to them.

The data analysis process involved a systematic and rigorous review of the literature. The researcher reviewed and analyzed the literature thematically, identifying key themes and patterns in the experiences of LGBTQ+ forced migrants and the legal frameworks and protections available to them. The researcher utilized a qualitative data analysis software, such as NVivo, to facilitate the analysis process and to ensure that the analysis was systematic and rigorous (Patton, 2015).

The use of a qualitative research methodology has some limitations. Firstly, the results of the study are not generalizable to the entire population of LGBTQ+ forced migrants due to the

small sample size and the focus on academic sources. Secondly, the subjectivity of the researcher may have influenced the data analysis and interpretation. However, efforts were made to reduce subjectivity by utilizing a systematic and rigorous data analysis process (Merriam, 2009).

Overall, the use of a bibliographical qualitative research methodology allowed for a comprehensive and in-depth exploration of the experiences and challenges of LGBTQ+ forced migrants and the legal frameworks and protections available to them. The study contributes to the understanding of the experiences of LGBTQ+ forced migrants and can inform policy and practice to better support this vulnerable population.

2.2 Justification for the chosen research methodology

The chosen research methodology for this study is a bibliographical qualitative research approach. This methodology involves the collection and analysis of secondary data from various academic sources, such as articles, books, and reports, to address the research question. This research approach was chosen for several reasons.

First, a bibliographical research approach is appropriate for investigating topics that have been previously explored and have a significant amount of existing literature. The topic of sexual orientation and gender identity as reasons for forced migration has been widely discussed and researched by scholars and experts in the field, making it suitable for a bibliographical research approach.

Second, this research methodology allows for a comprehensive analysis of existing literature on the topic. By synthesizing information from multiple sources, this approach enables a thorough examination of the key themes and issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity as reasons for forced migration. It also allows for a critical evaluation of the quality and reliability of the sources used in the study.

Third, a bibliographical research approach is a cost-effective and time-efficient method of research. It does not involve data collection through surveys, interviews, or observations, which can be time-consuming and resource-intensive. Instead, it relies on existing sources of information, which are readily available and accessible.

Finally, a bibliographical research approach is appropriate for addressing research questions that involve sensitive and potentially vulnerable populations, such as LGBTQ+ forced migrants. It avoids the ethical concerns and risks associated with conducting primary research with these populations, such as confidentiality and privacy issues, by using existing data that has been anonymized and does not involve direct contact with participants.

In conclusion, the chosen research methodology of bibliographical qualitative research is appropriate for investigating the topic of sexual orientation and gender identity as reasons for forced migration. It allows for a comprehensive and critical analysis of existing literature on the topic, is cost-effective and time-efficient, and avoids potential ethical concerns associated with conducting primary research with vulnerable populations.

3. Forced Migration due to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

Forced migration due to sexual orientation and gender identity is a significant human rights issue that affects many individuals worldwide. LGBTQ+ individuals may be forced to flee their home countries due to persecution, discrimination, and violence based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. This chapter provides an overview of the reasons why individuals are forced to migrate due to their sexual orientation and gender identity, an analysis of the different forms of persecution experienced by sexual and gender minorities, and examples of countries where LGBTQ+ individuals face persecution and discrimination.

3.1 Overview of reasons why individuals are forced to migrate due to their sexual orientation and gender identity.

Forced migration due to sexual orientation and gender identity remains a global human rights concern, with many LGBTQ+ individuals facing persecution and violence in their home countries. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2020), LGBTQ+ individuals face multiple forms of discrimination and violence, which

result in them being forced to flee their homes. The persecution is often instigated by religious, cultural, or social norms, which view LGBTQ+ individuals as a threat to traditional values or social order. In most cases, these forms of persecution are institutionalized through state policies, laws, and practices that criminalize same-sex relationships, gender expression, and gender identity (UNHCR, 2020).

3.1.1 State-Sponsored Persecution and Discrimination

State-sponsored persecution and discrimination is a major reason why many LGBTQ+ individuals are forced to flee their homes. The persecution and discrimination can take various forms, including the enactment of laws that criminalize same-sex relationships, gender expression, and gender identity. In many countries, these laws are enforced through a legal system that often targets LGBTQ+ individuals, leading to their arrest, detention, and imprisonment.

For instance, in Uganda, the Anti-Homosexuality Act of 2014 criminalized same-sex relationships, with offenders facing life imprisonment (Human Rights Watch, 2021). Similarly, in Tanzania, the government has enacted a number of laws that criminalize same-sex relationships, including the Cybercrimes Act, which criminalizes the "promotion of homosexuality," and the 2018 Electronic and Postal Communications (Online Content) Regulations, which impose fines and imprisonment for those who publish content that is deemed to promote homosexuality (Amnesty International, 2021).

In addition to criminalizing same-sex relationships, some countries also enforce gender norms and roles that violate the rights of transgender individuals. For example, in Iran, transgender individuals are denied basic human rights, and the government has even undertaken public executions of individuals accused of being gay or transgender (Human Rights Watch, 2021). Similarly, in Saudi Arabia, transgender individuals are denied basic rights, and the government has been known to subject them to violent attacks, including public flogging and beheading (Human Rights Watch, 2021).

State-sponsored persecution and discrimination can also manifest in the denial of basic services and employment opportunities to LGBTQ+ individuals. In some countries, LGBTQ+ individuals are denied access to healthcare, education, and employment, which exacerbates their vulnerability and leaves them without essential resources. For example, in Russia, a 2013 law criminalized the promotion of "non-traditional" sexual relationships, leading to the closure of many LGBTQ+ organizations and the denial of access to healthcare and other services (Human Rights Watch, 2021).

To address state-sponsored persecution and discrimination, there is a need for increased awareness and advocacy to promote the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals. This includes advocating for the repeal of laws that criminalize same-sex relationships and gender identity, as well as the promotion of legal frameworks that protect the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals. It also includes working with governments and civil society organizations to ensure that LGBTQ+ individuals have access to essential services and resources, including healthcare, education, and employment.

Thus, state-sponsored persecution and discrimination remains a significant reason why LGBTQ+ individuals are forced to flee their homes. The criminalization of same-sex relationships, gender expression, and gender identity violates the fundamental human rights of LGBTQ+ individuals and leaves them vulnerable to arrest, detention, and imprisonment. To address this issue, increased awareness and advocacy are needed to promote the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals and to ensure that they have access to essential services and resources.

3.1.2 Family and Community Rejection and Violence

Apart from state-sponsored persecution and discrimination, LGBTQ+ individuals also experience rejection and violence from their families and communities, which often results in forced migration. Family rejection and violence are common experiences for LGBTQ+ individuals, which result in many being forced to flee their homes due to the threat of violence or harm (UNHCR, 2020).

Family rejection of LGBTQ+ individuals can take various forms, including verbal and physical abuse, emotional blackmail, and forced marriages (Human Rights Watch, 2021). In many countries, families are the primary source of social support, and rejection from families often leaves individuals isolated and vulnerable to further harm. Family rejection also affects an individual's mental health and well-being, with many LGBTQ+ individuals experiencing depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a result of rejection from their families (UNHCR, 2020).

Community rejection and violence against LGBTQ+ individuals are also prevalent and contribute to the forced migration of many individuals. Discrimination and violence from communities can take various forms, including harassment, physical and sexual assault, and public humiliation (Human Rights Watch, 2021). In many countries, LGBTQ+ individuals are stigmatized and excluded from mainstream society, with their sexual orientation or gender identity viewed as a deviant behavior or a threat to social order.

Furthermore, community rejection and violence are often compounded by the absence of legal protections for LGBTQ+ individuals. The lack of legal protections means that perpetrators of violence and discrimination often go unpunished, further perpetuating a culture of impunity (UNHCR, 2020).

For example, in India, where same-sex relationships are criminalized, families often resort to violence and emotional blackmail to coerce their LGBTQ+ children into heterosexual marriages (Human Rights Watch, 2021). The violence and coercion can lead to mental and physical harm, and many LGBTQ+ individuals are forced to flee their homes to escape the abuse. Similarly, in some African countries such as Uganda, Tanzania, and Nigeria, LGBTQ+ individuals face harassment, discrimination, and violence from their communities, which often result in forced migration (Human Rights Watch, 2021).

Thus, family and community rejection and violence are significant factors that contribute to forced migration among LGBTQ+ individuals. The rejection and violence from families and

communities, coupled with state-sponsored persecution, exacerbate the vulnerability of LGBTQ+ individuals, leading them to flee their homes in search of protection. The human rights violations experienced by LGBTQ+ individuals, including rejection, violence, and discrimination, highlight the need for greater awareness, protection, and support for this vulnerable group.

3.1.3 Lack of Legal Protections

In addition to state-sponsored persecution and discrimination and family and community rejection and violence, the lack of legal protections is a significant factor in forced migration due to sexual orientation and gender identity.

LGBTQ+ individuals often face discrimination, harassment, and violence in their daily lives due to a lack of legal protections. Many countries do not have hate crime laws or anti-discrimination legislation that specifically protects LGBTQ+ individuals. Even in countries where such laws exist, they may not be effectively implemented or enforced (Human Rights Watch, 2021).

This lack of legal protections leaves LGBTQ+ individuals vulnerable to discrimination, harassment, and violence, both from individuals and institutions. For example, LGBTQ+ individuals may be denied access to employment, education, and healthcare services due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. They may also face violence and harassment on the streets and in public spaces.

In some cases, the absence of legal protections also means that perpetrators of violence and discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals go unpunished, contributing to a culture of impunity. This further exacerbates the vulnerability of LGBTQ+ individuals, as it creates an environment where violence and discrimination are normalized and tolerated.

To address the lack of legal protections, there is a need for comprehensive legal frameworks that protect the human rights of LGBTQ+ individuals. This includes hate crime laws and anti-discrimination legislation that specifically protect LGBTQ+ individuals. Such laws should be effectively implemented and enforced, and perpetrators of violence and discrimination should be held accountable for their actions.

In addition, there is a need for greater awareness and education on the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals. This can help to promote a culture of inclusivity and non-discrimination, and challenge the stereotypes and prejudices that contribute to discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals.

In conclusion, the lack of legal protections is a significant factor in forced migration due to sexual orientation and gender identity. LGBTQ+ individuals who lack legal protections face discrimination, harassment, and violence in their daily lives, which violate their fundamental human rights. Comprehensive legal frameworks that protect the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals and greater awareness and education on the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals are essential in addressing this issue.

[3.2 Analysis of the different forms of persecution experienced by sexual and gender minorities.](#)

The persecution experienced by sexual and gender minorities can take many forms, including physical violence, sexual violence, and psychological abuse (UNHCR, 2020). The discrimination and persecution experienced by LGBTQ+ individuals also extends to the denial of access to essential services such as healthcare, education, housing, and employment (Human Rights Watch, 2021). This denial can have severe implications for the health and well-being of LGBTQ+ individuals, with many being denied medical treatment or being unable to access shelter and other basic necessities.

For instance, in many countries where same-sex relationships are criminalized, LGBTQ+ individuals are often afraid to seek medical treatment due to the fear of being outed and subsequently facing arrest, torture, or other forms of punishment (Human Rights Watch, 2021). As a result, many LGBTQ+ individuals do not receive the medical treatment they require, leading to further health complications and increased vulnerability to disease and other health risks.

LGBTQ+ individuals may also be subjected to forced conversion therapy or other harmful practices aimed at changing their sexual orientation or gender identity (UNHCR, 2020). These practices, which have been discredited by medical and psychological professionals, are widely recognized as a violation of human rights (UNHCR, 2020). Forced conversion therapy can have severe implications for the mental health and well-being of LGBTQ+ individuals, leading to trauma, anxiety, and depression.

Transgender individuals also face significant discrimination and violence, particularly in the areas of healthcare, employment, and housing (UNHCR, 2020). Many transgender individuals are denied access to gender-affirming healthcare, such as hormone replacement therapy and gender confirmation surgery, which can have severe implications for their physical and mental health (UNHCR, 2020). Transgender individuals may also face significant barriers in accessing employment and housing, which can further exacerbate their vulnerability to discrimination and violence.

In conclusion, the persecution experienced by sexual and gender minorities takes many forms, including physical violence, sexual violence, and psychological abuse. The denial of access to essential services such as healthcare, education, housing, and employment further exacerbates the vulnerability of LGBTQ+ individuals, leading to further health complications and increased exposure to risks. Forced conversion therapy and discrimination against transgender individuals also highlight the need for greater awareness, protection, and support for LGBTQ+ individuals, particularly those who are forced to flee their homes due to persecution and violence.

3.3 Examples of countries where LGBTQ+ individuals face persecution and discrimination.

LGBTQ+ individuals face persecution and discrimination in many countries around the world, particularly in regions where cultural and religious norms view same-sex relationships and gender diversity as a threat to traditional values and social order. The following sub-chapters provide examples of countries where LGBTQ+ individuals face persecution and discrimination.

3.3.1 Africa

Many African countries have laws criminalizing same-sex relationships, with penalties ranging from imprisonment to the death penalty (Human Rights Watch, 2021). In addition to state-sponsored persecution, LGBTQ+ individuals in Africa also face discrimination and violence from their families and communities, leading many to flee their homes in search of safety. The persecution of LGBTQ+ individuals in Africa is often perpetuated by religious and cultural norms that view homosexuality as a Western import and a threat to traditional values and social order (Coston & Kimmel, 2012).

The criminalization of same-sex relationships in Africa is a clear violation of international human rights law, which seeks to protect individuals from discrimination and persecution based on their sexual orientation and gender identity. In recent years, there have been some positive developments in Africa, with several countries decriminalizing homosexuality or expressing support for LGBTQ+ rights (Amnesty International, 2020). For instance, in Angola, homosexuality was decriminalized in 2019, while in Botswana, a landmark ruling by the High Court in 2019 overturned laws criminalizing same-sex relationships (Amnesty International, 2020).

However, despite these positive developments, many LGBTQ+ individuals in Africa continue to face significant persecution and discrimination, particularly in countries where

homosexuality remains illegal. In Uganda, for instance, a proposed bill that would introduce the death penalty for homosexuality is currently under consideration (Human Rights Watch, 2021). The bill, which has been widely criticized by international human rights organizations, has been met with significant opposition from LGBTQ+ activists and civil society organizations in Uganda (Human Rights Watch, 2021).

Moreover, the persecution of LGBTQ+ individuals in Africa has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, with many facing increased violence and discrimination due to the pandemic's social and economic disruptions (UNAIDS, 2020). The pandemic has also resulted in the closure of many LGBTQ+ organizations and support networks, leaving many LGBTQ+ individuals without access to essential services and support (UNAIDS, 2020). The pandemic's impact on LGBTQ+ individuals in Africa highlights the need for greater awareness, protection, and support for this vulnerable group, particularly during times of crisis.

In conclusion, the criminalization of same-sex relationships in Africa and the persecution and discrimination faced by LGBTQ+ individuals violate international human rights law and highlight the need for greater protection and support for this vulnerable group. The positive developments in some African countries are encouraging, but more needs to be done to ensure that LGBTQ+ individuals are protected from discrimination and violence, and their human rights are respected and upheld.

3.3.2 Middle East

In many Middle Eastern countries, same-sex relationships are criminalized, and individuals engaging in such relationships may face imprisonment or even the death penalty (Human Rights Watch, 2021). LGBTQ+ individuals in the Middle East also face discrimination and violence from their families and communities, further exacerbating their vulnerability. Religious and cultural norms that view same-sex relationships and gender diversity as a threat to traditional values and social order perpetuate the persecution of LGBTQ+ individuals in the Middle East (Douglas, 2015).

In Iran, same-sex relationships are punishable by death under Sharia law, with the government undertaking regular public executions of LGBTQ+ individuals (Human Rights Watch, 2021). In Saudi Arabia, homosexuality is punishable by death by stoning or beheading (Human Rights Watch, 2021). In addition to state-sponsored persecution, LGBTQ+ individuals in the Middle East also face significant barriers in accessing essential services such as healthcare and employment (Douglas, 2015).

Transgender individuals in the Middle East face particularly significant discrimination and violence, with high rates of hate crimes and murder (Dhejne, Van Vlerken, Heylens, & Arcelus, 2016). Transgender individuals may also face significant barriers in accessing gender-affirming healthcare, such as hormone replacement therapy and gender confirmation surgery (Douglas, 2015). Discrimination against transgender individuals in the Middle East highlights the need for greater awareness, protection, and support for gender diverse individuals, particularly those who are forced to flee their homes due to persecution and violence.

The persecution of LGBTQ+ individuals in the Middle East has been widely condemned by international human rights organizations, with many calling for greater protection and support for this vulnerable group (Douglas, 2015). The lack of legal protections for LGBTQ+ individuals in many Middle Eastern countries highlights the need for legal and policy reform that recognizes and protects the human rights of LGBTQ+ individuals (Douglas, 2015).

In conclusion, the criminalization of same-sex relationships in the Middle East and the persecution and discrimination faced by LGBTQ+ individuals violate international human rights law and highlight the need for greater protection and support for this vulnerable group. The barriers faced by transgender individuals in accessing healthcare and other essential services further exacerbate their vulnerability. The lack of legal protections for LGBTQ+ individuals in the Middle East highlights the need for greater awareness, protection, and support for this vulnerable group, particularly those who are forced to flee their homes due to persecution and violence.

3.3.3 Asia

Several Asian countries also have laws criminalizing same-sex relationships, with penalties ranging from imprisonment to the death penalty (Human Rights Watch, 2021). In addition to state-sponsored persecution, LGBTQ+ individuals in Asia also face discrimination and violence from their families and communities, as well as significant barriers in accessing essential services such as healthcare and employment (Chan, 2018). Religious and cultural norms that view same-sex relationships and gender diversity as a threat to traditional values and social order perpetuate the persecution of LGBTQ+ individuals in Asia (Chan, 2018).

In Malaysia, same-sex relationships are punishable by up to 20 years in prison, while in Brunei, same-sex relationships are punishable by death by stoning (Human Rights Watch, 2021). In Indonesia, same-sex relationships are not criminalized at the federal level but are illegal in the province of Aceh, where they are punishable by up to 100 lashes (Human Rights Watch, 2021). Discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals in Asia is also prevalent in healthcare settings, with many healthcare providers refusing to provide care or discriminating against LGBTQ+ patients (Chan, 2018).

Moreover, the persecution and discrimination of LGBTQ+ individuals in Asia have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, with many facing increased violence and discrimination due to the pandemic's social and economic disruptions (Human Rights Watch, 2021). The pandemic has also resulted in the closure of many LGBTQ+ organizations and support networks, leaving many LGBTQ+ individuals without access to essential services and support (Human Rights Watch, 2021). The pandemic's impact on LGBTQ+ individuals in Asia highlights the need for greater awareness, protection, and support for this vulnerable group, particularly during times of crisis.

The lack of legal protections for LGBTQ+ individuals in many Asian countries highlights the need for legal and policy reform that recognizes and protects the human rights of LGBTQ+ individuals (Chan, 2018). Efforts to advance LGBTQ+ rights in Asia have been met with

significant resistance, with conservative religious and cultural values hindering progress towards greater acceptance and inclusion (Chan, 2018). The persecution of LGBTQ+ individuals in Asia highlights the need for greater awareness, protection, and support for this vulnerable group, particularly those who are forced to flee their homes due to persecution and violence.

In conclusion, the criminalization of same-sex relationships in Asia and the persecution and discrimination faced by LGBTQ+ individuals violate international human rights law and highlight the need for greater protection and support for this vulnerable group. The barriers faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in accessing essential services such as healthcare and employment further exacerbate their vulnerability. The lack of legal protections for LGBTQ+ individuals in many Asian countries highlights the need for legal and policy reform that recognizes and protects the human rights of LGBTQ+ individuals.

3.3.4 Latin America

In many Latin American countries, same-sex relationships are legal, and some countries have implemented laws and policies that recognize and protect the human rights of LGBTQ+ individuals (Human Rights Watch, 2021). However, despite these positive developments, LGBTQ+ individuals in Latin America still face significant persecution and discrimination, particularly in countries where same-sex relationships are not recognized or accepted by society and culture (Carillo & Paternotte, 2018).

In countries such as Mexico, Brazil, and Colombia, violence against LGBTQ+ individuals is prevalent, with high rates of hate crimes and murder (Human Rights Watch, 2021). LGBTQ+ individuals in Latin America also face significant barriers in accessing essential services such as healthcare, education, and employment, further exacerbating their vulnerability (Carillo & Paternotte, 2018). Discrimination against transgender individuals is particularly prevalent in Latin America, with high rates of violence and murder against trans women (Human Rights Watch, 2021).

In addition to violence and discrimination, LGBTQ+ individuals in Latin America also face significant challenges in accessing legal recognition of their gender and sexuality (Carillo & Paternotte, 2018). Transgender individuals, in particular, face significant barriers in accessing gender-affirming healthcare, such as hormone replacement therapy and gender confirmation surgery (Human Rights Watch, 2021). The lack of legal recognition and support for LGBTQ+ individuals in Latin America highlights the need for greater awareness, protection, and support for this vulnerable group, particularly those who are forced to flee their homes due to persecution and violence.

The persecution and discrimination of LGBTQ+ individuals in Latin America have been met with significant resistance from conservative religious and cultural values, hindering progress towards greater acceptance and inclusion (Carillo & Paternotte, 2018). However, efforts to advance LGBTQ+ rights in Latin America have also been met with significant support and activism, with LGBTQ+ individuals and their allies organizing and advocating for greater recognition and protection of their human rights (Carillo & Paternotte, 2018).

In conclusion, while many Latin American countries have made significant progress towards recognizing and protecting the human rights of LGBTQ+ individuals, there is still a significant need for greater awareness, protection, and support for this vulnerable group. The high rates of violence and discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals in Latin America, particularly transgender individuals, highlight the urgent need for legal and policy reforms that recognize and protect the human rights of all individuals, regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation.

4. Challenges and Struggles Faced by Forced Migrants

Forced migration is a difficult experience, but for LGBTQ+ individuals forced to migrate due to their sexual orientation and gender identity, the challenges and struggles they face can be even greater. This chapter examines the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants, focusing on their migration journey, mental health and well-being, and the challenges of integrating into a new society and culture.

4.1 Discussion of the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals during their migration journey, such as harassment and violence

Forced migration is a traumatic experience for anyone, and LGBTQ+ forced migrants face unique and additional challenges during their journey. This section delves deeper into the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants during their migration journey.

Firstly, LGBTQ+ forced migrants are at high risk of violence and harassment, both during their journey and upon arrival at their destination. They are often targeted due to their sexual orientation or gender identity, which can lead to physical violence, sexual assault, and harassment (Kidd, 2019). Many LGBTQ+ forced migrants have reported being threatened with violence, sexually assaulted, and robbed during their journey (Kidd, 2019). These experiences can be traumatic and have lasting impacts on the mental health and well-being of LGBTQ+ forced migrants.

Secondly, the fear of persecution can also cause LGBTQ+ forced migrants to undertake dangerous and often irregular migration routes, which can expose them to additional risks and dangers. Many LGBTQ+ forced migrants have reported taking longer and more dangerous routes in order to avoid persecution or discrimination (Kidd, 2019). This can lead to increased vulnerability to exploitation, abuse, and trafficking.

Thirdly, the lack of access to appropriate healthcare is a significant challenge faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants during their journey. Many LGBTQ+ forced migrants have reported being denied access to essential healthcare services, such as hormone replacement therapy or gender-affirming surgery (Kidd, 2019). This can have significant impacts on their mental and physical health, particularly for transgender individuals.

In addition to the challenges mentioned above, LGBTQ+ forced migrants may also face challenges related to language barriers, cultural differences, and the lack of support networks during their migration journey. For example, LGBTQ+ individuals may face challenges in

communicating their gender identity or sexual orientation due to language barriers, which can lead to misunderstandings and potentially negative consequences during the asylum application process (UNHCR, 2018). Additionally, the lack of support networks and community organizations can make it difficult for LGBTQ+ forced migrants to connect with others who share their experiences and can provide emotional and practical support.

Furthermore, the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants during their migration journey can have significant impacts on their mental health and well-being. Many LGBTQ+ forced migrants report experiencing symptoms of depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a result of their experiences (Kidd, 2019). This can be exacerbated by the lack of access to appropriate mental health services and support during their migration journey. The trauma and stress experienced during the journey can also have long-term impacts on their mental health, potentially affecting their ability to integrate into their new society.

It is important to note that the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants during their migration journey are not isolated incidents, but rather the result of systemic discrimination and persecution. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that includes addressing the root causes of discrimination and promoting greater acceptance and inclusivity for LGBTQ+ individuals. This includes education and awareness-raising campaigns, as well as the development of policies and programs that are specifically tailored to the needs of LGBTQ+ forced migrants.

Furthermore, it is worth noticing that LGBTQ+ forced migrants may also face challenges related to their legal status and the lack of access to legal support during their migration journey. LGBTQ+ individuals may be at greater risk of having their asylum applications rejected or delayed, and may face challenges in accessing legal protections due to the complex and often discriminatory legal frameworks in many countries (Amnesty International, 2020). This can leave LGBTQ+ forced migrants in a state of legal limbo, with limited access to rights and protections.

Moreover, LGBTQ+ forced migrants may also experience challenges related to their intersectional identities, such as race, ethnicity, or religion. This can lead to experiences of double discrimination, where LGBTQ+ individuals face discrimination both due to their sexual orientation or gender identity and their other intersecting identities (UNHCR, 2018). For example, LGBTQ+ forced migrants who belong to ethnic or religious minority groups may face additional discrimination and marginalization within their own communities, making their journey even more challenging.

Additionally, the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants during their migration journey can have significant impacts on their families and loved ones. Many LGBTQ+ forced migrants may have to leave behind partners, children, or other family members due to persecution or the inability to bring them along on their journey (UNHCR, 2018). This can lead to significant emotional distress and feelings of isolation, particularly for LGBTQ+ individuals who have limited support networks.

In conclusion, the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants during their migration journey are numerous and complex. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive and intersectional approach that recognizes the unique experiences and needs of LGBTQ+ individuals, and promotes greater inclusivity and acceptance for all individuals, regardless of their intersecting identities.

4.2 Explanation of the impact of the migration experience on their mental health and well-being

The migration journey for LGBTQ+ forced migrants can be traumatic and challenging, with significant impacts on their mental health and well-being. This section will explore the specific ways in which the migration experience can affect the mental health and well-being of LGBTQ+ forced migrants.

4.2.1 Fear of Persecution, Discrimination, and Violence

Forced migration due to sexual orientation and gender identity can be particularly traumatic and stressful for LGBTQ+ individuals, as they face the fear of persecution, discrimination, and violence. The fear of persecution is often related to the criminalization of homosexuality and gender non-conforming behavior in many countries, where LGBTQ+ individuals are subjected to arrest, detention, and imprisonment (Amnesty International, 2021).

Discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals can also result in barriers to accessing basic services such as healthcare, housing, and education, leading to further marginalization and vulnerability. This can have serious implications for the physical and mental health of LGBTQ+ forced migrants, who may face increased risks of violence, exploitation, and abuse.

Violence against LGBTQ+ individuals is a common experience in many countries, where they are targeted by individuals and groups who hold discriminatory attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity (Human Rights Watch, 2021). This violence can be physical, sexual, and psychological, and can have serious implications for the mental health and well-being of LGBTQ+ forced migrants. The fear of violence can also lead to a heightened state of anxiety and hypervigilance, which can further exacerbate their mental health challenges.

The fear of persecution, discrimination, and violence can lead to high levels of stress and anxiety among LGBTQ+ forced migrants, which can manifest in symptoms such as panic attacks, insomnia, and flashbacks (UNHCR, 2018). These experiences can be particularly traumatic for LGBTQ+ individuals who have experienced violence or persecution due to their sexual orientation or gender identity.

4.2.2 Mental Health Challenges

The experience of forced migration can lead to a range of mental health challenges for LGBTQ+ individuals, including depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). These challenges can be exacerbated by the unique stressors and difficulties faced

by LGBTQ+ forced migrants, such as social isolation, discrimination, and lack of access to appropriate healthcare services.

Depression is a common mental health challenge faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants, which can result from the stress of the migration journey, the uncertainty of the asylum application process, and the lack of support and resources available (Kidd, 2019). Depression can have serious implications for the physical and mental health of forced migrants, leading to a range of negative health outcomes, such as chronic pain, cardiovascular disease, and impaired immune function.

Anxiety is another common mental health challenge faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants, which can be related to the fear of persecution, discrimination, and violence, as well as the uncertainty and stress of the migration journey. Anxiety can manifest in a range of symptoms, including panic attacks, hyperventilation, and sweating (UNHCR, 2018). These symptoms can be extremely distressing and debilitating, affecting the ability of forced migrants to carry out daily activities and maintain social connections.

PTSD is a serious mental health condition that can result from exposure to traumatic events, such as violence, persecution, and forced displacement. PTSD can have a significant impact on the mental health and well-being of forced migrants, leading to symptoms such as nightmares, flashbacks, and avoidance behaviors (Kidd, 2019). These symptoms can be triggered by reminders of the traumatic event, such as sounds, smells, or images, and can have a significant impact on the ability of forced migrants to function and integrate into their new society.

In addition to depression, anxiety, and PTSD, LGBTQ+ forced migrants may also face other mental health challenges, such as substance abuse and suicidal ideation. Substance abuse can be a coping mechanism for individuals who are struggling with the stress and trauma of forced migration (Kidd, 2019). Substance abuse can have serious implications for the

physical and mental health of forced migrants, and can further exacerbate existing mental health challenges.

Suicidal ideation is another serious mental health challenge faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants, which can result from the stress and trauma of forced migration, as well as the experience of discrimination, isolation, and lack of support. Suicidal ideation can be related to feelings of hopelessness, worthlessness, and despair, and can have a significant impact on the mental health and well-being of forced migrants (UNHCR, 2018).

In addition to the direct impact on mental health, the mental health challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants can also have indirect impacts on their well-being and ability to integrate into new societies. For example, individuals who are struggling with mental health challenges may have difficulty finding and maintaining employment, accessing education and training programs, and developing social connections (Kidd, 2019). This can further exacerbate the stress and trauma of forced migration, and can lead to further social exclusion and marginalization.

Addressing the mental health challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants requires a comprehensive approach that includes access to appropriate mental health services and support, as well as the development of policies and programs aimed at promoting greater inclusivity and acceptance of sexual and gender diversity. This includes promoting greater awareness of the unique mental health challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants, and providing training and support to healthcare providers and other service providers on how to best meet the needs of this population. By recognizing and addressing the mental health challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants, it is possible to promote their well-being and help them to build new lives in safety and dignity.

4.2.3 Long-term Impacts on Mental Health and Well-being

The impact of forced migration on the mental health and well-being of LGBTQ+ individuals can be long-lasting, with significant implications for their quality of life and ability to integrate into new societies. For example, individuals who have experienced persecution and violence based on their sexual orientation or gender identity may continue to experience the effects of trauma and mental health challenges years after their initial displacement (UNHCR, 2018).

Long-term mental health challenges can include chronic depression and anxiety, as well as the development of chronic physical health conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and chronic pain (Kidd, 2019). These conditions can be exacerbated by the social and economic exclusion faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants, including discrimination in healthcare and employment settings, lack of access to appropriate healthcare services, and limited social support networks.

Long-term mental health challenges can also have significant impacts on the ability of LGBTQ+ forced migrants to integrate into new societies. For example, individuals who are struggling with mental health challenges may have difficulty finding and maintaining employment, accessing education and training programs, and developing social connections (Kidd, 2019). This can further exacerbate the stress and trauma of forced migration, and can lead to further social exclusion and marginalization.

In addition to chronic mental health challenges, forced migration can also have long-term impacts on the physical health of LGBTQ+ forced migrants. For example, individuals who are forced to flee their homes may face limited access to healthcare services, as well as exposure to environmental and occupational hazards, which can lead to chronic health conditions later in life (UNHCR, 2018). These challenges can be particularly acute for LGBTQ+ individuals, who may face additional barriers to accessing appropriate healthcare services due to discrimination and stigma.

The long-term impacts of forced migration on mental and physical health can also have significant economic implications. For example, individuals who are struggling with chronic mental or physical health challenges may have difficulty finding and maintaining employment, which can further exacerbate their social exclusion and marginalization. Additionally, the high costs of healthcare and other support services can create significant financial burdens for forced migrants, which can limit their ability to rebuild their lives in safety and dignity (Kidd, 2019).

Another long-term impact of forced migration on mental health and well-being is the experience of loss and grief. Many forced migrants have experienced significant losses, including the loss of family members, homes, and communities. These losses can have significant psychological impacts, and may require ongoing support and care to help individuals process and cope with their experiences (UNHCR, 2018).

Finally, it is important to recognize that the long-term impacts of forced migration on mental health and well-being are not solely individual in nature, but are also shaped by broader structural factors such as discrimination, inequality, and violence. Addressing these broader structural factors is essential to promoting the long-term well-being of LGBTQ+ forced migrants, and requires a collective and sustained effort from governments, civil society organizations, and the international community more broadly.

4.3 Analysis of the challenges of integrating into a new society and culture

One of the major challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants is the process of integrating into a new society and culture. This can be a complex and difficult process, particularly for individuals who have experienced persecution and discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. Some of the key challenges of integration include access to appropriate housing, employment, education, and healthcare services, as well as the development of social networks and support systems (UNHCR, 2018).

Language barriers can also pose a significant challenge to integration. LGBTQ+ forced migrants who do not speak the language of their new country may struggle to access essential services and communicate effectively with service providers and community members. This can further exacerbate feelings of isolation and exclusion, and may limit opportunities for social and economic integration.

Another significant challenge faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants is discrimination and prejudice from members of the host society. Even in countries where LGBTQ+ individuals are legally protected from discrimination, social stigma and bias can still exist, creating barriers to integration and inclusion. This can manifest in a range of ways, from verbal harassment and physical violence to exclusion from social and economic opportunities (Kidd, 2019).

Furthermore, forced migrants may also face challenges in navigating the legal and administrative processes required for residency and citizenship in their new country. These processes can be complex and confusing, particularly for individuals who may not have access to legal or administrative support. The lack of clarity and predictability in these processes can exacerbate feelings of anxiety and uncertainty, and can make it difficult for individuals to plan and build a stable future in their new home (UNHCR, 2018).

To address the challenges of integration, it is important to provide access to targeted support services that meet the unique needs of LGBTQ+ forced migrants. This may include access to mental health services, legal and administrative support, and language and cultural training. Providing these services can help individuals navigate the complex integration process and build the skills and resources necessary for success.

One promising approach to supporting integration is the development of community-based programs that provide social support and connection for LGBTQ+ forced migrants. These programs can provide a safe and welcoming environment for individuals to connect with

others, share experiences, and build social networks. They can also provide opportunities for skill-building, education, and cultural exchange, helping individuals to develop the resources and competencies necessary for success in their new home.

Another important aspect of supporting integration is the development of policies and programs that promote the inclusion and participation of LGBTQ+ forced migrants in all aspects of society. This includes efforts to promote diversity and inclusion in workplaces, schools, and other community settings, as well as the development of anti-discrimination policies and laws. By creating more inclusive and welcoming environments, society can help to reduce the barriers to integration faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants and promote their full participation and contribution to society.

Ultimately, the challenges of integration for LGBTQ+ forced migrants require a sustained and coordinated effort from all members of society, including governments, civil society organizations, and the broader community. By recognizing the unique needs and experiences of LGBTQ+ forced migrants, and by taking proactive steps to address the challenges they face, we can build more inclusive and welcoming communities that support the success and well-being of all individuals.

5. The Situation of LGBTQ+ Forced Migrants in Host Countries

LGBTQ+ forced migrants face a unique set of challenges in their host countries, ranging from social and psychological challenges to discrimination and stigma. This chapter examines the situation of LGBTQ+ forced migrants in host countries, including an examination of their social and psychological situation, the challenges they face in terms of discrimination and stigma, and the role of support networks and community organizations in assisting them.

5.1 Examination of the social and psychological situation of LGBTQ+ forced migrants in the countries where they seek asylum

Forced migration is a difficult and complex process, particularly for LGBTQ+ individuals who face specific challenges related to their sexual orientation or gender identity. A study by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) found that LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers experience a range of social and psychological challenges in host countries (UNHCR, 2012). These challenges include discrimination, stigma, social exclusion, and mental health problems such as depression and anxiety.

One of the key social challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants in host countries is social exclusion and marginalization. A study by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) found that LGBTQ+ forced migrants in host countries often experience discrimination, exclusion, and violence (IOM, 2014). This can lead to a sense of social isolation and difficulty in integrating into the host society. LGBTQ+ individuals who have experienced trauma in their home countries may be particularly vulnerable to these challenges, as they may struggle to form trusting relationships with members of the host community.

The psychological challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants in host countries are also significant. A study conducted by the National LGBTQ Task Force found that LGBTQ+ forced migrants in the United States experience high rates of depression, anxiety, and PTSD (National LGBTQ Task Force, 2013). These challenges can be compounded by the stigma and discrimination that LGBTQ+ individuals often face in their home countries and in host societies, further exacerbating feelings of isolation and exclusion.

The UNHCR notes that LGBTQ+ forced migrants may also experience specific challenges related to their gender identity or expression. Transgender individuals, for example, may struggle to access appropriate healthcare or may face discrimination in employment or housing. A study by the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA) found that transgender individuals experience high rates of violence and discrimination in many countries, which can make their migration journey particularly challenging (ILGA, 2020).

One study conducted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) found that LGBTQ+ migrants often face social isolation and exclusion in their host countries, leading to a sense of loneliness and a lack of belonging. This is especially true in countries where LGBTQ+ individuals face discrimination and persecution, as they may be hesitant to disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity for fear of further marginalization. Furthermore, the study found that LGBTQ+ migrants are more likely to experience mental health problems, such as depression and anxiety, due to the stress of their situation and the discrimination they face (IOM, 2019).

Another study conducted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) revealed that LGBTQ+ refugees in Kenya faced significant challenges, including harassment, arbitrary detention, and extortion, as well as restricted access to healthcare and education. The study also found that LGBTQ+ refugees in Kenya often experienced discrimination and violence from both the police and the local population, leading to a sense of insecurity and vulnerability (UNHCR, 2018). These findings highlight the urgent need for increased protection and support for LGBTQ+ refugees in Kenya and other countries where they face similar challenges.

Despite these challenges, there is evidence that support networks and community organizations can play a critical role in assisting LGBTQ+ forced migrants. A study by the International Rescue Committee found that LGBTQ+ refugees in the United States who had access to support services reported higher levels of social and psychological well-being than those who did not (International Rescue Committee, 2013). These findings suggest that support networks and community organizations can provide vital resources and support to help LGBTQ+ forced migrants navigate the challenges of migration and integrate into their new communities.

In conclusion, the social and psychological challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants in host countries are significant and complex, and require a coordinated effort from all members of society to address. Addressing these challenges requires a sustained and coordinated effort

from governments, civil society organizations, and the broader community to create more inclusive and welcoming societies that support the success and well-being of all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

5.2 Discussion of the challenges they face in terms of discrimination and stigma in their host countries

Forced migrants who identify as LGBTQ+ often face discrimination and stigma in their host countries, which can further exacerbate the challenges they face. Discrimination may take various forms, including verbal and physical abuse, harassment, and exclusion from social and economic opportunities. This is especially true in countries where LGBTQ+ rights are not recognized or protected by law. A study by Human Rights Watch (HRW) found that LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers in Turkey were subject to arbitrary detention and mistreatment by state officials, with many reporting instances of harassment, extortion, and physical abuse (HRW, 2020). In many cases, the lack of legal protection for LGBTQ+ individuals in host countries means that they have limited recourse to seek justice or protection.

Stigma can also impact the social and psychological well-being of forced migrants who identify as LGBTQ+. Studies have shown that social exclusion, prejudice, and discrimination can lead to feelings of isolation, anxiety, and depression (Grossman & D'Augelli, 2007; Meyer, 2003). This is compounded by the fact that many LGBTQ+ forced migrants have experienced trauma and persecution in their countries of origin, leaving them vulnerable to mental health issues. Furthermore, the stigma attached to being LGBTQ+ can result in a lack of access to healthcare, housing, and employment opportunities, further compounding the challenges that forced migrants face in their host countries.

The challenges of discrimination and stigma faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants in their host countries can also impact their ability to integrate into society. A report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) found that discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals can lead to lower levels of trust in institutions and decreased civic

engagement (OECD, 2020). This can make it more difficult for forced migrants to participate in society and contribute to their new communities. Furthermore, a lack of social support and networks can leave LGBTQ+ forced migrants vulnerable to isolation and exclusion, further hindering their ability to integrate.

Stigma and discrimination can also lead to social isolation for LGBTQ+ forced migrants, particularly if they are unable to find supportive communities in their host countries. A study by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) found that many LGBTQ+ forced migrants feel isolated and marginalized within refugee communities, and may be subject to bullying and harassment from other refugees (UNHCR, 2015). This can further exacerbate the mental health challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants.

Transgender individuals, in particular, may face significant discrimination and violence in their host countries. A report by Amnesty International found that transgender asylum seekers in Mexico are often subject to sexual violence, extortion, and other forms of violence and abuse (Amnesty International, 2017). Similarly, a report by Human Rights Watch documented cases of violence and discrimination against transgender refugees in Greece (Human Rights Watch, 2018). These experiences can have significant long-term impacts on the mental health and well-being of transgender forced migrants.

In some cases, LGBTQ+ forced migrants may also face discrimination and stigma within the legal and administrative systems of their host countries. For example, they may be subject to discriminatory treatment by immigration authorities or may be denied access to basic services such as healthcare or legal representation. This can make it more difficult for LGBTQ+ forced migrants to assert their rights and can perpetuate cycles of discrimination and exclusion.

5.3 Analysis of the role of support networks and community organizations in assisting LGBTQ+ forced migrants

Support networks and community organizations play a crucial role in assisting LGBTQ+ forced migrants in adapting to their new host countries. These organizations can provide a range of services, including legal aid, healthcare, language classes, and job training programs, that can help forced migrants integrate into their new societies. The LGBT Asylum Project in the United Kingdom, for instance, provides free legal advice and representation to LGBTQ+ asylum seekers and refugees, helping them navigate the complex asylum system and access necessary services. The project also offers psycho-social support to individuals facing mental health challenges due to their traumatic experiences of forced migration. The availability of such resources can improve the overall well-being of LGBTQ+ forced migrants (Denny, 2018).

In addition to practical support, community organizations can also provide a sense of belonging and community to LGBTQ+ forced migrants. LGBTQ+ individuals who have fled persecution often experience social isolation and may feel disconnected from their new communities. Support networks and community organizations can provide a safe and supportive environment where forced migrants can connect with others who share their experiences and find a sense of belonging. For example, the Organization for Refugee, Asylum and Migration in Germany (ORAM) provides a range of services, including peer counseling and support groups, to LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers. These services can help individuals connect with others in the community, reducing social isolation and promoting mental health and well-being (Burrell & Wigfall, 2020).

However, community organizations and support networks face their own set of challenges in assisting LGBTQ+ forced migrants. One major challenge is funding. Many organizations rely on grants and donations to fund their services, and competition for limited resources can be fierce. ORAM, for example, relies on private donations and grants from organizations such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Limited resources can also limit the reach of these organizations and their ability to provide comprehensive support to all individuals in need. Additionally, community organizations may struggle to find qualified staff and volunteers who can provide culturally sensitive services to LGBTQ+ forced migrants (Burrell & Wigfall, 2020).

Despite these challenges, community organizations and support networks remain an important source of support for LGBTQ+ forced migrants. These organizations play a critical role in helping forced migrants navigate the challenges of adapting to a new society and in promoting the inclusion and protection of LGBTQ+ individuals in host countries. Moreover, research has shown that the involvement of community organizations and support networks in the integration process can lead to improved outcomes for LGBTQ+ forced migrants (Burrell & Wigfall, 2020). For example, a study by Denny, et al. (2018) found that community-based organizations in New Zealand played an important role in supporting LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers and helped these individuals navigate the health and legal systems. Thus, the importance of community organizations and support networks cannot be overstated in ensuring the well-being of LGBTQ+ forced migrants.

In conclusion, community organizations and support networks can provide valuable support to LGBTQ+ forced migrants in their journey towards integration in their host countries. The services they offer can help address the challenges faced by forced migrants, including discrimination and stigma, social isolation, and mental health challenges. Despite challenges such as funding and limited resources, community organizations and support networks remain critical in ensuring the well-being of LGBTQ+ forced migrants. More research is needed to further explore the role of community organizations in the integration process and to identify best practices that can be adopted to support the unique needs of LGBTQ+ forced migrants.

6. The Role of International Law and Organizations

6.1 Overview of the international legal framework and protections for forced migrants, including the 1951 Refugee Convention

6.1.1 The 1951 Refugee Convention

The 1951 Refugee Convention is a key component of the international legal framework for protecting the human rights of forced migrants. The Convention defines a refugee as an individual who is outside their country of origin due to a well-founded fear of persecution on

account of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group, which includes LGBTQ+ individuals (UNHCR, 2021a).

The Convention imposes certain obligations on States to ensure the protection of refugees. One such obligation is the principle of non-refoulement, which prohibits States from returning refugees to countries where they would face persecution (UNHCR, 2021a). This principle is essential to ensuring that forced migrants are not subjected to further persecution and harm.

In addition, the Convention outlines the rights and obligations of States towards refugees, including access to housing, education, employment, and other basic needs. These provisions are critical to ensuring that refugees are able to live with dignity and security while they seek protection.

Despite the protections afforded by the Convention, LGBTQ+ forced migrants still face significant challenges in seeking asylum and protection. One of the major challenges is the difficulty in proving the persecution they have faced due to their sexual orientation or gender identity (LGBTQI+ Rights Advocacy, 2018). In many cases, LGBTQ+ forced migrants face additional barriers due to their intersectional identities, such as race or ethnicity.

Moreover, many countries have restrictive immigration policies and may deny LGBTQ+ forced migrants access to protection or exclude them from legal frameworks (Zorn, 2017). Such policies violate the principle of non-refoulement and limit the ability of LGBTQ+ forced migrants to access their rights under the Convention.

In recent years, there have been efforts to expand legal protections for LGBTQ+ forced migrants. The UNHCR in 2012 issued guidance outlining the need for greater attention to the protection needs of LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers. The guidance calls on States to provide adequate protection and support for LGBTQ+ forced migrants, including through the provision of legal and social services (UNHCR, 2012).

Overall, the 1951 Refugee Convention provides a crucial legal framework for protecting the human rights of forced migrants, including LGBTQ+ individuals. However, more efforts are needed to ensure that LGBTQ+ forced migrants are able to access their rights under the Convention, and to address the challenges they face in seeking protection.

6.1.2 Other International Instruments

The international legal framework and protections for forced migrants go beyond the 1951 Refugee Convention. Other international instruments, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), further protect the human rights of forced migrants.

The UDHR, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, outlines the fundamental rights and freedoms to which all human beings are entitled, including the right to seek and enjoy asylum from persecution (UN General Assembly, 1948). Article 14 of the UDHR specifically recognizes the right of individuals to seek asylum in other countries to escape persecution.

The ICCPR, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1966, is a legally binding treaty that protects civil and political rights, including the right to life, freedom from torture and slavery, and freedom of expression (United Nations Human Rights, n.d.). Article 6 of the ICCPR recognizes the inherent right to life and prohibits arbitrary deprivation of life, while Article 7 prohibits torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

These international instruments provide important legal protections for forced migrants, including LGBTQ+ individuals. However, the effective implementation and enforcement of these protections can be challenging. For example, in some countries, the government may interpret the language of the international instruments narrowly or impose additional

requirements on forced migrants seeking protection, thereby limiting access to protection (Zorn, 2017).

Moreover, the limitations of the international legal framework are particularly evident in the case of LGBTQ+ forced migrants. While the 1951 Refugee Convention includes persecution on account of membership in a particular social group as grounds for granting asylum, the interpretation and application of this provision varies across countries (LGBTQI+ Rights Advocacy, 2018). This can result in LGBTQ+ forced migrants being denied protection or facing significant barriers in seeking asylum.

One further major limitation is the narrow definition of a refugee as someone fleeing persecution on the basis of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group. This definition fails to recognize that sexual orientation and gender identity can also be grounds for persecution and that LGBTQ+ individuals may face unique forms of persecution that are not captured within this definition (Worster, 2015). As a result, many LGBTQ+ forced migrants may be excluded from the protection afforded by the Convention and other international instruments.

Furthermore, the Convention places the burden of proof on the individual seeking asylum to demonstrate that they meet the definition of a refugee and have a well-founded fear of persecution. This can be a significant challenge for LGBTQ+ forced migrants, who may face difficulty in proving the persecution they have faced due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. Additionally, the Convention does not explicitly recognize the protection needs of LGBTQ+ forced migrants, leaving them vulnerable to discrimination and violence within the refugee system (LGBTQI+ Rights Advocacy, 2018).

Another limitation of the legal framework is the lack of effective implementation and enforcement by States. Many countries fail to provide adequate support and protection for forced migrants, including LGBTQ+ individuals, despite their obligations under the Convention and other international instruments. This can result in forced migrants being

denied access to basic needs such as housing, education, and healthcare, and facing continued persecution and discrimination (Zorn, 2017).

In addition, the Convention does not address the issue of statelessness, which can be a significant challenge for LGBTQ+ individuals. Stateless individuals are not recognized as citizens by any country and lack access to basic rights and services, including the right to travel, work, and access healthcare (UNHCR, 2021c). Many LGBTQ+ individuals are at risk of statelessness due to discriminatory laws and policies in their home countries that deny them citizenship or the ability to obtain identification documents (UNHCR, 2021c).

In conclusion, while the international legal framework and protections for forced migrants, including the 1951 Refugee Convention and other international instruments, provide important protections for LGBTQ+ individuals, there are limitations to these legal frameworks that hinder their effectiveness in protecting the rights of LGBTQ+ forced migrants. These limitations include the narrow definition of a refugee, the burden of proof placed on individuals seeking asylum, the lack of effective implementation and enforcement by States, and the failure to address the issue of statelessness. It is important for States to address these limitations and take action to ensure that LGBTQ+ forced migrants receive the protection and support they need to live free from persecution and discrimination.

6.2 Discussion of the challenges in implementing and enforcing these legal protections

Despite the existence of international legal frameworks and protections for forced migrants, including the 1951 Refugee Convention, implementing and enforcing these protections presents significant challenges. In the case of LGBTQ+ forced migrants, these challenges can be particularly acute due to discrimination and bias within the refugee system.

6.2.1 Lack of Implementation of Legal Protections

Despite the existence of international legal protections for forced migrants, including LGBTQ+ individuals, the implementation of these protections remains a challenge. One major issue is the lack of resources and capacity of States to implement and enforce these

protections. Many countries have limited resources and face significant political and economic challenges, which can make it difficult to provide adequate support and services to forced migrants (Kunz et al., 2020).

In addition to resource constraints, there are also political and social barriers to implementing legal protections for forced migrants. Some countries may be resistant to accepting forced migrants, particularly those who identify as LGBTQ+, due to cultural or religious beliefs. This can create a hostile environment for forced migrants and may lead to discrimination and abuse (Legrain, 2019).

Another challenge is the lack of coordination and cooperation among States in implementing legal protections for forced migrants. Many countries have their own domestic laws and policies regarding asylum and forced migration, which can create confusion and inconsistencies in how legal protections are applied. Additionally, some countries may be reluctant to cooperate with international organizations, such as the UNHCR, in providing protection and support for forced migrants (Weissbrodt & Collins, 2018).

Despite these challenges, there have been some efforts to improve the implementation of legal protections for forced migrants. For example, the Global Compact on Refugees, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2018, seeks to improve international cooperation and support for forced migrants. The Compact calls on States to increase their support for refugees and to work together to address the root causes of forced migration (UNHCR, 2018).

Furthermore, civil society organizations and community groups have played a critical role in advocating for the rights of forced migrants and in providing support and services. These organizations can provide practical assistance, such as legal aid and healthcare services, as well as advocacy and awareness-raising efforts to promote the rights of forced migrants (Garnier & Weissbrodt, 2020).

In conclusion, the lack of implementation of legal protections for forced migrants, including LGBTQ+ individuals, remains a significant challenge. The issues of resource constraints, political and social barriers, and lack of coordination among States must be addressed in order to ensure that forced migrants have access to the protection and support they need.

6.2.2 Lack of Access to Legal Assistance

Lack of access to legal assistance is a significant challenge faced by many forced migrants, including LGBTQ+ individuals. Legal assistance is essential for forced migrants to navigate complex asylum processes and to access the protections and services to which they are entitled. However, many forced migrants do not have access to legal assistance, either due to a lack of resources or because of structural barriers in the legal system.

One major issue is the shortage of legal aid services available to forced migrants. In many countries, legal aid services are limited or non-existent, leaving forced migrants without access to legal assistance. This can be particularly challenging for LGBTQ+ forced migrants, who may face additional legal and social barriers due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. Studies have shown that LGBTQ+ forced migrants are more likely to experience legal and administrative hurdles in accessing protection and support services due to discrimination, stigma, and homophobia/transphobia (Hess, 2018).

Even in countries where legal aid services are available, there may be other structural barriers that limit access to legal assistance. For example, some countries require forced migrants to have legal residency or citizenship status in order to access legal aid services. This can create a Catch-22 situation for forced migrants, who may not be able to regularize their status without legal assistance but cannot access legal assistance without regularized status (Weissbrodt & Collins, 2017).

Language and cultural barriers can also make it difficult for forced migrants to access legal assistance. Forced migrants may not be fluent in the language of their host country, making it difficult to navigate the legal system and to communicate effectively with legal professionals.

Additionally, cultural differences in legal systems and procedures can be confusing and intimidating for forced migrants.

In addition to the challenges of accessing legal assistance faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants, there are also issues related to the quality of legal representation. Research has shown that LGBTQ+ asylum seekers are often subjected to biased and insensitive questioning during the asylum process, and may struggle to communicate their experiences effectively to legal authorities (Pai, 2013). Furthermore, the lack of cultural competence among legal professionals may result in misunderstandings and misrepresentations of the experiences of LGBTQ+ forced migrants (Bhabha & Finch, 2018).

The lack of access to legal assistance for LGBTQ+ forced migrants is not only a problem in low-income countries, but also in high-income countries. For example, research conducted in the United States found that many LGBTQ+ asylum seekers struggle to obtain legal representation due to the high cost of legal services and the lack of available pro bono representation (Bullock, 2019). Additionally, the restrictive immigration policies of some countries may limit the opportunities for LGBTQ+ forced migrants to access legal assistance.

Efforts have been made to address the lack of access to legal assistance for forced migrants. For example, some countries have implemented legal aid programs specifically targeted towards forced migrants. The UNHCR also provides legal assistance and advice to forced migrants in many countries. However, more resources and support are needed to ensure that forced migrants, including LGBTQ+ individuals, have access to legal assistance and can exercise their legal rights.

In conclusion, the lack of access to legal assistance is a significant challenge faced by many forced migrants, including LGBTQ+ individuals. Structural barriers in the legal system, such as the shortage of legal aid services and language/cultural barriers, must be addressed in order to ensure that forced migrants can access the legal assistance and protections to which they are entitled.

6.2.3 Discrimination and Bias within the Refugee System

LGBTQ+ forced migrants often face discrimination and bias within the refugee system, making it difficult for them to access legal protections and services. A study conducted by Human Rights Watch found that LGBTQ+ asylum seekers in the United States often face bias and discrimination from asylum officers, who may have limited knowledge and understanding of LGBTQ+ issues and may rely on stereotypes and assumptions when evaluating their claims (Human Rights Watch, 2018). Similarly, a study of LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers in Canada found that many experienced discrimination and bias from government officials, health care providers, and other service providers (Lindsay et al., 2018).

One factor contributing to discrimination and bias within the refugee system is the lack of training and education among officials and service providers. Many may not have adequate knowledge or understanding of LGBTQ+ issues and may rely on stereotypes and assumptions when evaluating the claims of LGBTQ+ forced migrants. To address this issue, organizations such as the UNHCR have developed guidelines and training programs for officials and service providers on how to better support and protect LGBTQ+ forced migrants (UNHCR, 2012).

Another factor contributing to discrimination and bias within the refugee system is the lack of diversity and representation among officials and service providers. Studies have found that LGBTQ+ forced migrants may feel more comfortable disclosing their sexual orientation or gender identity to officials or service providers who are themselves LGBTQ+ or who have experience working with LGBTQ+ individuals (Siltanen et al., 2017; Torres, 2020). Therefore, it is important to ensure that there is diversity and representation among officials and service providers in order to better meet the needs of LGBTQ+ forced migrants.

In addition to addressing discrimination and bias among officials and service providers, there is a need for broader societal change to combat homophobia and transphobia. A study of LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers in Europe found that many experienced discrimination and violence from members of the broader society, which can contribute to feelings of social isolation and difficulty integrating into their new communities (Bakker & Dagevos, 2016). Therefore, efforts to promote greater acceptance and inclusion of LGBTQ+ individuals in host communities are crucial in ensuring the safety and well-being of LGBTQ+ forced migrants.

Overall, discrimination and bias within the refugee system remain significant challenges for LGBTQ+ forced migrants. Efforts to address these issues must include training and education for officials and service providers, as well as efforts to promote diversity and representation among these individuals. Additionally, broader societal change is needed to combat homophobia and transphobia and promote greater acceptance and inclusion of LGBTQ+ individuals in host communities.

6.2.4 Limited Resources and Capacity

Despite the existence of international legal protections for forced migrants, including LGBTQ+ individuals, the implementation of these protections remains a challenge due to limited resources and capacity of the States to implement and enforce these protections (Joly & Herman, 2020). Many countries have limited resources and face significant political and economic challenges, which can make it difficult to provide adequate support and services to forced migrants (Bilginsoy, 2020). This can lead to forced migrants being detained in inadequate facilities and being deprived of basic needs such as food, water, and medical care.

Furthermore, the lack of resources and capacity of States may result in inadequate legal aid and representation for forced migrants (Schabas, 2020). In some cases, as seen above, forced migrants may not even have access to legal aid, which can make it difficult for them to navigate the complex legal procedures involved in seeking asylum and protection (Aleinikoff,

2019). This lack of legal aid can lead to forced migrants being denied protection or being returned to countries where they may face persecution.

Limited resources and capacity can also result in inadequate protection and support for forced migrants who are vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation (Costello, Azad, & Barnett, 2019). For example, LGBTQ+ forced migrants may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation and violence due to their sexual orientation or gender identity (Potts & Ntukanyagwe, 2021). Without adequate support and protection, forced migrants may be forced to engage in risky behaviours to survive, which can further expose them to harm.

Despite these challenges, there have been some efforts to improve the resources and capacity of States to provide protection and support for forced migrants. For example, the European Union has established a Common European Asylum System (CEAS) to provide a coordinated approach to asylum and migration policies (Zwaan & Milardović, 2020). The CEAS includes measures to improve the capacity of States to provide adequate protection and support for forced migrants, including through the provision of funding and technical assistance.

Thus, limited resources and capacity remain a significant challenge in implementing legal protections for forced migrants, including LGBTQ+ individuals. Without adequate resources and capacity, forced migrants may be deprived of their basic needs and may not have access to legal aid and protection. Efforts are needed to address these challenges and to ensure that forced migrants have access to the protection and support they need.

6.3 Analysis of the role of international organizations, such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in supporting LGBTQ+ forced migrants

According to a study by Poteat and Logie (2018), LGBTQ+ forced migrants face unique challenges, such as fear of persecution and violence, when seeking asylum. The UNHCR has recognized the need to address the specific needs of this population, issuing guidance in 2012 to provide better protection and support (UNHCR, 2012).

One way the UNHCR supports LGBTQ+ forced migrants is through partnerships with other organizations. For example, the UNHCR has worked with the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA) to promote the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals globally (UNHCR, 2016). The UNHCR also collaborates with civil society organizations to provide support and services to forced migrants (UNHCR, 2021).

However, the UNHCR faces challenges in providing adequate support and protection to LGBTQ+ forced migrants. According to a report by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the UNHCR and other international organizations lack the resources and capacity to provide adequate support to all forced migrants, including LGBTQ+ individuals (OSCE, 2016).

Additionally, there is a need for more coordination among international organizations and States to address the specific needs of LGBTQ+ forced migrants. According to a study by Czaika and De Haas (2014), cooperation among States and international organizations is essential for effective protection and support of forced migrants.

In addition to the UNHCR, other international organizations have also played a crucial role in supporting LGBTQ+ forced migrants. For example, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) provides assistance to migrants worldwide, including forced migrants, through its various programs and initiatives. The IOM has been working with LGBTQ+ migrants and refugees to provide them with tailored support, including safe shelter, healthcare, and legal assistance. In particular, the IOM has been working to ensure that LGBTQ+ forced migrants are not subjected to discrimination and violence during their journeys and are provided with access to protection mechanisms (IOM, 2021).

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is also working to support LGBTQ+ forced migrants by addressing the root causes of forced migration and promoting human rights and equality. The UNDP has been working to promote the inclusion of LGBTQ+ individuals in development policies and programs and has been working with governments

and civil society organizations to address discrimination and stigma towards LGBTQ+ individuals. By addressing the root causes of forced migration, the UNDP aims to prevent the displacement of individuals due to their sexual orientation or gender identity (UNDP, 2020).

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have also been instrumental in supporting LGBTQ+ forced migrants. For example, Rainbow Railroad is an international organization that works to provide support and assistance to LGBTQ+ individuals who are facing persecution and violence due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. The organization has been working to assist LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers in accessing protection mechanisms and support services and has been providing financial and practical support to those in need (Rainbow, Railroad, 2021).

Overall, international organizations and NGOs play a critical role in supporting LGBTQ+ forced migrants by providing protection mechanisms, legal assistance, and support services. By working together, these organizations can help to ensure that LGBTQ+ forced migrants are able to access the protection and support they need and are able to live their lives free from persecution and discrimination.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Recap of the importance of the topic and its impact on individuals

The topic of sexual orientation and gender identity as reasons for forced migration is of utmost importance in the current global climate. The issue of forced migration has been a significant concern for several years, with millions of people being displaced from their homes due to various reasons, including persecution and conflict. However, the experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals as forced migrants have often been overlooked and marginalized, resulting in limited attention to their unique needs and challenges.

As explored in this dissertation, LGBTQ+ forced migrants face significant challenges throughout their migration journey, including persecution and violence in their home countries, discrimination and bias within the refugee system, and limited access to legal

protections and support services. These challenges have a profound impact on the mental and physical health, social and economic well-being, and overall quality of life of LGBTQ+ forced migrants.

Moreover, the importance of this topic extends beyond individual experiences. The rights and protections of forced migrants, including LGBTQ+ individuals, are fundamental human rights that should be upheld by all countries and organizations. Ensuring that LGBTQ+ forced migrants have access to adequate support and protection mechanisms is not only a matter of justice and human rights but also has broader implications for the promotion of diversity and inclusivity within societies.

In light of the above, it is imperative that we acknowledge the importance of the topic of sexual orientation and gender identity as reasons for forced migration and the significant impact it has on individuals and society as a whole. We must continue to work towards greater awareness and understanding of the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants and advocate for the rights and protections they are entitled to under international law.

Overall, the experiences of LGBTQ+ forced migrants highlight the need for a more inclusive and equitable approach to forced migration. By recognizing and addressing the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals as forced migrants, we can work towards a more just and inclusive world.

[7.2 Call to action for increased awareness and support for LGBTQ+ forced migrants](#)

To address the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants, there is a need for increased awareness and support from various stakeholders, including governments, international organizations, and civil society. The following strategies can help promote inclusivity, non-discrimination, and human rights in the context of LGBTQ+ forced migration:

7.2.1 Strengthening Legal Frameworks and Protections

To address the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants, there is a need to strengthen legal frameworks and protections. This includes both domestic and international legal frameworks that can ensure that LGBTQ+ forced migrants are protected from persecution and violence, have access to legal pathways for migration, and have their rights upheld in their host countries.

One potential strategy is the adoption of more inclusive asylum policies and practices. For example, in 2020, the government of Canada released a new policy that recognizes that LGBTQ+ individuals may face persecution on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity and provides guidance to immigration officers on how to assess such claims. This policy includes a list of factors that may be relevant to the assessment of an individual's claim, such as the individual's history and social context, as well as the situation in their home country. Such policies provide a clear and consistent framework for assessing claims made by LGBTQ+ forced migrants and ensure that these individuals receive the protection they need. (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2020)

Another potential strategy is the improvement of the implementation of existing legal frameworks. The 1951 Refugee Convention and other international instruments provide important protections for forced migrants, including LGBTQ+ individuals. However, the implementation of these frameworks remains a challenge in many countries. For example, in the United States, LGBTQ+ asylum seekers have reported being subjected to discrimination and bias by immigration officers during their claims process. One strategy to improve the implementation of existing frameworks is to provide training to immigration officers and other relevant personnel on how to recognize and address discrimination against LGBTQ+ forced migrants. (Human Rights Watch, 2018)

In addition, there is a need to strengthen the legal frameworks around hate crimes and hate speech. Violence and discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals can be exacerbated by hate speech and hate crimes. Therefore, stronger legal frameworks can provide a deterrent to such actions and provide avenues for redress for those who experience them. For example, in

2019, Brazil's Supreme Court ruled that homophobia and transphobia should be considered crimes similar to racism. This ruling provides a clear legal framework for protecting LGBTQ+ individuals and may serve as a deterrent to those who seek to discriminate against or harm them. (Alves et al., 2019)

Finally, there is a need to promote and support the work of human rights organizations and civil society groups that work to promote the rights of LGBTQ+ forced migrants. These organizations can provide crucial support services, such as legal aid and healthcare services, as well as advocacy and awareness-raising efforts to promote the rights of forced migrants. For example, the UK-based organization, Stonewall, provides support and advocacy for LGBTQ+ individuals, including forced migrants. The organization has worked to provide legal aid and other support services to LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers, as well as to raise awareness about the challenges faced by these individuals. (Stonewall, 2022)

In conclusion, strengthening legal frameworks and protections is essential to promoting the rights of LGBTQ+ forced migrants. Strategies such as the adoption of more inclusive asylum policies, the improvement of the implementation of existing frameworks, the strengthening of legal frameworks around hate crimes and hate speech, and the promotion and support of human rights organizations and civil society groups can all contribute to this effort. It is important that governments and other relevant actors take action to ensure that LGBTQ+ forced migrants receive the protection and support they need to live free from persecution and discrimination.

7.2.2 Promoting Diversity and Inclusion within Host Communities

Promoting diversity and inclusion within host communities is crucial to ensuring that LGBTQ+ forced migrants are able to live free from discrimination and violence. One potential strategy is to raise awareness and promote education about LGBTQ+ issues within host communities. This can include awareness campaigns, training sessions, and other forms of outreach to promote greater understanding and acceptance of LGBTQ+ individuals.

Research has shown that education and awareness-raising efforts can be effective in promoting attitudes of acceptance and inclusion towards LGBTQ+ individuals within host communities (Carrasco et al., 2020). For example, a study conducted in Australia found that educational programs aimed at promoting LGBTQ+ inclusivity within schools led to increased knowledge, empathy, and understanding towards LGBTQ+ individuals among students and teachers (Jones et al., 2017).

Another potential strategy is the promotion of LGBTQ+ representation and visibility within host communities. This can include the organization of events, such as pride parades or cultural festivals, that celebrate LGBTQ+ culture and identity. It can also include the promotion of LGBTQ+ representation in media and entertainment.

Studies have shown that increased representation of LGBTQ+ individuals in media and entertainment can lead to greater acceptance and understanding of LGBTQ+ individuals within host communities (Kates et al., 2018). For example, a study conducted in the United States found that exposure to LGBTQ+ characters on television led to increased levels of support for same-sex marriage among viewers (Hoewe & Mastro, 2019).

Additionally, there is a need to promote the participation of LGBTQ+ forced migrants in community activities and decision-making processes. This can include the establishment of LGBTQ+ community groups and organizations that can provide support and services to LGBTQ+ forced migrants, as well as opportunities for these individuals to participate in community events and activities.

Overall, promoting diversity and inclusion within host communities is essential to ensuring the well-being and protection of LGBTQ+ forced migrants. Strategies such as awareness-raising and education, the promotion of LGBTQ+ representation and visibility, and the participation of LGBTQ+ forced migrants in community activities and decision-making processes can all contribute to this effort.

Chapter 7.2.3: Providing Access to Health Care and Support Services

Access to health care and support services is crucial for LGBTQ+ forced migrants, who often face significant challenges in accessing these resources. Therefore, promoting access to such services is a critical strategy for supporting LGBTQ+ forced migrants.

One important step is to provide education and training for healthcare professionals to better understand the unique needs of LGBTQ+ forced migrants. This includes training on topics such as cultural competence and sensitivity, the impact of trauma on health outcomes, and the provision of gender-affirming care. For example, a study in Canada found that training healthcare providers on LGBTQ+ health issues resulted in increased comfort and knowledge in providing care to this population (Logie et al., 2017). Such training can improve the quality of care provided to LGBTQ+ forced migrants and ensure that their health needs are adequately addressed.

In addition to education and training, there is a need to provide specific support services to LGBTQ+ forced migrants. These may include mental health services, legal aid, and social support networks. For example, the LGBT Asylum Project in the United Kingdom provides a range of support services, including legal representation, housing assistance, and social events, for LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers (LGBT Asylum Project, n.d.). Such services can help to address the unique needs of LGBTQ+ forced migrants and provide them with the support they need to rebuild their lives in a new country.

Another important strategy is the provision of gender-affirming care for transgender and gender non-conforming forced migrants. This may include access to hormone replacement therapy, gender-affirming surgeries, and other medical interventions. For example, a study in the United States found that access to gender-affirming care was associated with improved mental health outcomes for transgender individuals (Reisner et al., 2016). Therefore, ensuring that transgender and gender non-conforming forced migrants have access to gender-affirming care is essential for promoting their health and well-being.

Thus, providing access to health care and support services is crucial for promoting the well-being of LGBTQ+ forced migrants. Strategies such as education and training for healthcare professionals, the provision of specific support services, and the provision of gender-affirming care can all contribute to this effort. It is important that governments and other relevant actors take action to ensure that LGBTQ+ forced migrants have access to the care and support they need to live healthy and fulfilling lives.

7.2.4 Addressing Root Causes of Forced Migration

Another important strategy to support LGBTQ+ forced migrants is to address the root causes of forced migration. Discrimination and persecution based on sexual orientation and gender identity are often major drivers of forced migration for LGBTQ+ individuals (UNHCR, 2015). Addressing these root causes requires a range of approaches, including advocacy for LGBTQ+ rights, education and awareness-raising efforts, and community-building initiatives.

One key approach is to promote education and awareness-raising efforts about the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals. This includes promoting education and awareness-raising about the human rights of LGBTQ+ individuals in schools, workplaces, and communities. Education and awareness-raising can help to challenge stereotypes and prejudices against LGBTQ+ individuals and can promote greater acceptance and inclusivity. For example, in the Netherlands, the government has implemented a program called “Diversity in Business” to promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace, including for LGBTQ+ individuals (Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2020). Such programs can help to address the root causes of forced migration by promoting greater acceptance and inclusivity in society.

In addition to education and awareness-raising efforts, advocacy for LGBTQ+ rights is also important. Advocacy efforts can help to promote legal protections for LGBTQ+ individuals and challenge discriminatory laws and policies. For example, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) is a US-based organization that advocates for LGBTQ+ rights and works to promote equality for LGBTQ+ individuals. The HRC has been involved in advocating for legal

protections for LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers and has worked to raise awareness about the challenges faced by these individuals (HRC, 2021).

Community-building initiatives can also be important in addressing the root causes of forced migration for LGBTQ+ individuals. Building strong, supportive communities can provide LGBTQ+ individuals with a sense of belonging and support, which can help to reduce the likelihood of forced migration. For example, the LGBT Center in New York City is a community-based organization that provides support services and programs for LGBTQ+ individuals, including forced migrants (The LGBT Center, 2021). Such organizations can provide vital support services and help to build strong, supportive communities for LGBTQ+ individuals.

In conclusion, addressing the root causes of forced migration for LGBTQ+ individuals is an important strategy to support these individuals. Education and awareness-raising efforts, advocacy for LGBTQ+ rights, and community-building initiatives can all play a role in addressing the root causes of forced migration. By promoting greater acceptance and inclusivity for LGBTQ+ individuals and advocating for their rights, we can work towards a world in which LGBTQ+ forced migrants are able to live their lives free from persecution and discrimination.

[7.3 Final thoughts and reflections on the importance of promoting diversity and inclusivity.](#)

In conclusion, promoting diversity and inclusivity is crucial in the context of LGBTQ+ forced migration. It is essential to recognize the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals who are forced to flee their homes due to persecution and violence, and to work towards creating a world where all individuals can live free from discrimination and violence. By promoting diversity and inclusivity, we can create a more equitable and just world for all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

One important aspect of promoting diversity and inclusivity is the need for increased awareness and education. It is important that individuals and communities are educated about

the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants, as well as the importance of promoting equality and human rights. This can include awareness-raising campaigns, educational programs, and other initiatives that seek to promote understanding and empathy towards those who have been forced to flee their homes due to persecution and violence.

Another important aspect of promoting diversity and inclusivity is the need for increased support for LGBTQ+ forced migrants. This can include providing access to legal assistance, healthcare, and other support services that can help these individuals to rebuild their lives in their new host communities. It is also important to work towards creating a more inclusive and welcoming environment within host communities, where LGBTQ+ forced migrants can feel safe and supported.

In addition, it is important to address the root causes of forced migration, such as discrimination, persecution, and violence. This can involve working towards creating more equitable and just societies, where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. It can also involve addressing the specific challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in their home countries, such as the criminalization of homosexuality and other forms of discrimination.

Finally, it is important to recognize that promoting diversity and inclusivity is not a one-time effort, but an ongoing process that requires commitment and dedication. It is important that individuals, communities, and governments work together to create a world where all individuals can live free from discrimination and violence, and where the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ+ forced migrants are recognized and addressed.

In conclusion, promoting diversity and inclusivity is essential in the context of LGBTQ+ forced migration. By increasing awareness and education, providing support services, addressing the root causes of forced migration, and recognizing the ongoing nature of this work, we can create a more equitable and just world for all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

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