

**RESUMEN:**

En general, las terapias afirmativas LGBTQ+ pretenden evaluar y abordar las experiencias distintivas de las personas pertenecientes a minorías sexuales con los factores estresantes de estas y las formas en las que estos factores pueden afectar al funcionamiento psicológico. Este enfoque de la psicología parte de la teoría del Estrés de Meyer, la cual recalca que los problemas experimentados por las personas LGBTQ+ se ven potenciados por factores estresantes crónicos únicos. La adopción de este enfoque en el panorama de la psicología es de gran importancia dado que las personas del colectivo LGBTQ+ son una de la población de riesgo que más probabilidades tiene de desarrollar problemas de salud mental como la ansiedad y depresión entre otros, y a esto se le suma que la población de este colectivo busca con más frecuencia ayuda terapéutica para poder lidiar con estas problemáticas. Este enfoque de la psicología, aun teniendo en cuenta su importancia, no tiene el soporte que requiere, dado que muchos estudios han demostrado tanto la poca preparación por parte de los profesionales para desarrollar unas terapias efectivas, como las dificultades que encuentran estas minorías para poder encontrar una ayuda adaptada a sus vivencias. De este modo, esta revisión sistemática pretende poner en evidencia la necesidad de este enfoque para el colectivo LGBTQ+, así como de una mayor formación en este ámbito partiendo de la evidencia de la efectividad tanto de la preparación como de la intervención.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Psicología afirmativa, estrés de minorías, Colectivo LGBTQ+, minorías sexuales

**ABSTRACT:**

In general, LGBTQ+ affirmative therapies aim to assess and address the distinctive experiences of sexual minority people with sexual minority stressors and the ways in which these factors can affect psychological functioning. This approach to psychology builds on Meyer's Stress theory, which emphasises that the problems experienced by LGBTQ+ people are compounded by unique chronic stressors. The adoption of this approach in the psychology landscape is of great importance given that LGBTQ+ people are one of the most likely populations at risk of developing mental health problems such as anxiety and depression among others, and that LGBTQ+ people are more likely to seek therapeutic help to cope with these issues. This approach to psychology, even taking into account its importance, does not have the support it requires, given that many studies have shown both the lack of preparation by professionals to develop effective therapies, as well as the difficulties that these minorities encounter in finding help adapted to their experiences. In this way, this systematic review aims to highlight the need for this approach for LGBTQ+ people, as well as for more training in this area starting from the evidence of the effectiveness of both preparation and intervention.

**KEYWORDS:** Affirmative psychology, minority stress, LGBTQ+, sexual minorities.

# THE NEED FOR AFFIRMATIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND ITS BENEFITS FOR THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

## INTRODUCTION

It is a reality that LGBTQ+ people more frequently need and seek therapeutic help (Beard et al., 2017; DiGloria, 2020). In this context, affirmative psychology emerges, which is considered more as a therapeutic stance than a specific intervention (Shumilina, 2022) and has Meyer's minority stress theory at its core (Cox et al., 2011; Meyer, 2003; Shumilina, 2022). The study is based on the importance of training professionals in this field, given that a lack of preparation in this area can have very negative psychological consequences for this collective (Walker et al., 2010). This systematic review focuses on the attitudes of both LGBTQ+ people and mental health professionals towards this approach to psychology, highlighting the importance of the adoption of this knowledge and its effectiveness for quality, non-discriminatory clinical intervention.

## RESULTS

### EFICACY

- Proven effectiveness of affirmative cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)
- Lack of bisexual and transgender inclusivity
- Intersectionality (ethnic group, sexual diversity, etc.)
- Affirmative couple therapy

### BENEFITS

- Improve Resilience
- Reduction of mental health problems
- Increases individual and couple well-being

### TRAINING/EDUCATION

- Preparation ensures better intervention
- Mostly extracurricular training
- One proposal for affirmative psychology as a curricular formation

### PROFESSIONAL PERCEPTION

- Better preparation after formation
- Feeling of unpreparedness after university
- Motivation to improve in this field

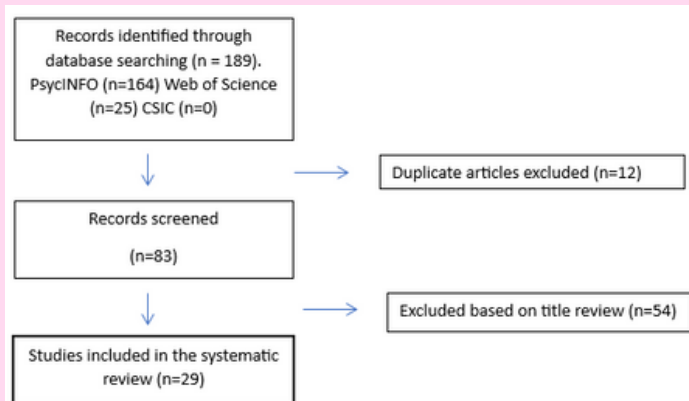
### LGBTQ+ PERCEPTION

- Difficulties in finding well-trained therapists
- Future help seeking can be affected by previous negative experiences
- Preferences towards therapists

### BARRIERS/FACILITATORS

- Economic cost
- Context (Region, country, etc.)
- Internal barriers

## METHOD



The criteria of the review were the databases PsycINFO, Web of Science and CSIC; the keyword was Affirmative Psychology LGBTQ+; published date, 2011-2023; and language Spanish and English.

## DISCUSSION

It is of great importance for the well-being of LGBTQ+ people that mental health professionals are prepared to work with them, providing them with resources to overcome the discrimination they have encountered in their lives, rather than contributing to it. Although professional preparation may entail certain costs, affirmative therapy contributes to the reduction of psychological distress of sexual minorities (Zúñiga-Salazar et al., 2021) and the effectiveness of training in this area is supported by many studies (Pachankis et al., 2022; Dovala, 2022; Shumilina, 2022).

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