



08 - 10 August 2025
Berlin, Germany

Prevalence and Risk Factors of LGBTQ+ Identity Abuse: A Scoping Review

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Abstract

Identity abuse is a form of domestic abuse seen in LGBTQ+ romantic relationships which weaponises one's gender or sexual identity against them. In this scoping review, we aimed to identify risk and protective factors of LGBTQ+ Identity Abuse (IA) in romantic relationships. The secondary aim was to identify the prevalence of IA and the prevalence of specific IA tactics identified by Woulfe and Goodman (2018). Using PRISMA-ScR guidelines, search terms focused on LGBTQ+ identities and domestic abuse. A total of 8918 papers were retrieved through this methodology with only 42 papers meeting the criteria for inclusion. Both qualitative and quantitative papers were included in this review. Specific gender and sexual identities were a prominent risk factor. Those who identify as transgender and gender non-binary, and bisexuals are more likely to be victims of IA. Furthermore, those who have experienced homelessness, and past-year sex work increased the risk of IA victimisation. Those who are 'out' with their sexuality and gender identity are less likely to be victimised by IA and less negatively impacted by it. Overall, the review highlights the field of IA as being restricted. The synthesis of literature that the review provides is a crucial step for understanding and developing IA as a concept and provides direct recommendations for future research.

Keywords: identity abuse, queer relationships, LGBTQ+ domestic abuse