

# **A Psychosocial Case Study of LGBTQ Lived Experiences in Neo-Pentecostal Churches Across Brazil and Australia**

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## **Background:**

Neo-Pentecostalism is an expanding Christian denomination that typically perceives non-normative gender identities and sexualities as sinful. In Australia, the 2017 marriage equality debate, terminations of LGBTIQ+ school staff, and anti-trans protests reveal enduring discrimination within religious settings and their impact on the mental well-being of LGBTIQ+ individuals, especially those of faith. This study explores the experiences of LGBTQ individuals in two prominent Neo-Pentecostal churches in Brazil and Australia, unveiling the impacts of anti-LGBTIQ+ religious discourses. Unlike the prevailing literature focusing on extreme religious modalities or rooted in cognitive approaches, this research offers original insights into LGBTQ individuals' daily religious practices and their lifelong journey of revealing traumatic religious experiences.

## **Research Questions**

1. What is the nature of LGBTQ lived experiences in Neo-Pentecostal churches?
2. What are the Neo-Pentecostal narratives on sexual and gender diversity?
3. How do cultural constructions on gender and masculinity influence the narratives and experiences of LGBTQ Neo-Pentecostals in Brazil and Australia?

## **Methods:**

The study delves into two case studies of Neo-Pentecostal institutions, the Hillsong Church in Australia and the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God in Brazil. These churches were chosen due to their significant national and international visibility, growth, and political influence. The research's theoretical framework is grounded on a transdisciplinary perspective, encompassing psychoanalysis and sociological theories of violence and masculinity. Data was collected through hybrid ethnography (digital and offline) and in-depth interviews encompassing 20 subjects, ten from each country. All the interviewees were current or former church members. The majority were LGBTQ, but we also included cisgender heterosexual individuals.

## **Findings**

The study is currently in the data analysis phase. We aim to present findings in conferences and publications throughout this year.