# INEQUALITY UNDER THE ROOF? AN ANALYSIS OF MATERIAL LIVING CONDITIONS ACCORDING TO SEXUAL ORIENTATION

## DESIGUALDADE SOB O TETO? UMA ANÁLISE DA CONDIÇÃO DE VIDA MATERIAL SEGUNDO A ORIENTAÇÃO SEXUAL

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**Abstract:** This article analyzes housing infrastructure and access to durable consumer goods among homosexual and heterosexual individuals in Brazil from 2016 to 2023. Employing the Household Condition Index (HCI), the Durable Consumer Goods Index (DCGI), and Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regressions based on PNAD-C microdata, the outcomes reveal general similarities alongside significant disparities. Gay men had the lowest HCI scores, while lesbians had the highest. Conversely, DCGI values were lower overall, with lesbians having the least access to durable goods and gay men having the most. OLS regression outcomes indicate a negative effect of sexual orientation on both indices, underscoring the economic and social vulnerabilities faced by sexual minorities amid Brazil's political and economic fluctuations.

**Keywords:** Sexual Orientation; Durable Goods; Infrastructure; Housing; Brazil.

**Resumo:** Este artigo examina a infraestrutura habitacional e o acesso a bens duráveis entre indivíduos homossexuais e heterossexuais no Brasil de 2016 a 2023. Utilizando o Índice de Condição Domiciliar (ICD), o Índice de Bens de Consumo Duráveis (IBCD) e regressões OLS com microdados da PNAD-C, os resultados revelam semelhanças gerais, mas disparidades significativas. Lésbicas apresentaram o maior ICD, enquanto gays tiveram os menores valores. O IBCD foi inferior, com gays tendo maior acesso a bens duráveis e lésbicas, o menor. As regressões OLS indicam impacto negativo da orientação sexual em ambos os índices, reforçando vulnerabilidades econômicas e sociais diante das oscilações políticas e econômicas do Brasil.

**Palavras-chave:** Orientação Sexual; Bens Duráveis; Infraestrutura; Habitação; Brasil.



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## Introduction

Infrastructure and housing conditions are recognized as fundamental human rights guaranteed to all people both by Brazilian legislation, such as article 6 of the 1988 constitution (Brasil, 1988), and by international law, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Nações Unidas, 1948) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Nações Unidas, 1992). Some basic conditions such as housing need to be met so that people can have an adequate standard of living, although many Brazilians do not share this reality. Many of them live in inadequate households, with risks for their health or conditions that disrespect human dignity (Brasil, 2013).

Some criteria must be met within what is considered adequate housing, including the availability of services, materials, and infrastructure such as drinking water, basic sanitation, heating, lighting, food storage, and garbage collection (Brasil, 2013). Decent housing and infrastructure are fundamental rights, as are non-discrimination and equality. Both subjects – inadequate housing and discrimination – are intertwined, as they may lead to an increase in poverty and economic segregation in a society where these two phenomena are intense and persistent (Un-Habitat, 2009). Evidence suggests that LGBTQIAPN+ individuals face unique challenges in accessing stable housing due to direct discrimination, family rejection, and economic barriers. Studies have highlighted higher rates of rental dependency and housing instability among this group, reflecting structural inequalities that persist despite legal protections in some regions (Romero; Goldberg; Vasquez, 2020).

Economic exclusion and, particularly, poverty are complex and multifaceted phenomena that cannot be solely defined by low income levels. Although the lack or insufficiency of income is a key component in conceptualizing poverty, it is not the only factor that should be considered (Kreter; Del-Vecchio; Staduto, 2015). Other elements, such as housing infrastructure conditions and access to durable consumer goods, must also be taken into account (Mesquita; Nascimento; Lima, 2022).

Socially vulnerable groups such as non-whites, women, and the LGBTQIAPN+[3] population, are disproportionately affected in the labor market, especially in relation to income levels and unemployment rates (Mantovani; Staduto, 2023; Mantovani; Staduto; Paiva, 2024). During times of crisis, women (Gonzaga, 2021) and non-whites individuals (Cotrim; Teixeira; Proni, 2020; Rocha, 2021) are typically the first to be dismissed

3 Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transvestite, queer, intersex, asexual, pansexual, non-binary, and others.

from employment. Similar patterns may apply to homosexual individuals, who often face hiring discrimination (Weichselbaumer, 2003; Drydakis, 2011).

The examination of these groups – women, non-whites, and homosexuals – is essential for understanding labor market decisions, geographic distribution, and specialization at work or home (BLACK; Gates; Sanders; Taylor, 2000). These populations are the subject of numerous empirical studies in a variety of fields, such as health (Gomes, 2021; Lopes, 2021), social issues (Anjos, 2014), cultural studies (Oliveira, 2018), political engagement (Prado; Souza, 2017; França, Silva, 2019), and economics (Weichselbaumer, 2003; Drydakis, 2011; Suliano; Cavalcante; Rodrigues, 2021).

From an economic perspective, sexual orientation has frequently been investigated in terms of income disparities and labor market discrimination (Mantovani; Paiva; Staduto, 2024), as well as employer bias (Weichselbaumer, 2003; Drydakis, 2011). More recent research, particularly in international contexts, have explored the intersection of sexual orientation with material living conditions. Studies such as Klawitter (2008) and Schneebaum and Badgett (2019) highlight disparities in housing stability, access to durable goods, and financial resilience among LGBTQIAPN+ populations. Nevertheless, the Brazilian context remains underexplored—particularly regarding how sexual orientation influences housing conditions and ownership of durable goods—thus necessitating a broader empirical framework beyond the unidimensional income approach.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze differences in housing infrastructure and access to durable consumer goods among homosexual and heterosexual workers in Brazil from 2016 to 2023. By employing a multidimensional approach through the HCI and DCGI indices, the research transcends income-based analysis to encompass broader dimensions of well-being and social inclusion.

## 1 Quality, housing conditions and consumption patterns from the perspective of sexual orientation

The housing conditions and ownership of durable goods among LGBTQIAPN+ populations have been widely studied in diverse international contexts, with particular attention to aspects such as bargaining power, consumption behaviors, and housing discrimination. Research by Klawitter (2008) and Negrusa and Oreffice (2011) have highlighted the financial dynamics and disparities in savings behavior between same-sex and different-sex couples in the United States. Similarly, Schneebaum and Badgett (2019)

examined poverty rates among LGBTQIAPN+ households (Table 1), while Dilmaghani and Dean (2020) explored the relationship between sexual orientation and homeownership in Canada (Table 1).

Although these studies offer important insights, they also emphasize that housing and consumption patterns differ considerably depending on variables such as public policy, family structure, and geographic location. These results offer a crucial starting point for understanding the socioeconomic dynamics affecting LGBTQIAPN+ populations, while also highlighting gaps in cross-country comparability and methodological approach.

**Table 1.** Empirical evidence on housing, consumption, and material conditions

| Author(s) | Local | Objective | Database | Findings |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Klawitter (2008) | USA | To examine the portfolio of bank accounts held by same-sex and different-sex couples and its relationship to bargaining power and individual and relationship characteristics. | U.S. Survey of Consumer Finances (1992, 1995, 1998, 2001 and 2004) | - Married couples are more likely to hold money than same-sex or unmarried different-sex couples.<br>- Proxies for bargaining power predict account holdings for same-sex and unmarried different-sex couples.<br>- Couples of all types hold money in joint accounts more often in longer term relationships and when rearing children. |
| Negrusa and Oreffice (2011) | USA | To examine the association between sexual orientation and household savings. | 2000 U.S. Census | - Homosexual couples significantly more likely to hold retirement and social security income than heterosexual couples.<br>- Lesbian couples pay higher mortgages relative to house value.<br>- Cohabiting heterosexuals incur higher housing costs compared to married counterparts. |
| Schneebaum and Badgett (2019) | USA | To investigate poverty rates among same-sex couple households in the United States. | American Community Survey (2010-2014) | - Same-sex couple households are more likely to be in poverty than different-sex married couples.<br>- Same-sex couples are protected from poverty by higher education and labor force participation.<br>- Lesbians couples are most likely to be in poverty compared to other couples. |
| Hellyer (2021) | USA | To evaluate whether discrimination against same-sex couples differs between rural and urban rental housing markets. | 28 markets located in 14 states | - Landlords do not respond at significantly different rates to inquiries from same-sex or opposite-sex couples across rural or urban markets, or between states with and without anti-discrimination ordinances. |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Martell and Roncolato (2023) | USA | To analyze the economic experiences of sexual minorities during the COVID-19 pandemic. | U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse survey (July 21, 2021 – May 9, 2022) | - Lesbian and bisexual women, and bisexual men were more likely than their heterosexual counterparts to live in a household that experienced pandemic related job loss during the pandemic.<br>- Bisexual men were more likely than heterosexual men to report difficulties paying expenses, experiencing food insufficiency, and facing housing insecurity.<br>- Lesbian and bisexual women were more likely than heterosexual women to report expense difficulty and food insecurity.<br>- Pre-existing inequalities likely persist beyond the pandemic. |
| Allen (2014) | Canada | To estimate differences in household production across different couple-types may be caused by many different factors. | 2006 Canada census | - No statistically differences in the value of household commodities across sexual orientations.<br>- While household production values vary by sexual orientation, the overall levels are similar.<br>- Market goods significantly affect household production across all couple types. |
| Dilmaghani and Dean (2020) | Canada | To examine sexual orientation and homeownership patterns. | Canadian censuses (2001, 2006, 2016) and the 2011 National Household Survey | - Prior to the legal recognition of same-sex marriage, homeownership rates among same-sex households fell between those of married common-law.<br>- After legalization, common-law same-sex and different-sex couples exhibited similar homeownership rates.<br>- Married same-sex couples were significantly less likely to own their residence than their married heterosexuals counterparts. |
| Maletta (2006) | Bolívia | To explore changes over time in the household infrastructure quality[a] using a proposed index. | Bolivian Censuses (1976, 1992, and 2001) | - From 1976 to 2001, the Bolivia experienced consistent improvement in the HIM[b], with rising material living standards across all regions, socioeconomic groups and, education levels. |
| Barreto, Sandoval, and Cortés (2010) | Bogotá | To identify the practices (e.g., housing, utilities, domestic expenses) and lifestyle behaviors (e.g., sports, recreation) among LGBT and heterosexual individuals. | Survey administered to 639 individuals from LGBT and heterosexual populations | - Lifestyle differences exist both within LGBT groups and between them and heterosexuals, but these variations are context-specific and not solely attributable to sexual orientation.<br>- Consumption practices exhibit more similarities than differences across groups, and are more closely relate to demographics variables than sexual orientation. |

**Source:** Elaborated by the authors.
**Notes:** (a) The quality of household infrastructure refers to the fundamental material conditions of living, including aspects related to shelter, water supply, energy and sanitation; (b) HIM: Household Infrastructure Measure.

Despite the relevance of existing researches, the analysis of quality of life including housing conditions and durable goods ownership – still lack a focused approach tailored to the Brazilian context, where structural challenges such as social and economic inequality remain significant. Although authors like Kreter, Del Vecchio, and Staduto (2015) and Mesquita, Nascimento, and Lima (2022) have addressed these topics within Brazilian settings, no study to date has incorporated variables related to sexual orientation as a central element in the analysis.

This paper seeks to contribute to the national literature by integrating variables concerning to sexual orientation into the examination of housing conditions and consumption patterns, as elaborated in Section 3. The lack of specialized research on this topic in the Brazilian context emphasizes how urgent it is to examine these problems from a perspective that takes into account the unique cultural, political, and economic traits of the nation.

## 2 Methodological procedures[4]

The Continuous National Household Sample Survey (PNAD-C, in Portuguese Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios Contínua) first annual interview microdata for 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2022 and 2023 were used in this research. These particular years were chosen in accordance with the database's accessibility. Although PNAD-C provides data for other years, variables related to housing characteristics and durable consumer goods are only available during the aforementioned periods.

The inclusion of variables related to durable goods was intended to capture and assess potential differences in housing conditions between homosexual and heterosexual individuals. These household attributes serve as proxies for poverty, offering a broader, multidimensional perspective beyond income alone (Kreter; Del-Vecchio; Staduto, 2015).

As PNAD-C does not include question regarding the sexual orientation of respondents, cohabitation with same-sex or different-sex partners was employed as a proxy to identify gays and lesbians individuals, respectively. It is worth noting that these individuals may constitute a relatively privileged subgroup within the LGBTQIAPN+ community. Table 2 presents the identification criteria for this family arrangement.

4 The authors are available to provide the data used in this study upon request.

**Table 2.** Identification of homosexuals and heterosexuals

| Head of family gender | | Spouse gender | | **Sexual orientation** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Woman | + | Woman | = | Lesbian |
| Woman | + | Man | = | Heterosexual woman |
| Man | + | Man | = | Gay |
| Man | + | Woman | = | Heterosexual man |

**Source:** Based on PNAD-C from 2016 to 2023 (IBGE, 2025b).

Given the limitationz of the official Brazilian database, the identification of same-sex couples is restricted to those in cohabiting relationships, thereby excluding individuals with other sexual orientations –such as being asexual, bisexual, pansexual, or other identities– from analysis. Despite t these constraints, several studies have employed this same criterion to distinguish between homosexuals and heterosexuals individuals, including those by Suliano, Cavalcante, and Rodrigues (2021), Mantovani and Staduto (2023) and Mantovani, Paiva e Staduto (2024).

To assess the basic infrastructure and access to durable consumer goods among homosexual and heterosexual populations, we employed a aggregate index encompassing multiple dimensions (Mesquita; Nascimento; Lima, 2022). Two indices were developed within this multidimensional framework: the Household Condition Index (HCI) and the Durable Consumer Goods Index (DCGI).

HCI and DCGI were based on and adapted from methodologies proposed Barros, Carvalho, and Franco (2006), Kreter, Del Vecchio, and Staduto (2015) and Mesquita, Nascimento, and Lima (2022). While these indexes have been applied to various population groups in prior research, their relationship to sexual orientation has received limited attention. Scores were assigned to the variables comprising each index, ranked in ascending order— where the lowest score denotes the most disadvantaged condition, and the highest score represents the most favorable scenario regarding housing infrastructure and ownership of durable goods. The variables included in the analysis are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Selection and description of variables

| Variable | Description | Score |
|---|---|---|
| *Household Condition Index (HCI)* | | |
| Type of household | House | 3 |
| | Apartment | 2 |
| | Housing in a boarding house or tenement | 1 |
| Material of external walls | Coated masonry/coated rammed earth | 5 |
| | Uncoated masonry | 4 |
| | Wood suitable for construction (trimmed) | 3 |
| | Reclaimed wood | 2 |
| | Uncoated rammed earth | 1 |
| Water supply | General water distribution network | 6 |
| | Deep or artesian well | 5 |
| | Shallow or phreatic well | 4 |
| | Fountain or spring | 3 |
| | Stored rainwater | 2 |
| | Other | 1 |
| Waste drain | General network, rainwater network | 6 |
| | Septic tank connected to the network | 5 |
| | Septic tank not connected to the network | 4 |
| | Rudimentary septic tank | 3 |
| | Ditch | 2 |
| | River, lake, or sea | 1 |
| Garbage destination | Collected directly by cleaning service | 6 |
| | Collected in cleaning service skip bin | 5 |
| | Burnt (on the property) | 4 |
| | Buried (on the property) | 3 |
| | Thrown in a vacant lot or public place | 2 |
| | Other destination | 1 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Origin of electrical energy | Uses at least one source of electrical energy | 2 |
| | Does not use/has no electricity | 1 |
| *Durable Consumer Goods Index (DCGI)* | | |
| Refrigerator | Yes, 2 or more doors | 3 |
| | Yes, 1 door | 2 |
| | No | 1 |
| Washing machine | Yes | 2 |
| | No | 1 |
| Television | Yes, thin screen only (LED, LCD, or plasma) | 4 |
| | Yes, thin screen and CRT | 3 |
| | Yes, CRT only | 2 |
| | No | 1 |
| Mobile phone | Yes | 2 |
| | No | 1 |
| Landline phone | Yes | 2 |
| | No | 1 |
| Personal computer | Yes | 2 |
| | No | 1 |
| Internet access | Yes | 2 |
| | No | 1 |
| Automobile | Yes | 2 |
| | No | 1 |
| Motorcycle | Yes | 2 |
| | No | 1 |

**Source:** Based on PNAD-C from 2016 to 2023 (IBGE, 2025b).

**Note:** Laptop, notebook, ultrabook, and netbook are classified as personal computers.

The Household Condition Index (HCI) and Durable Consumer Goods Index (DCGI) were calculated as follows, after assigning the scores to the selected variables (see Table 3):

$$ICD_{ijt} = \frac{1}{n}\prod_{i=1}^{n} x_{ijt} \qquad (1)$$

$$IBCD_{ijt} = \frac{1}{n}\prod_{i=1}^{n} x_{ijt} \qquad (2)$$

In which:

$ii$: 1, 2 (gender: male and female)

$jj$: 1, 2 (sexual orientation: homosexual and heterosexual)

$tt$: 2016, ..., 2023 (year)

$nn$: 1, ..., n (number of variables composing the index)

$xx$: 1, ..., n (variables composing the index)

$ICD_{ijt}ICD_{ijt}$: value of the household condition index for gender $ii$, sexual orientation $jj$, and time $tt$.

$IBCD_{ij}IBCD_{ij}$: value of the durable consumer goods index for gender $ii$ , sexual orientation $jj$, and time $tt$.

The values of the HCI and DCGI range from zero (0) to one (1). Values closer to 1, indicate better housing infrastructure conditions and greater access to durable consumer goods for workers, while values closer to zero reflect poorer conditions.

Differences associated with sexual orientation may be influenced by other factors related to personal characteristics or the labor market dynamics, such as professional experience, education level, and place of residence, as noted in studies by Cavalcante, Suliano, and Rodrigues (2021), and Mantovani and Staduto (2023).

In this context, Ordinary Least Squares[5] (OLS) regressions were estimated for the HCI and DCGI indices using the independent variables presented in Table 4.

5 The following tests were conducted: (i) multicollinearity using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF); (ii) heteroscedasticity using the Breusch-Pagan test; and (iii) specification bias. Since heteroscedasticity was confirmed, White's robust standard error correction was applied.

**Table 4.** Description of the variables used in the regressions

| | |
|---|---|
| ***Dependent variable*** | |
| $HCI$ | Household Condition Index |
| $DCGI$ | Durable Consumer Goods Index |
| ***Independent variables*** | |
| $FAM\_SZ$ | Number of people who live in the house. |
| $WH$ | =1 white, otherwise 0. |
| $W$ | =1 woman, otherwise 0. |
| $HOMO$ | =1 homosexual, otherwise 0. |
| $X$ | Years of experience (Age – 5 – years of study). |
| $X^2$ | Squared experience variable. |
| $YS$ | Qualification level. |
| $F$ | =1 if the individual works in the formal market[a], otherwise 0. |
| $PRIV$ | =1 if the individual works in the private market[b], otherwise 0. |
| $SECTORS$ | $S\_COMS\_COM$: =1 commerce sector, otherwise 0.<br>$S\_INDS\_IND$: =1 industry sector, otherwise 0.<br>$S\_SERVS\_SERV$: =1 customer service, otherwise 0.<br>$S\_CONSTS\_CONST$: =1 construction sector; otherwise 0.<br>(Agriculture sector – base sector). |
| $URB$ | =1 urban resident, otherwise 0. |
| $REGIONS$ | $R\ NR\ N$: =1 Northern resident, otherwise 0.<br>$R\ SER\ SE$: =1 Southeastern resident, otherwise 0.<br>$R\ SR\ S$: =1 Southern resident, otherwise 0.<br>$R\_CWR\_CW$: =1 Central-Western resident, otherwise 0.<br>R_FD: =1 Federal District resident, otherwise 0.<br>(Northeastern resident – base region) |

**Source:** Based on PNAD-C from 2016 to 2023 (IBGE, 2025b).

**Notes:** (a) employee with social insurance and labor rights, as established in the Consolidations of Labor Laws in Brazil; (b) person who works for an employer in the private sector, generally forcing himself to complete a working day and receiving in return remuneration in cash, goods, products, or benefits.

Thus, by applying the dependent and independent variables outlined in Table 4, the regression models can be formulated as follows:

$$I_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 FAM\_SZ_t + \beta_2 WH_t + \beta_3 W_t + \beta_4 HOMO_t + \beta_5 X_t + \beta_6 X_t^2 + \beta_7 YS_t + \beta_8 F_t + \beta_9 PRIV_t + \beta_{10} S\_COM_t + \beta_{11} S\_IND_t + \beta_{12} S\_SERV_t + \beta_{13} S\_CONST_t + \beta_{14} URB_t + \beta_{15} R\_N_t + \beta_{16} R\_SE_t + \beta_{17} R\_S_t + \beta_{18} R\_CW_t + \beta_{19} R\_FD_t + \mu_{ijt} \quad (3)$$

In which:

$II$: value of the HCI or DCGI

$tt$: 2016, ..., 2023 (year)

The analysis of housing conditions and access to durable goods among homosexual and heterosexual individuals represents an innovative approach, given that most existing studies on the LGBTQIAPN+ community in the labor market focus almost exclusively on wage disparities or employment discrimination. While housing and access to consumer goods are essential components of economic well-being, they have rarely been examined through the lens of sexual orientation. This study addresses this gap by offering an empirical investigation into how these material conditions vary across different population groups.

## 3 Results and discussions

### *Descriptive statistics*

Income is a factor strongly associated with living conditions and access to durable consumer goods. According to the results, hourly wages vary throughout groups (Figure 1) (Suliano; Cavalcante; Rodrigues, 2021; Mantovani; Staduto, 2023; Mantovani; Paiva; Staduto, 2024). Men, gay and heterosexual, made more money on average than women, which is consistent with other empirical research done in Brazil (Paiva; Souza; Gomes, 2020; Mantovani; Souza; Gomes, 2021; Mantovani; Paiva; Staduto, 2024). It is noteworthy that gay men had the highest incomes, exceeding those of straight men, while heterosexual women had the lowest incomes, except in 2022 (Figure 1). Although these findings do not prove sexual orientation discrimination, they do show that there are gender-based wage differences (Suliano; Cavalcante; Rodrigues, 2021; Mantovani; Staduto, 2023; Mantovani; Paiva; Staduto, 2024).

The inclusion of variables related to durable consumer goods in the analysis aimed to capture the different housing conditions between homosexuals and heterosexuals individuals. Two different groups were used to study these characteristics. Data on household infrastructure, such as the kind and classification of the household, the materials used for external walls, the availability of piped water, waste disposal systems, garbage collection techniques, and electricity sources, are included in the first group.

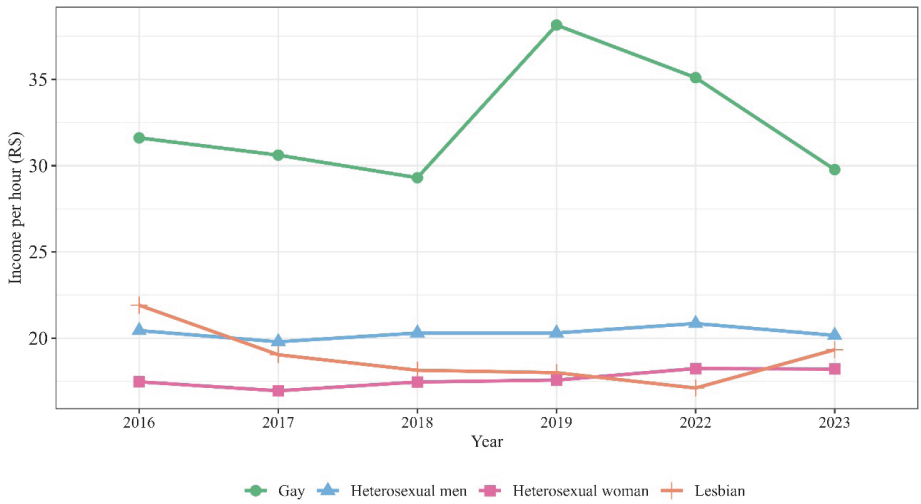


**Figure 1.** Average income per hour (R$) according to sexual orientation in Brazil – 2016 to 2023

**Source:** Based on PNAD-C from 2016 to 2023 (IBGE, 2025b).

**Note:** Incomes were corrected for 2023 based on the Broad Consumer Price Index (IPCA).

Most workers live in houses, regardless of sexual orientation or gender (Table 5). In 2023, more than 72% of heterosexuals owned their own house (paid or paying), while over 18% rented a house to live in (Figure 2). In addition, approximately 45% of homosexuals rented a house in 2023, while 24%, on average, have their own home and have paid for it (Figure 2).

The proportion of homosexuals living in apartments are higher than those of heterosexuals, especially among gays (52.28 % in 2016 and 61,69 % in 2023) (Table 5), with 49% and 41% of them being rented, while 49% and 54% are already paid or in the process of payment, respectively in 2016 and 2023 (Figure 2). Approximately 22% and 26% of lesians lived in apartments (Table 5), with 36% and 67% being rented, and 23% and 9% owned (fully paid or being paying off) in 2016 and 2023, in that order (Figure 2). A small part of heterosexuals lives in apartments, corresponding to 12% in 2016 and 14% in 2023 (Table 5).

**Table 5.** Housing conditions of homosexual and heterosexual workers in Brazil – 2016 and 2023

| | 2016 | | | | 2023 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Homosexual | | Heterosexual | | Homosexual | | Heterosexual | |
| | M | W | M | W | M | W | M | W |
| Type of household (%) | | | | | | | | |
| Apartment | 47.59 | 22.23 | 12.02 | 12.06 | 38.31 | 25.78 | 13.75 | 13.77 |
| House | 52.28 | 77.44 | 87.84 | 87.81 | 61.69 | 73.88 | 86.15 | 86.13 |
| Boarding house | 0.13 | 0.33 | 0.14 | 0.13 | 0.00 | 0.34 | 0.10 | 0.10 |
| Material of external walls (%) | | | | | | | | |
| Coated masonry | 97.46 | 86.80 | 88.40 | 88.47 | 90.71 | 94.12 | 89.32 | 89.37 |
| Uncoated masonry | 1.94 | 8.71 | 5.55 | 5.53 | 5.73 | 4.05 | 5.76 | 5.75 |
| Trimmed wood | 0.33 | 4.49 | 4.97 | 4.94 | 2.16 | 1.46 | 4.19 | 4.16 |
| Reclaimed wood | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.33 | 0.33 | 0.78 | 0.37 | 0.22 | 0.22 |
| Other | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.19 | 0.18 | 0.41 | 0.00 | 0.21 | 0.21 |
| Uncoated rammed earth | 0.27 | 0.00 | 0.56 | 0.55 | 0.21 | 0.00 | 0.30 | 0.29 |
| Piped water supply (%) | | | | | | | | |
| Rain | 0.00 | 0.18 | 0.65 | 0.63 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.65 | 0.64 |
| Fountain | 0.67 | 0.00 | 2.40 | 2.39 | 0.31 | 0.10 | 2.34 | 2.34 |
| Other | 0.00 | 1.36 | 1.77 | 1.75 | 0.82 | 0.46 | 1.34 | 1.34 |
| Deep well | 2.20 | 6.84 | 7.89 | 7.88 | 6.27 | 6.50 | 8.44 | 8.44 |
| Shallow well | 0.60 | 3.55 | 3.23 | 3.21 | 0.72 | 0.84 | 3.07 | 3.05 |
| Network | 96.53 | 88.07 | 84.06 | 84.14 | 91.88 | 92.10 | 84.16 | 84.19 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Waste drain (%) | | | | | | | | |
| Connected septic tank | 12.29 | 28.08 | 32.68 | 32.59 | 6.34 | 7.97 | 6.19 | 6.18 |
| Non-connected septic tank | 0.34 | 2.67 | 1.78 | 1.76 | 9.63 | 11.47 | 16.23 | 16.22 |
| Rudimentary septic tank | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1.01 | 1.01 | 3.17 | 3.88 | 13.35 | 13.31 |
| General network. rainwater | 87.37 | 69.25 | 64.28 | 64.39 | 79.25 | 76.41 | 61.31 | 61.37 |
| River | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1.22 | 0.22 | 1.34 | 1.34 |
| Ditch | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.39 | 0.05 | 1.58 | 1.58 |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Garbage destination (%) | | | | | | | | |
| Skip bin | 3.50 | 5.26 | 7.82 | 7.82 | 8.84 | 8.50 | 6.31 | 6.32 |
| Buried | 0.07 | 0.00 | 0.44 | 0.44 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.29 | 0.29 |
| Thrown | 2.24 | 0.12 | 0.83 | 0.82 | 0.33 | 1.21 | 0.39 | 0.39 |
| Other | 0.97 | 0.00 | 0.28 | 0.28 | 0.00 | 0.25 | 0.32 | 0.32 |
| Burnt | 0.34 | 1.42 | 9.39 | 9.33 | 1.52 | 0.00 | 7.81 | 7.79 |
| Cleaning service | 92.88 | 93.20 | 81.24 | 81.31 | 89.31 | 90.04 | 84.88 | 84.89 |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Electrical energy (%) | | | | | | | | |
| Does not use/does not have | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.21 | 0.21 | 0.57 | 0.00 | 0.20 | 0.19 |
| One source | 100.00 | 100.00 | 99.79 | 99.79 | 99.43 | 100.00 | 99.80 | 99.81 |

**Source:** Based on PNAD-C from 2016 to 2023 (IBGE, 2025b).

**Notes:** M: man; W: woman.


**Figure 2.** Household situation according to sexual orientation in Brazil – 2016 and 2023

**Source:** Based on PNAD-C from 2016 to 2023 (IBGE, 2025b).

Coated masonry is the predominant material on external walls (on average, more than 90%), while the main form of piped water supply is carried out by the general distribution network for the studied gender, sexual orientation, and years (Table 5). The general network and rainwater network are the most relevant forms of waste disposal although the septic tank not connected to the network is more expressive for heterosexuals, with approximately 16% in 2023. Garbage collection is carried out directly by a cleaning service and almost all workers, homosexuals and heterosexuals, use at least one source of electrical energy (Table 5).

Ownership of particular things, such as landlines and mobile phones, refrigerators, washing machines, televisions, personal computers, internet access, and vehicles like cars or motorcycles for personal use, is the subject of the second set of variables. On average, 99% of individuals own a mobile phone, whereas most do not have a landline telephone at home. This pattern reflects both technological advancements and shifts in personal habits, largely driven by the advantages of mobile phones, such as mobility, practicality, convenience, speed, and lower cost compared to traditional landline services.

In 2016 and 2023, approximately 81% and 71% of gay individuals, respectively, reported having a personal computer at home, in contrast to 61% and 60% of lesbian individuals in those same years. The data for heterosexual individuals show similar trends, with 51% of heterosexual men and 44% of heterosexual women owning a personal computer during the corresponding periods (Table 6).

**Table 6**. Access to durable consumer goods for homosexual and heterosexual workers in Brazil – 2016 and 2023

| | 2016 | | | | 2023 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Homosexual | | Heterosexual | | Homosexual | | Heterosexual | |
| | M | W | M | W | M | W | M | W |
| Mobile phone (%) | | | | | | | | |
| No | 0.56 | 0.37 | 4.96 | 4.91 | 0.21 | 0.00 | 1.48 | 1.47 |
| More than one | 99.44 | 99.63 | 95.04 | 95.09 | 99.79 | 100.00 | 98.52 | 98.53 |
| Landline phone (%) | | | | | | | | |
| No | 58.38 | 60.55 | 63.81 | 63.67 | 93.71 | 93.34 | 89.55 | 89.52 |
| Yes | 41.62 | 39.45 | 36.19 | 36.33 | 6.29 | 6.66 | 10.45 | 10.48 |
| Personal computer (%) | | | | | | | | |
| No | 19.01 | 38.76 | 48.86 | 48.7 | 29.12 | 40.62 | 55.78 | 55.66 |
| Yes | 80.99 | 61.24 | 51.14 | 51.3 | 70.88 | 59.38 | 44.22 | 44.34 |
| Internet access (%) | | | | | | | | |
| No | 20.3 | 17.36 | 31.89 | 31.79 | 3.20 | 1.80 | 6.16 | 6.14 |
| Yes | 79.7 | 82.64 | 68.11 | 68.21 | 96.80 | 98.20 | 93.84 | 93.86 |
| Refrigerator (%) | | | | | | | | |
| No | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1.20 | 1.15 | 1.73 | 1.67 | 0.99 | 0.98 |
| One | 41.50 | 53.52 | 50.80 | 50.72 | 34.92 | 41.65 | 45.14 | 45.06 |
| Two or more | 58.50 | 46.48 | 48.00 | 48.13 | 63.35 | 56.68 | 53.87 | 53.96 |
| Washing machine (%) | | | | | | | | |
| No | 21.16 | 30.97 | 32.64 | 32.45 | 18.96 | 27.02 | 25.15 | 25.02 |
| Yes | 78.84 | 69.03 | 67.36 | 67.55 | 81.04 | 72.98 | 74.85 | 74.98 |
| Television (%) | | | | | | | | |
| Thin screen and CRT | 3.57 | 9.5 | 11.75 | 11.79 | 1.34 | 0.10 | 1.93 | 1.93 |
| Thin screen | 78.59 | 61.51 | 57.23 | 57.34 | 92.61 | 93.03 | 88.78 | 88.87 |
| CRT | 16.33 | 28.83 | 29.29 | 29.17 | 2.60 | 2.80 | 5.72 | 5.70 |
| Does not have | 1.51 | 0.16 | 1.73 | 1.7 | 3.45 | 4.07 | 3.57 | 3.50 |
| Motorcycle (%) | | | | | | | | |
| No | 93.18 | 77.27 | 73.14 | 73.17 | 83.68 | 76.66 | 69.06 | 69.09 |
| Yes | 6.82 | 22.73 | 26.86 | 26.83 | 16.32 | 23.34 | 30.94 | 30.91 |
| Automobile (%) | | | | | | | | |
| No | 93.18 | 77.27 | 73.14 | 73.17 | 41.39 | 51.62 | 38.68 | 38.55 |
| Yes | 6.82 | 22.73 | 26.86 | 26.83 | 58.61 | 48.38 | 61.32 | 61.45 |

**Source:** Based on PNAD-C from 2016 and 2023 (IBGE, 2025b).

**Notes:** (a) M: man; W: woman; (b) The values were corrected for 2023 based on the Broad Consumer Price Index (IPCA).

Despite the decline in personal computer ownership, internet access has become increasingly widespread. On average, 68% of heterosexual individuals had internet access in 2016, rinsing to 94% in 2023, compared to 81% and 98% among homosexual individuals in the same years. However, widespread internet access does not necessarily indicate ownership of a personal computer. This discrepancy may be explained by the growing reliance on mobile phones for internet connectivity, as the proliferation of mobile devices has paralleled the gradual decline in personal computer ownership (Table 6).

Regarding white-good, less than 1% of individuals, on average, lack a refrigerator at home, with the majority own models with two or more doors. Washing machines are also widely available, with gay and lesbian individuals demonstrating the highest rates of ownership. Television ownership is nearly universal across all groups, irrespective of sexual orientation and gender, with flat-screen models being the most common (Table 6). Nevertheless, economic disparities remain, particularly among LGBTQIAPN+ individuals, who experience a 15% higher poverty rate compared to their heterosexual counterparts. This economic inequality directly affects their capacity to acquire durable goods and obtain adequate housing, thereby reinforcing material disparities (Romero; Goldberg; Vasquez, 2020).

These patterns partially align with international research but also reveal disparities specific to the Brazilian context. Although Barreto, Sandoval, and Cortés (2010) reported minimal consumption differences by sexual orientation in Bogotá, significant gender-based disparities in technology access are observed in the Brazilian data—particularly regarding personal computer ownership (71% among gay men versus 59% among lesbians; Table 6). Klawitter (2008) similarly identified differentiated consumption priorities among same-sex couples. However, the current results diverge from the U.S.-based evidence presented by Schneebaum and Badgett (2019), particularly concerning the determinants of poverty among lesbian households. While their analysis emphasizes household composition as a central explanatory factor, the Brazilian context suggests that structural barriers—such as persistent inequalities in education and digital inclusion—remain influential even among higher-income homosexual individuals (Figure 1).

The data on personal transportation – specifically automobiles and motorcycles – indicate significant variation across population groups. A clear gender-based pattern is observed in motorcycle ownership, with men, particularly gay men, reporting the highest percentages of households without a motorcycle: 93% in 2016 and 84% in 2023, respectively (Table 6).

Motorcycles are characterized by relatively lower acquisition and maintenance costs, making them a more accessible mode of transport compared to automobiles. As of December 2023, 64% of drivers licensed in category A (motorcycle only), 71% in category AB (motorcycle and automobile), and 50% in category B (automobile only) in Brazil were male. This distribution reflects a correlation between the predominance of male motorcycle owners (both gay and heterosexual) and the licensing patterns observed across these categories (Ministério da infraestrutura, 2025).

In 2016, heterosexual men and women were the predominant automobile owners, each representing 27% of the population. By 2023, heterosexual women had become the largest group of automobile owners, representing 61.45% of sample, closely followed by heterosexual men at 30.32% (Table 6). In 2023, women comprised for 36%, 29%, and 50% of licensed drivers in categories A (motorcycle only), AB (motorcycle and automobile), and B (automobile only), respectively, indicating that men continued to to represent the majority of licensed drivers (Ministério da infraestrutura, 2025). This distribution is consistent with the patterns of male vehicle ownership documented in Table 5.

In summary, both homosexual and heterosexual exhibit generally adequate housing conditions, contributing to a more dignified standard of living, as guaranteed by national and international legal frameworks (Nações Unidas, 1948, 1992; Brasil, 1988). Over the years, availability of infrastructure (Table 5) and the ownership of specific goods (Table 6) have undergone substantial changes, with some notable deficiencies remaining in certain households. This trend is particularly evident with regard to personal computers, mobile phones, and internet access (Table 6), especially in the context of a post-COVID-19 pandemic, which underscores the influence of evolving work models and the increasing reliance on digital technologies during this period.

### *Housing conditions, access to durable consumer goods and sexual orientation*

HCI and DCGI were estimated to assess whether housing infrastructure and access to durable consumer goods could be considered "optimal", as outlined in Section 3.2. The HCI exhibited no consistent pattern over time and revealed three distinct trends: (iii) periods in which the index varied by group, as observed from 2016 to 2018 and 2022 to 2023; (ii) periods of decline across all groups, such as from 2018 to 2019; and (iii) periods of uniform improvement from 2019 to 2022 (Figure 3).


**Figure 3.** Household Condition Index (HCI) according to sexual orientation in Brazil – 2016 to 2023

**Source:** Based on PNAD-C from 2016 to 2023 (IBGE, 2025b).

**Note:** The index values for heterosexual men and women are similar, causing the lines representing heterosexual women to overlap with those of heterosexual men.

The HCI was more sensitive among homosexual individuals, particularly gay men, than among heterosexual individuals (Figure 3). This sensitivity may be associated with Brazil's political, social, and economic context during the period, marked by low GDP growth, high unemployment rates (Ibge, 2025a; Ipeadata, 2022), and a reduction in average hourly earnings (Figure 1) over the period.

Lesbian individuals recorded the highest HCI values across the entire period, peaking at 0.826 in 2017. Heterosexual women and men reached their highest scores in the same year, with values of 0.797. 0.800 and 0.796 (Figure 3), respectively, while gay men attained their peak index in 2018, with a value of 0.787.

In contrast, the lowest HCI values were observed among gay individuals until 2019, and thereafter among heterosexual individuals men and women. In 2019, the lowest recorded index values were 0.781 for lesbians, 0.732 for gay men, 0.733 for heterosexual men, and 0.734 for heterosexual women (Figure 3). These data suggest that higher income levels (Figure 1) do not necessarily translate into improvements in housing infrastructure. Nonetheless, HCI values remained relatively high across all groups, consistently exceeding 0.70 throughout the entire period (Figure 3).

Another factor potentially influencing the HCI (Figure 3) is the type of housing arrangement. While most individuals reside in houses (Table 4), gays and lesbians individuals predominantly occupy rental properties, whereas heterosexuals individuals are more likely to own their homes outright (Figure 2).

The DCGI values were consistently lower than HCI scores throughout the analysis (Figures 3 and 4). The index indicated that gay individuals had greater access to durable consumer goods in all years except for 2016. The highest DCGI value for gay men was 0.271 in 2017, whereas lesbians reached their highest score in 2016 (0.229). Heterosexual men and women both recorded their peak values in 2018, each at 0.188 (Figure 4).

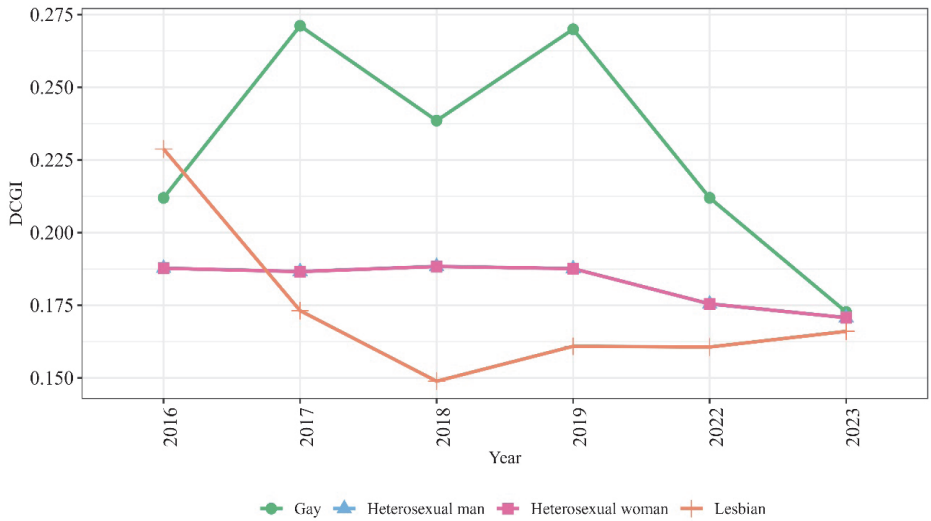


**Figure 4.** Durable consumer goods index (DCGI) according to sexual orientation in Brazil – 2016 to 2023

**Source:** Based on PNAD-C from 2016 to 2023 (IBGE, 2025b).

**Note:** The index values for heterosexual men and women are similar, causing the lines representing heterosexual women to overlap with those of heterosexual men.

At the other end of the distribution, lesbian individuals exhibited the lowest DCGI scores in all years except 2016, with a minimum value of 0.149 in 2018. Gay men reported the lowest value in 2016 (0.212). Heterosexual groups presented more consistent values across the period, with only a slight decline observed by 2022 (Figure 4). These outcomes may reflect income disparities (Figure 1), as gay individuals reported the highest income levels, whereas lesbian individuals experienced a progressive decline over time. This pattern is consistent with the findings of Dilmaghani and Dean (2020), who

noted that institutional discrimination and market segmentation can restrict access for LGBTQIAPN+ individuals, even when income is relatively high.

The DCGI hierarchy – gay individuals > heterosexuals > lesbians – partially mirrors findings by Klawitter (2008), who emphasized the role of bargaining power in same-sex couples' asset accumulation. However, the considerable disadvantage observed among Brazilian lesbians, as opposed to the conclusions of Schneebaum and Badgett (2019) concerning poverty among lesbian couples, may reflect compounded gender-based obstacles such as wage inequality (Figure 1) or unmeasured caregiving responsibilities.

Figures 3 and 4 further indicate that HCI and DCGI values were more stable among heterosexual men and women, while the values for gay and lesbian individuals displayed greater volatility, particularly in the case of gay men. This observation is consistent with Schneebaum and Badgett (2019), who reported heightened material inequality among lesbian households. The observed volatility may also be attributed to structural discrimination, as noted by Klawitter (2008), which limits access to goods and services in more conservative regions. Other contributing factors include labor market discrimination, legal and civil rights dynamics, and broader cultural or regional attitudes toward LGBTQIAPN+ populations.

Although average levels of housing infrastructure and access to durable consumer goods appear similar across groups (as discussed in Section 3.2), the HCI and DCGI highlight diverging realities (Figures 3 and 4). These indexes were more responsive to Brazil's economic, social, and political environment during the analyzed period, a time when the country had not fully recovered from the 2016–2019 recession. This period was marked by stagnant or negative growth, rising unemployment, and expansion of informal labor markets. Simultaneously, key public policies targeting women and LGBTQIAPN+ populations were dismantled, thereby reducing institutional support for vulnerable groups (Quadrado; Ferreira, 2019; Silva; Luppi; Veras, 2020).

Examples of such policy regressions include the dissolution of the National Council to Combat LGBTQIAPN+ Discrimination under Decree No. 9.759 (Irineu; Lopes, 2020; Brasil, 2021) and Ordinance No. 2046, which abolished various monitoring and evaluation bodies responsible for overseeing public policy implementation. Committees focused on gender[6],

6 The gender committee was created in 2018 and was responsible for proposing measures to prevent gender violence against ministry employees and indicating actions to promote equality in the government body. The restraint of violence was extended to transsexual women (Brasil, 2015; Irineu; Lopes, 2020).

diversity and inclusion[7] were among those eliminated (IBDFAM, 2019; Irineu; Lopes, 2020). In summary, this period in Brazil was characterized by conservative governance, limited economic recovery, persistently high unemployment, and sluggish growth, all of which were reflected in the decline of the indexes, particularly the HCI in 2019 and the DCGI in both 2016 and 2019.

The elevated volatility of the HCI among homosexual individuals is consistent with the results of Martell and Roncolato (2023), who found that households headed by lesbians, bisexual women, and bisexual men in the United States were more susceptible to economic shocks during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, whereas their findings linked this vulnerability to employment instability, the Brazilian data point to additional structural factors—such as housing insecurity and uneven regional policies—as primary drivers of material instability (Figure 2).

The lowest indices recorded between 2019 and 2023, particularly the HCI, be attributed to the exacerbation of pre-existing inequalities during the COVID-19 pandemic. As noted by Schneebaum and Badgett (2019), periods of economic crisis tend to disproportionately affect marginalized populations, including gays and lesbians.

Regression analysis of the HCI and DCGI indexes against the independent variables outlined in Table 4 reveals a negative relationship between sexual orientation and both indices (Figure 5). In general, , regardless of the index, heterosexual men and women displayed positive coefficients, suggesting a favorable effect, whereas gay and lesbian individuals exhibited negative coefficients, indicating a disadvantage associated with sexual orientation (Figure 5).

These negative coefficients align with Hellyer's (2021) findings regarding rental market discrimination against same-sex couples in rural areas of the United States. Nevertheless, the Brazilian case appears to involve broader structural mechanisms, such as unequal access to credit and spatial segregation, which underscore the need for targeted policy measures beyond anti-discrimination legislation.

For instance, in 2018, heterosexual men and women experienced increases of 4.45% and 3.50%, respectively, in the HCI. In contrast, gay men and lesbian women faced reductions of 3.96%, 4.52%, and 3.52%, respectively, attributable to sexual orientation (Figure 5). A similar pattern

7 Established in 2018, the diversity and inclusion committee had the function of promoting sexual diversity and protecting LGBTQIA+ people within the ministry (Brasil, 2015; Irineu; Lopes, 2020).

was observed for the DCGI, with heterosexual women showing a 7.26% increase, while gay and lesbian individuals recorded declines of 4.18% and 6.96%, respectively.


**Figure 5.** Ordinary Least Squares regressions according to sexual orientation in Brazil – 2016 to 2023

**Source:** Based on PNAD-C from 2016 to 2023 (IBGE, 2025b).

**Notes:** Only statistically significant values were plotted.

These outcomes support the patterns shown in Figures 3 and 4. The observed volatility in HCI and DCGI values corresponds with the negative coefficients obtained through regression, reinforcing the conclusion that sexual orientation has a significant impact on material living conditions and access to durable goods. These findings indicate that sexual orientation may significantly impact both housing conditions and overall quality of life, as evidenced by disparities in access to durable consumer goods. Moreover, these disparities may be linked to additional factors not addressed in this study, including workplace discrimination and the influence of cultural, social, and regional variables.

Whereas previous studies have primarily examined the direct effects of economic crises on income, the current analysis expands this perspective by demonstrating the broader impact on housing infrastructure and access to consumer goods, particularly among economically and socially marginalized groups. This offers a more comprehensive understanding of the indirect effects of political and economic disruptions on material well-being.

**Final considerations**

This article aimed to capture the different housing conditions among homosexual and heterosexual in Brazil from 2016 to 2023. To understand who homosexual and heterosexual couples are, descriptive statistics indicated that income levels varied across family arrangements. A persistent gender hierarchy was observed throughout the period under analysis, with men consistently earning more than women. A similar pattern was found across sexual orientation: gay men reported the highest income levels, surpassing those of heterosexual men, while heterosexual women exhibited the lowest earnings.

Although the general housing conditions and access to durable goods appeared relatively similar across the groups, significant disparities emerge when assessed through the the HCI and DCGI. These indexes presented more stable values among heterosexual men and women, whereas greater variability was observed among gay and lesbian individuals, particularly gay men. Lesbians individuals reported the highest HCI values, while gay men demonstrated the highest levels of access to durable goods, as measured by the DCGI. These patterns reflect a nuanced hierarchy of inequalities shaped by both gender and sexual orientation.

Regression analysis of the HCI and DCGI indicates that sexual orientation negatively affects housing conditions and access to durable goods, with negative coefficients observed for gay and lesbian individuals, in contrast to the positive coefficients associated with heterosexual individuals.. The volatility observed in the index values aligns with these regression results, suggesting that sexual orientation constitutes a significant factor in explaining disparities in material living conditions, alongside economic, regional, sectoral, and individual characteristics.

The analysis was conducted during a period marked by strong conservative forces in both government and civil society, slow economic recovery, high unemployment, and low growth rates in Brazil. These conditions were reflected in the index values, with the lowest HCI levels recorded in 2019 and the lowest DCGI scores in 2016 and 2019, regardless of population group.

Despite certain limitations, the article offers important contributions. First, the identification of sexual orientation was based on a proxy variable – cohabitation with same-sex partners – which restricts the analysis to a specific subset of the LGBTQIAPN+ population and may lead to overestimation of the indexes. Second, the HCI and DCGI do not account for regional cost-of-living differences or the quality of durable goods. Third, the absence of an intersectional analysis prevents the examination of how race, class, and sexual orientation may interact to compound disadvantage. Nonetheless, the results provide a valuable foundation for designing public policies that promote equitable access to adequate housing and consumer goods.

The implementation of inclusive housing and credit policies has the potential not only to reduce material inequalities but also to promote greater social integration. The findings underscore the importance of developing targeted public policies aimed at ensuring equal access to infrastructure and durable goods as a means of fostering social and economic justice for the LGBTQIAPN+ population in Brazil.

Finally, the study provides a foundation for future further investigation into how economic inequalities extend beyond income to affect other dimensions of daily life. Further investigations should also examine regional variations, considering that areas with progressive policies tend to offer greater inclusion, whereas rural and conservative regions often exhibit higher levels of bias.

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