

NON-BINARY PEOPLE IN THE LABOR MARKET: AN INTEGRATIVE LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The article explores the experiences and challenges faced by non-binary individuals in the workplace. Non-binarism refers to gender identities that transcend the male-female binary, challenging the cisnormative structural norms of society. It is estimated that 1.19% of the Brazilian population identifies as non-binary, representing around 2.4 million people. Globally, this number could reach 160 million. The exclusion faced by these individuals in the labor market is exacerbated by organizational practices based on a binary view of gender. Norms such as bathroom segregation, promotions, and dress code policies perpetuate the marginalization of non-binary people. Furthermore, organizational literature still pays little attention to their experiences and challenges. Therefore, the study adopts Queer Theory and the notion of gender performativity to critically analyze the existing literature and discuss ways of inclusion. The review found 17 articles addressing the topic, highlighting the marginalization of these individuals and the lack of inclusive policies in global organizations. The research suggests that companies should promote gender diversity training and reconsider diversity management in the workplace. The review points to the need for more studies investigating how exorsexism manifests in the corporate environment and the legal implications of the omission of gender discrimination.

Keywords: Non-Binary People. Labor Market. Inclusion. Organizations.

Edited in Portuguese and English. Original version in Portuguese.

Article Version Presented at the VI International Conference in Management and Accounting (ICMA), from October 28 to 30, 2024, online.

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Received on 03/06/2025. **Revised on** 03/23/2024. **Accepted on** 04/07/2024 by Prof. Dr. Rogério João Lunkes (Editor-in-Chief). **Published on** 05/06/2025.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Non-binarism conceptually refers to the gender identity of individuals who experience gender beyond the binary, that is, female - girl - woman as opposed to male - boy - man (Barbosa, 2023). It is an identity that transcends the traditional dichotomy and the biodeterministic expectations of society (Preciado, 2022). In this sense, non-binary people may: i) not identify with either the female or male gender, ii) identify with both binary genders simultaneously, or iii) identify more closely with one gender than the other (Losty & O'Connor, 2018). The term “non-binary” operates as an umbrella concept encompassing various gender identities that do not align with the gender binary (Darwin, 2020).

In Brazil, approximately 1.19% of the population identifies as non-binary, corresponding to around 2.4 million individuals. Globally, it is estimated that 2% of the population identifies as non-binary, representing approximately 160 million people (Spizzirri, Eufrásio & Lima, 2021). These are individuals who possess various personal characteristics, including gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, nationality, socioeconomic status, education, and life trajectory, and who challenge the binary cisnormativity through their existence.

Cisnormativity is the set of structural norms in society that aim to naturalize binary cisgenderism as the only way to experience gender (Scott, 2017). These norms manifest in various social environments, from family spaces and relationships to educational settings and the labor market, which constantly reproduce stereotypical views, such as: blue is for boys and pink is for girls; boys are adventurous and bold, girls are delicate and well-behaved. These are discursive examples of gender technologies that operate norms on bodies, defining roles that determine power according to the culturally and discursively established binary criterion (Fausto-Sterling, 2006).

Subverting binary cisnormativity, non-binarism consists of recognizing that gender experiences are diverse and do not conform to the hegemonic standard constructed from the method of sexual difference (Fausto-Sterling, 2006). Although the topic of “non-binarism” gained more attention from the media, politicians, and public debates at the end of the 20th century and in the first two decades of the 21st century, the experiences of individuals who do not fit within the gender binary have existed for centuries (Segato, 2012; Preciado, 2022). In the Americas, prior to colonization, indigenous peoples already recognized additional gender categories—one example being the two-spirit indigenous people, whose gender identity does not align with the male and female binary (Miller, 1999).

The current Western gender binary model, which distinguishes identities as male and female, stems from the legacy of Eurocentric-Catholic colonization. This colonization oppressed indigenous peoples who did not follow the European cisnormative and binary norms (Segato, 2012). Since the colonization in 1500, the binary standard has influenced and continues to influence the construction of knowledge in the Social Sciences, medical fields, and organizational studies, shaping bodies, epistemologies, and social relations (Nascimento, 2021; Preciado, 2022).

Since 2015, groups of non-binary people from various countries, including Brazil, have mobilized in search of recognition of their gender identities in social environments, including political, academic, and organizational settings (Silva, 2021). This mobilization arose in response to the exclusion and social erasure faced by non-binary people, resulting from the cisheteronormative binary standards promoted by conservative cisgender men and women and, paradoxically, reproduced by conservative groups of trans men and women aligned with the policies and ideologies of the far-right, who appropriate and demonize non-binarism (Butler, 2024).

Society - when it considers gender identity as natural, equating sex and gender as synonyms, and assuming it as the universal standard fosters the exclusion of non-binary people in various environments (Preciado, 2022). In the organizational context, the binary division of gender

in the labor market reproduces sexual difference, resulting in the lack of opportunities for access, retention, and professional advancement for gender dissenters in organization (Acker, 1990).

The experiences of non-binary people in organizational environments differ from those of cisgender men and women, as these environments are constructed from a binary perspective regarding: i) physiological needs (only male and female restrooms); ii) internal promotion processes (exclusive opportunities for men and women); iii) identification badges and clothing; among other limitations that restrict environments based on the compulsory gender binary that operates as an organizational rule (Donders, 2020).

In the organizational literature, discussions about the experiences and mechanisms of inclusion and/or exclusion of non-binary people are still in their early stages (Ozturk & Tatli, 2015; Fletcher & Marvell, 2022; Hennekam & Köllen, 2023), as the cisheteronormativity that governs organizational structures also operates in research within the business field (Jones, 2023). The silencing produced by the cisgender and binary standard is present in various social environments, excluding dissenting bodies from scientific research, through social relationships, to the formal labor market (Nascimento, 2021). Additionally, studies about non-binary people are generally conducted about them and not with or by them, often reflecting a restriction where they are understood as subjects of study, respondents to surveys, and interview participants, rather than as producers of knowledge about themselves.

Given the above, considering the non-binary invisibility present in business research and organizations (Fletcher & Marvell, 2022; Gutierrez & Lordello, 2023), this article aims to answer the following guiding question: How does the organizational literature present discussions on non-binary people in the formal labor market? The objective is, therefore, to map organizational studies that discuss non-binary gender in the formal labor market globally, to identify and problematize the mechanisms of inclusion and/or exclusion that operate in work environments.

Thus, this article seeks to contribute to organizational literature and gender studies by updating knowledge about non-binary people in organizations through an Integrative Literature Review. Additionally, this study has practical implications in providing an informational basis for the development of inclusive practices and policies for the retention and professional advancement of non-binary people in organizations.

2 METHODOLOGICAL TRAJECTORY

Considering the invisibility of non-binary people in organizational literature and the labor market (Gutierrez & Lordello, 2023), this study conducts an Integrative Literature Review (ILR), recommended for emerging studies (Torraco, 2005). This is qualitative, critical, and exploratory research. The reviewed studies were critically analyzed based on the methodological contributions of Torraco (2016), who advises on the need to evaluate the main discussions addressed in each study through a critical and analytical perspective.

Given the above, for the development of the research, considering the need for depth on the investigated topic, the study relied on Queer Theory, with an emphasis on gender performativity (Butler, 2002) and gender technologies (Preciado, 2022). According to Butler (2002), gender identities are relational, discursively constructed, and shaped by cultural practices the gender is performative, as it is a constant process of “doing gender.” In this regard, Preciado (2022) advances the discussion on gender by proposing an analysis of somatopolitics and the technologies that operate on individuals, relating gender, power, and bodily materiality through pharmaco-pornographic practices.

For the development of the ILR, the step-by-step approach proposed by Torraco (2016) was used, which is a flexible model suited to the specificities of each study. The model is divided into five stages: i) definition of the topic and research question; ii) definition of databases, inclusion-exclusion criteria, and key terms; iii) pre-selection and selection of studies; iv) synthesis

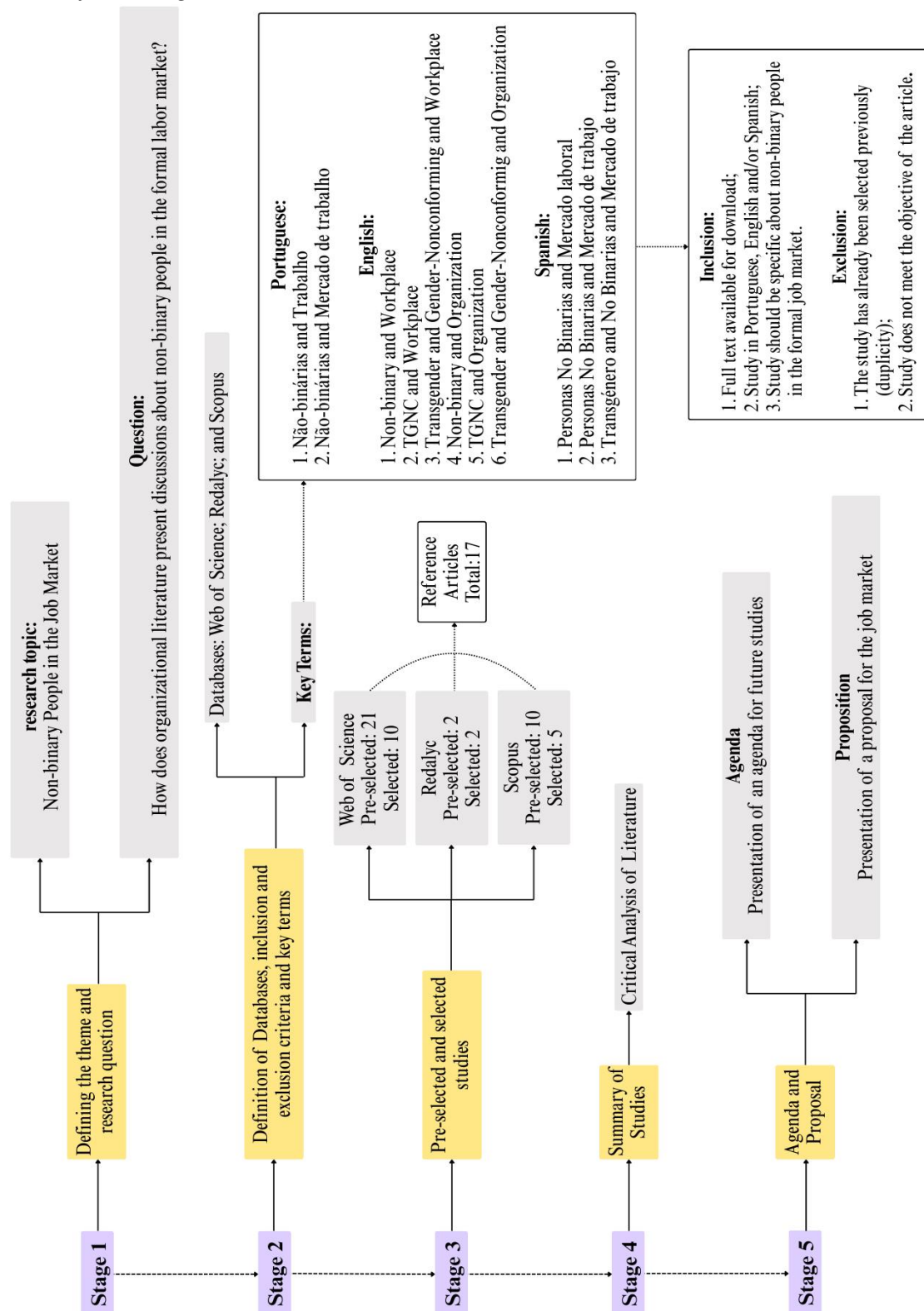
of the studies included in the review; and v) construction of an agenda for future studies and the proposal of inclusion mechanisms for the labor market.

In the first stage, the following research question was defined: How does the organizational literature present discussions on non-binary people in the formal labor market? Based on this guiding question, searches were conducted for scientific articles published in journals with no geographical restrictions in three databases: i) Web of Science; ii) Redalyc; and iii) Scopus. Subsequently, for the search of articles in the selected databases, six descriptors in English, two descriptors in Portuguese, and three descriptors in Spanish were used with the Boolean operator AND.

No initial publication period was established as a criterion to obtain the maximum number of possible results, thus identifying from which year the topic began to be researched/published. As a final date, works published until June 2024 were included, applying the filter "peer-reviewed scientific articles."

After filtering, 33 studies were pre-selected based on the inclusion criteria: i) Full text available for download; ii) Study in Portuguese, English, and/or Spanish; iii) Study must specifically include the experiences of non-binary people in the formal labor market; and exclusion criteria: i) The study was previously selected (duplication); ii) Study does not meet the article's objective. The pre-selected articles were then read, and 16 studies were excluded, totaling 17 articles for this review, as presented in step 3 of Figure 1:

Figure 1
Flowchart of the Integrative Literature Review



Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

The synthesis of the studies was made by raising the methodological characterization of each research. Based on the synthesis of the reviewed articles, the guidance of Torraco (2016) was followed regarding the necessary steps for the critical analysis of the findings, which includes: i)

analysis of the strengths of the literature; ii) analysis of the weaknesses of the literature; iii) analysis of omitted and imprecise information (the unspoken), followed by a critical discussion of the literature. Finally, in step 5, an agenda for future studies was presented, along with proposals for inclusive business actions for work environments.

3 NON-BINARY PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS: AN ANALYSIS OF ACADEMIC PRODUCTION

In this section, we present the studies reviewed that discuss non-binary people in organizations. The 17 studies were organized in chronological order, from the oldest to the most recent. The order of information in the Matrix of Study Synthesis, as shown in Table 1, is: i) Title; ii) Year of Publication; iii) Objective; iv) Approach; and v) Method.

Table 1
Studies Selected for the ILR

Authorship	Matrix of Study Synthesis
Marinho (2017)	Title: Trans Youth(s): Subjectivities and Possible Bodies in the World of Work? Year of Publication: 2017. Objective: Understand the possibilities and impossibilities of trans youth constituting themselves as workers and existing in the world as bodies that subvert gender norms. Approach: Qualitative. Method: Theoretical Reflection
O'Shea (2019)	Title: Cutting my dick off. Year of Publication: 2019. Objective: Explore the experiences of transgender and gender non-conforming (TGNC) individuals undergoing gender confirmation surgery and how this process is influenced by social and institutional factors. Approach: Qualitative. Method: Autoethnography.
O'Shea (2020)	Title: Working at gender? An autoethnography. Year of Publication: 2020. Objective: To explore the concept of work in relation to gender, particularly focusing on the experience of unemployment and underemployment. Approach: Qualitative. Method: Autoethnography.
Waite (2021)	Title: Should I Stay or Should I Go? Employment Discrimination and Workplace Harassment against Transgender and Other Minority Employees in Canada's Federal Public Service. Year of Publication: 2021. Objective: Investigate the experiences of employment discrimination and workplace harassment faced by transgender and other minority employees in Canada's federal public service. Approach: Quantitative. Method: Multivariate Logistic Regression Model.
Huffman et al. (2021)	Title: Workplace support and affirming behaviors: Moving toward a transgender, gender diverse, and non-binary friendly workplace. Year of Publication: 2021. Objective: To address the gap in the literature on workplace support perceptions and affirming behaviors of transgender, gender-diverse, and non-binary (TGDNB) workers. Approach: Qualitative and Quantitative. Method: Structural Equation Modeling (AMOS 24) and Descriptive Analysis.
Johnson et al. (2021)	Title: What's in a pronoun: Exploring gender pronouns as an organizational identity-safety cue among sexual and gender minorities. Year of Publication: 2021. Objective: Investigate the impact of gender pronoun usage in organizational contexts on organizational attitudes and perceptions of LGBTQ representation. Approach: Quantitative. Method: Experimental.
Moulin de Souza & Parker (2022)	Title: Practices of freedom and the disruption of binary genders: Thinking With Trans. Year of Publication: 2022. Objective: Explore practices of freedom in organizational studies, particularly focusing on non-binary trans people and their capacity for resistance within the binary gender order. Approach: Qualitative. Method: Reflexão Crítica.
García Johnson & Otto (2022)	Title: Illegitimate tasks: obstacles to trans equality at work. Year of Publication: 2022. Objective: Explore the relationship between the reported frequency of illegitimate tasks performed at work (FREQUIT) and gender identity among cisgender individuals and those with transgender or gender non-conforming (TGNC) identities. Approach: Quantitative. Method: Experimental.

Melo et al. (2022)	Title: Diversity in the Organizational Environment: Inclusion and Retention of Transgender People in the Brazilian Labor Market. Year of Publication: 2022. Objective: Identify the main difficulties faced by transgender people in their inclusion and retention in the labor market. Approach: Quantitative. Method: Descritiva.
Goryunova et al. (2021)	Title: Exploring workplace experiences of transgender individuals in the USA. Year of Publication: 2022. Objective: Contribute to the understanding of workplace experiences and access to career improvement opportunities for transgender employees and inform organizational leaders about opportunities to create a fully inclusive workplace. Approach: Qualitative. Method: Phenomenological Research.
Fletcher & Swierczynski (2023)	Title: Non-binary gender identity expression in the workplace and the role of supportive HRM practices, co-worker allyship, and job autonomy. Year of Publication: 2023. Objective: Investigate how non-binary people express their gender identity in the workplace, using the theories of self-description and self-verification. Approach: Qualitative e Quantitative. Method: Recrutamento através do Prolific Academic e Análise de Conteúdo.
Suhomlinova et al. (2024)	Title: Rethinking gender diversity: Transgender and gender nonconforming people and gender as constellation. Year of Publication: 2023. Objective: Expand the conceptualization of gender in organizational contexts, considering the lives of transgender and gender non-conforming (TGNC) individuals to illuminate the complexity of gender diversity in organizations. Approach: Qualitative. Method: Dynamic Nominalism.
Anderson (2023)	Title: Cisnormative symbolic colonization and transgender and gender nonconforming individuals in the workplace. Year of Publication: 2023. Objective: Explore the life experiences of transgender and LGBTQ individuals in the workforce, focusing on their social interactions, beliefs, identities, and social practices. Approach: Qualitative. Method: Life History Narrative.
Hennekam & Köllen (2023)	Title: Trapped in cisnormative and binarist gendered constraints at work? How HR managers react to and manage gender transitions over time. Year of Publication: 2023. Objective: Examine how employees undergoing gender transition perceive the readiness and willingness of employer organizations to handle gender transitions and identify the barriers that prevent these employees from expressing their gender in the workplace in the way they prefer. Approach: Qualitative. Method: Semi-structured interview.
Mehta & Kappal (2024)	Title: Good, bad and ugly experiences of non-binary gender inclusion at the workplace to frame employee value proposition. Year of Publication: 2024. Objective: Evaluate the experience of non-binary (NB) employees in the context of Employee Value Propositions (EVP) in Indian companies and make suggestions for organizations to align their gender interventions with the EVP framework. Approach: Qualitative. Method: Semi-structured Interviews.
Trotter & Yates (2024)	Title: Belonging beyond the binary: the positive experiences of visible non-binary and genderqueer individuals in the workplace. Year of Publication: 2024. Objective: Explore how the positive experiences of non-binary and genderqueer individuals contribute to their sense of belonging in the workplace. Approach: Qualitative. Method: Semi-structured and in-depth interviews.
Enogieru et al. (2024)	Title: Prevalence and correlates of workplace violence: descriptive results from the National Transgender Discrimination Survey. Year of Publication: 2024. Objective: Describe the lifetime prevalence of workplace harassment, physical violence, and sexual assault against transgender and non-binary workers targeted because of their gender identity, and identify correlates of this workplace violence. Approach: Quantitative. Method: Descriptive Cross-sectional Study.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

Of the 17 articles analyzed, 10 use a Qualitative Approach, 5 use a Quantitative Approach, and 2 employ mixed methods (Qualitative and Quantitative). Since there was no delimitation regarding the Year of Publication, it was observed that the scientific discussion on non-binary people in organizations is relatively recent, with the first paper published in 2017.

Considering the number of papers published over the years, based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria of this research, we have: 1 scientific article in 2017, 1 in 2019, 1 in 2020, 3 in 2021, 4 in 2022, 4 in 2023, and 3 until June 2024. There is a modest increase in the published research on non-binary gender identities in organizations. One possible explanation for this phenomenon is the subsumption of non-binary people into scientific discussions on gender identities (Barbosa, 2023).

4 CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

Based on the evidence synthesis proposed by Círico (2024), Table 2 presents the studies with the analyzed phrases in this section. To construct the evidence synthesis, the main discussions made by the authors throughout their research were considered. The decision not to geographically limit the searches allowed the selected articles to encompass various countries, different cultures, and consequently, different perspectives on the topic.

Table 2

Síntese das evidências

Authorship	Evidence Synthesis
Marinho (2017)	The research highlighted that the subjectivity formation of trans youth is historically and culturally constructed through collective processes, where hegemonic gender norms are frequently broken. Trans youth face discrimination and exclusion in the formal labor market, leading them to informal work. However, the telemarketing sector has proven to be an employment niche, despite the degrading working conditions. It was emphasized that the legal name change is crucial for professional inclusion. The study concludes that the presence of trans youth in the labor market reconfigures gender norms, demonstrating resistance and resilience in the face of social and economic adversities.
O'Shea (2019)	The study explores the author's personal experience as a non-binary trans person with gender dysphoria and the process of gender confirmation surgery. The author discusses the violations and the slowness of the process in the United Kingdom, which requires years of repetitive and dehumanizing assessments. The author reflects on the dissatisfaction with the limited gender binary in official medicine, highlighting the desire for a body that does not fit into the male or female gender norms. The study also addresses the psychological and physical impact of the abrupt reduction in hormone treatment, which exacerbated emotional instability and suicidal ideation. The author reports using self-harm as a way to cope with dysphoria and cisnormative oppression, marking the skin with tattoos and scars that symbolize resistance and identity. The research criticizes the pathologization of trans bodies and the societal obsession with maintaining the integrity of gender norms, questioning the need for conformity with cisnormative standards and exploring the complexity of the trans experience in an organizational and social context.
O'Shea (2020)	The autoethnographic study examines the challenges and obstacles faced by non-binary trans people. The author explores throughout the research how the requirement to "pass" as a specific (binary) gender affects their life in both professional and personal contexts. The study also addresses the organizational and social barriers that fuel prejudice against non-binary trans people. Additionally, the author's personal narrative (Autoethnography) highlights the experiences of violence, social exclusion, and economic precariousness that many non-binary trans people face, fueled by policies and legislations that perpetuate stigmas limiting access to safe environments and opportunities in the formal labor market.

Waite (2021)	<p>The research highlights that employees who identify as gender diverse face significantly higher rates of discrimination and harassment in employment compared to cisgender men and women. Among various minority groups, employees identifying as gender diverse report the highest rates of discrimination and harassment, surpassed only by those with disabilities. The research further reveals that the intersection of multiple minority statuses increases the likelihood of discrimination and harassment in the workplace. Additionally, employment discrimination and harassment are strongly correlated with the desire to leave the job, suggesting that promoting greater diversity and tolerance in the workplace could reduce turnover among marginalized employees.</p>
Huffman et al. (2021)	<p>The study reveals that the perception of support in the workplace and affirming behaviors are crucial to improving the experience of transgender, gender-diverse, and non-binary (TGDNB) individuals. Analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data, the study found that the use of affirming pronouns and the availability of safe restrooms were positively related to the perception of support from supervisors, coworkers, and a favorable organizational climate. However, discouraging derogatory comments showed a mixed effect, influencing support from coworkers but not from supervisors. The research suggests that a supportive organizational environment specifically for TGDNB individuals is vital for gender identity openness at work and job and life satisfaction, highlighting the need for training and inclusive policies for managers and supervisors, along with greater institutional and cultural support within organizations.</p>
Johnson et al. (2021)	<p>The research investigates whether the inclusion of gender pronouns in organizational materials acts as an identity-safety signal for sexual and gender minorities. Three experiments and an internal meta-analysis were conducted. The results showed that, compared to the absence of pronouns, the presence of pronouns led to more positive organizational attitudes among predominantly cisgender lesbian, gay, and bisexual participants (Experiment 1) and transgender and gender non-conforming individuals (Experiments 2 and 3). Additionally, the inclusion of pronouns promoted perceptions of procedural justice, employee-manager alliance, which in turn correlated positively with organizational attitudes. The mediational analysis suggested that identity safety mediated the effect of pronouns on organizational attitudes. The inclusion of pronouns was associated with an increase in perceptions of procedural justice and alliance, which promoted more positive attitudes toward the organization.</p>
Moulin de Souza & Parker (2022)	<p>The study analyzes the "practices of freedom" of non-binary trans people, highlighting their ability to resist the intelligibility of normative binary heterosexual gender. Inspired by the works of Michel Foucault and Judith Butler, the study argues that these practices not only transform the trans individuals themselves but also those around them. The text suggests that these practices can be seen as a form of Foucauldian "care of the self," creating new ways of doing gender that are not reduced to "man" or "woman." By problematizing binary gender norms and promoting practices of freedom inside and outside organizations, non-binary trans identities prefigure forms of trans organization that transcend dualisms, opening new possibilities for livable lives.</p>
García Johnson & Otto (2022)	<p>The research explores the relationship between gender identity and illegitimate tasks (IT) in the workplace, focusing on transgender and gender non-conforming (TGNC) individuals. The study revealed that supervisors are more likely to assign IT to TGNC subordinates than to cisgender subordinates, configuring a subtle form of gender harassment. This unequal assignment of tasks harms the career and well-being of TGNC individuals. Furthermore, the results indicated that, despite TGNC individuals having lower perceptions of task illegitimacy (PERTI) and consequently reporting a lower frequency of performing IT (FREQUIT), they still show higher levels of burnout and greater intent to leave their jobs compared to their cisgender counterparts.</p>

Melo et al. (2022)	The study reveals that the inclusion and retention of non-binary trans people in the formal labor market in Brazil face multiple challenges. The main barriers identified include prejudice and discrimination during the recruitment and selection process, with 59% of participants reporting that they are rarely or never called for interviews, even when they have the necessary qualifications. Furthermore, the lack of respect for gender identity, especially regarding restroom use and interactions with coworkers, contributes to a hostile environment that hinders the integration and retention of non-binary trans employees. Only 20% of respondents stated that their gender identity is always respected during the selection processes. The study also highlights the urgent need for training of human resources professionals and employees to promote a more inclusive and respectful environment. The results suggest that companies that adopt inclusive policies and promote diversity may benefit from more committed and satisfied teams, which can lead to better organizational performance.
Goryunova et al. (2021)	The research explores the work experiences of gender non-conforming individuals in the U.S., highlighting the persistence of cissexism and its adverse impact on their experiences in the workplace and access to career development opportunities. Participants reported that discrimination and marginalization are frequent, such as being fired, having promotions denied, or not being hired due to their gender identity or expression. The research emphasizes the need for inclusive organizational practices that consider the experiences of non-binary trans employees and recommends support policies, such as gender-neutral restrooms, inclusive healthcare plans, and diversity training for all levels of the organization.
Fletcher & Swierczynski (2023)	The research investigates how non-binary people express their gender identity in the workplace, using self-discrepancy and self-verification theories. The study, which includes a mixed Quantitative/Qualitative survey with 160 non-binary workers in the UK and the USA, reveals that these individuals express their identity through physical appearance, clothing, gestures, language, and other communication signals. However, many perceive a moderate discrepancy between their current expression and their ideal expression. This discrepancy is smaller in organizations that promote HR practices supporting gender identity (such as flexible dress codes and pronoun policies), coworker alliances, and autonomy at work. Thus, HR practices that support gender diversity, allies in the workplace, and greater autonomy at work are crucial to reducing perceived discrepancies and supporting the authentic expression of non-binary gender identity.
Suhomlinova et al. (2024)	The study criticizes the dominant view of gender rooted in binary cisnormativity and suggests that current gender frameworks used in research and organizational practice are inadequate for addressing the diversity of transgender and gender non-conforming (TGNC) identities. Using Hacking's concept of "dynamic nominalism," the research highlights the importance of considering the complexity and variability of gender experiences, going beyond traditional linear and binary perspectives, and suggests a reconceptualization of gender that better reflects the diversity and needs of TGNC people in organizations.

Anderson (2023)	The study analyzes cisnormative symbolic colonization (CSC) in the workplace and how it affects transgender and gender non-conforming (TGNC) individuals. Using a combination of Habermas's communicative action theory and symbolic interactionism, the study reveals that repetitive social practices reinforce cisnormative domination in the workplace. The research demonstrated that cisnormative symbolism prevails in work interactions, leading to discrimination and marginalization of TGNC employees, while the inclusion of trans symbols promotes more inclusive work environments. Bargaining and validation strategies used communicative and strategic actions, often requiring the adoption of cisnormative symbolism to be effective, while symbolic alignment and endorsement of values focused on promoting trans inclusion, resulting in better personal and professional outcome.
Hennekam & Köllen (2023)	The study explores how HR managers handle gender transitions in the workplace over time. The study reveals that HR practices are deeply rooted in cisnormative and binary gender social norms. This results in limited support and acceptance for transgender and non-binary employees. Key issues identified include the lack of organizational knowledge about transgender issues, the need for transgender status to be visible and fit into a male or female category to be intelligible to HR managers, and a temporal decline in support as the transition process progresses. The findings emphasize the need for better HR training and guidelines to effectively and inclusively support employees' undergoing transitions, recognizing the fluid and ongoing nature of gender identity transitions.
Mehta & Kappal (2024)	The research investigates the experiences of non-binary (NB) employees in Indian companies, using qualitative interviews. The findings reveal eight themes that capture the good, bad, and poor experiences of these employees in the context of Employee Value Propositions (EVP). Positive experiences include initial acceptance and support from immediate managers, while negative and poor experiences highlight the lack of continuous support policies, difficulties with identity expression, subtle discrimination, lack of adequate infrastructure (such as gender-neutral restrooms), and non-inclusive insurance and hiring policies. The practical implications suggest the need for regular awareness training, equitable hiring and promotion policies, as well as improvements in infrastructure and benefits to include NB employees. These actions are crucial to promoting genuine and sustainable inclusion in the workplace.
Trotter & Yates (2024)	The study examines the positive experiences of non-binary and genderqueer (NBGQ) individuals in the workplace, highlighting three main themes: allowing authenticity, social support, and the creation of an inclusive culture. Through semi-structured interviews with five participants, the results indicate that NBGQ individuals' authenticity, perceived social support from coworkers, and the proactive creation of inclusive organizational cultures significantly contribute to their sense of belonging at work. The research suggests that identity validation, the use of gender-neutral language, the existence of inclusive policies, and emotional and instrumental support are crucial for creating a welcoming and safe work environment for NBGQ individuals.
Enogieru et al. (2024)	The study examined the prevalence of workplace violence against transgender and non-binary workers using data from the 2008-2009 National Transgender Discrimination Survey (NTDS). The research revealed that violence is more prevalent among transfeminine and non-binary employees, Black individuals, those with lower education levels, and those working in the informal economy, such as in the sex trade. The study highlights the need for workplace violence prevention programs that specifically address gender identity-based violence and provide channels for reporting discrimination and violence.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

Studies investigating gender identities in the context of organizations and/or the formal labor market often treat transgender people as a homogeneous and consolidated identity (Círico, 2024, Galvão & Círico, 2025). Although this may not be intentional, such studies often omit the layers of intersections present in the LGBTQIAPN+ community (Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender people, Queers, Intersex people, Asexuals, Pansexuals, Non-binary, and other identities), as well as in the transgender community itself (Transsexuals, Travestis, Transmasculine, and Non-binary).

The works presented in this section converge on the understanding of the absences and organizational and academic silencing regarding non-binary identities. Based on the proposed synthesis, we adopt the perspective of "the other of the other" by Nascimento (2021), which refers to the position occupied by trans women and travestis in social agendas, expanding it to "the other of the other of the other" when addressing non-binary people. This social, organizational, and epistemic silencing goes beyond transphobia, also encompassing exorsexism, which refers to discrimination against people who do not conform to binary gender norms (Galvão, 2023).

According to Melo et al. (2022), non-binary people occupy a "non-place" both in scientific research and in society. Marinho (2017) highlights that gender dissidents face informal labor because of the cis-binary structures of the formal labor market, which tend to exclude marginalized groups from early on. This informality results in the loss of labor dignity and security both in the present and future. An example of this is pension systems, which exclusively consider cisgender binarism for planned retirement. In this context, the "non-place" also refers to the impossibility of aging with guaranteed rights (Reis, 2022).

To understand the challenges faced by non-binary people in the formal labor market, it is essential to historicize the construction of the binary society and how binarism became consolidated as a gender dichotomy, absorbed by various cultures. This process directly influenced social relations, which were shaped by the understanding of gender dualism (Preciado, 2022). Job vacancies, restrooms, dress codes, and behavior norms associated with male and female gender identities reflect a structurally binary and cisnormative society (Butler, 2002).

The compulsory gender binarism, which places non-binary people at a social, economic, and security disadvantage, was established over centuries by the method of sexual difference (Preciado, 2022). In this method, due to the absence of contemporary clinical and social studies, it was believed that the only possibilities for defining gender were linked to the genital organ at birth (penis or vagina). This method marginalized intersex bodies and gender dissidents for years (Fausto-Sterling, 2006). Before the imposition of sexual difference, the single-sex model prevailed, which assigned the same nomenclature, "phallus," to all genitals (vagina, penis, and ambiguous genitals). It was only after the late 17th century that the binary model began to prevail, catering to the interests of Catholicism, marriage as a contract, and the rise of Enlightenment (Laqueur, 2001).

In global society, the method of sexual difference operates similarly to the Lombrosian effect, distinguishing "naturally" civilized and worthy bodies from those considered unworthy and uncivilized (Cavalcanti, Barbosa & Bicalho, 2018). One of the consequences of this process is pathologization, which serves as justification for hegemonic groups to discriminate against bodies that deviate from the cis-binary norm (O'Shea, 2020). Cisgender people, fitting the dual standard of man and woman, take the category of "natural" for themselves while labeling non-hegemonic groups as deviants from the norm (Prunas, 2019; Butler, 2002).

Being a deviant body from the cis-binary perspective in the organizational context means facing restrictive environments, limited career advancement opportunities, and hostile treatment from colleagues and superiors (García Johnson & Otto, 2022). In the worst-case scenario, this situation culminates in exclusion from the formal labor market (Melo et al., 2022; Waite, 2021). According to O'Shea (2020), social exclusion leads to the economic precariousness of non-binary people. The lack of a formal income source, combined with the stereotypes associated with bodies

that deviate from the cis-binary norm, forces many non-binary people to turn to precarious work, such as prostitution, which further reduces their chances of reintegration into the formal labor market due to stigma (Enogieru et al., 2024).

The studies by O'Shea (2020), Huffman et al. (2021), Melo et al. (2022), Fletcher and Swierczynski (2023), and Mehta and Kappal (2024) converge on a common understanding of the inclusion and acceptance of non-binary people in the formal labor market. These authors emphasize the urgency for organizations to recognize the multiplicity of gender identities and adapt their internal policies. In line with this, Hennekam and Köllen (2023) recommend that organizations promote inclusion, going beyond cis-binarism in human resources management by offering literacy training, especially for cisgender human resources professionals who work at the entry point for new talent.

However, we identify two recurring weaknesses in these studies: the lack of discussions on the legal accountability of organizations and the scarcity of an intersectional approach in analyzing the experiences of non-binary people. Although the texts navigate between proposals, critiques, and the benefits of inclusion, adopting a pedagogical tone, we consider it essential for research to also advance in reflecting on the legal implications for organizations that adopt trans-exclusionary stances, as well as the impacts of intersectional crossings in the lives of these people. When organizations reproduce exorsexist practices—refusing applications from non-binary people, neglecting inclusive actions, or hindering their trajectories—we believe it is crucial to investigate the legal and social repercussions/consequences of such behaviors (Círico & Galvão, 2021).

4.1 Organizational Cis-binarism

The absence of bodies that diverge from cis-binary norms in the formal labor market (Mehta et al., 2024) reveals the inability of the labor system to absorb talents from diverse genders. O'Shea (2020) points out that non-binary trans people, when losing their jobs or being unable to access the formal labor market due to binary and normative gender standards, face not only economic precariousness but also social and emotional exclusion.

Formal employment directly impacts the dignity of the employee, influencing not only the organizational environment but also social relationships, the acquisition of assets, leisure, and physical and mental health (Trotter et al., 2024). When people with dissenting gender identities are excluded from the formal labor market, they experience the "non-place" an environment of exclusion where their bodies, personal and professional goals, and their lives are not recognized (O'Shea, 2020).

The "non-place" can be analyzed from two perspectives. The first is the exclusion and denial of dissenting bodies by normative society, which worships cis-binary gender as the ideal standard, naturalizing bodies that are discursively and performatively constructed by conventions and social practices (Anderson, 2023; Goryunova, 2021). The second perspective is the claim of the "non-place" as a symbol of resistance and struggle. The "failure" of the non-binary body in a capitalist, cisgender, binary, and patriarchal society can be seen as a symbol of Queer resistance and struggle (Halberstam, 2021).

If the market operates under the cis-binary norm (O'Shea, 2020), measures success by position in the formal labor market and the wealth accumulated by the individual (Halberstam, 2021), and discriminates and excludes people who do not fit these standards (Anderson, 2023), it follows that organizational environments are predisposed to reject non-binary people (Waite, 2021). According to Enogieru et al. (2024), non-binary people face an unemployment rate three times higher than cisgender people. For the authors, unemployment reflects the multiple violences experienced in the workplace, ranging from verbal insults to physical assaults.

Claiming the "non-place" and rejecting the cis-binary biodeterministic construction of success allows the creation of new imaginaries of ascension. This is a path, though without guarantees, that involves embracing "failure" by subverting exclusionary metrics and collectively building organizational environments that recognize gender identity diversity beyond the prevailing cis-binarism.

4.2 Queer Theory and Organizational Cis-binarism

Addressing organizational cis-binarism from the perspective of Queer theory requires flexibility and creativity, as demonstrated by Halberstam (2021) and Butler (2018) in theorizing within the field of Queer theory, based on the works of various intellectuals, especially Michel Foucault. Although Foucault (2011) did not specifically write about gender, his analysis of power relations and the social construction of identity inspired theorists, philosophers, and researchers worldwide, given the adaptability of his ideas to various debates, including that of gender.

Queer theory does not solely focus on understanding and discussing gender cis-binarism. However, by critiquing and deconstructing socially naturalized norms about gender and sexuality (Butler, 2018), it allows us to confront and debate the constructed gender standards in various contexts, including in organizational environments.

Organizations act as a reflection of society (Círico, 2024); excluding and discriminatory social conventions are internalized and reproduced as part of organizational culture (Huffman et al., 2021). Gender dissidents are excluded from labor spaces through the "watchers" of the binary (cis)system, with the aim of maintaining the gender status quo (Acker, 1990). These "watchers" refer to both organizational structures and cisgender individuals in positions of decision-making power, who hold the authority to oppress and exclude employees who do not conform to the hegemonic gender identity (Johnson et al., 2021).

For this reflection, we use two central concepts from Foucault's (2013) works: i) power devices [devices that permeate society; in this analysis, they refer to organizations]; and ii) the role of normalization [related to the individuals responsible for imposing norms and behavior standards; in this analysis, I refer to the imposition of social standards]. From a Queer perspective (Butler, 2018), the watchers in the workplace interact with each other and jointly reproduce the multiple oppressions against gender dissident employees. Identifying how gender cis-binarism manifests and reproduces in the workplace requires a look at both the subjects and the organization (Moulin de Souza & Parker, 2022).

The tension that emerges when questioning cis-binary norms in a workplace reveals the naturalization of power relations that favor bodies conforming to Eurocentric standards (Melo et al., 2022). For a cisgender man, going to the bathroom is simply attending to his physiological needs; for a non-binary person with a masculine expression, fear precedes the physiological need itself. Going to the bathroom becomes an exposure to multiple forms of violence, both verbal and physical, perpetrated by cisgender individual (Mehta & Kappal, 2024).

The normalization produced by cisgender individuals in binary (cis)-centered organizations reveals, when confronted with Queer theory, the artificiality of conservative and exclusionary norms and devices. What is artificial is presented as natural, and the argument of "it's always been this way" proves to be empty and dishonest in relation to history and the gender dissident groups marginalized by the discursively constructed and performatively enacted norms presented as natural. The issue is not about cisgender individuals or the organization, but about a norm that does not serve the collective, as it was created to privilege specific groups that fit within the cis-binary, patriarchal, and Eurocentric model (Enogieru et al., 2024).

In practice, it is not enough to dismiss individuals who reproduce cis-binarism if discriminatory practices are already ingrained in the organizational culture. Similarly, it is not enough to transform the organizational culture if the individuals responsible for hiring and

retaining employees hold exorsexist views about non-binary trans people. The cis-binary power structure permeates organizational environments like a fungus that contaminates both the visible and the invisible parts of a fruit. By analogy, it is not enough to modify the surface when the entire body is compromised.

5 RESEARCH AGENDA AND PROPOSALS FOR THE LABOR MARKET

In this section, we present the agenda for future studies and the proposal of actions for the inclusion of non-binary people in organizations. The agenda for future studies was developed considering the gaps in the literature reviewed, as well as the discussions developed in the previous section. The purpose is to encourage future studies to address non-binarism, questioning and discussing how cisgender and binary norms can impact the reality of approximately 160 million people who identify as non-binary transgender worldwide.

Non-binarism, although a historically known topic for those who identify with and research the experiences of people who transcend the gender binary, is still an emerging subject in organizational sciences that requires further investigation. The first research suggestion we present relates to the role of personal narrative for non-binary individuals through Autoethnography as a resource to be heard and present their dissident reality to academia: *How can the personal narrative of non-binary people contribute to the inclusion of the group in organizational environments?*

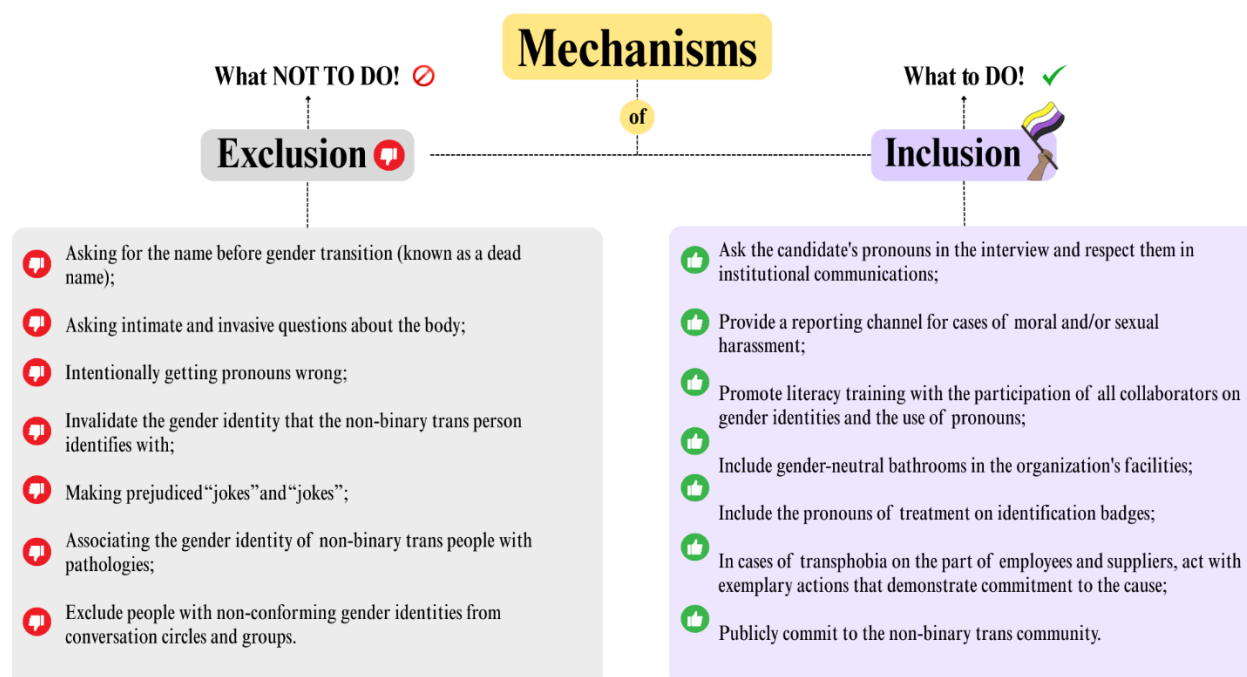
The second issue we propose is the resistance of cisgender people in recognizing non-binary individuals in organizations: *How can the presence of non-binary individuals in organizations be perceived as a threat to groups that have historically held power?*

The third question relates to organizations and a practical implication of the studies on the topic and asks: *How can organizations absorb the contributions of Queer research in the business field to redefine internal policies and promote diversity and inclusion for gender dissident people?*

Finally, the fourth provocation we present for future studies is the need for research that investigates the subsumption of non-binary trans people within the LGBTQIAPN+ community in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs in organizations: *How has the scarce representativity of non-binary people in organizations been reported in gender research in the business field?*

Aligned with the proposed research agenda, Figure 2 presents actions for the inclusion of non-binary people in organizations. In the figure, we present two scenarios: i) what not to do (practices that result in the exclusion of non-binary people from the formal labor market); ii) what to do (actions that promote the inclusion of non-binary people in the formal labor market).

Figure 2
Proposals for Inclusion Actions



Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

The seven exclusionary practices presented in Figure 2 were identified in the studies reviewed in the ILR these are trans-exclusionary behaviors adopted in organizations that oppress non-binary trans employees, excluding them from the formal labor market. The seven actions for the inclusion of non-binary people in the formal labor market were also identified in this review and in the dialogue between the authors of the 17 studies.

Finally, by presenting the mechanisms of exclusion and proposing actions for inclusion in this section, the goal is to encourage professionals in organizational environments to reflect on how they have been managing gender diversity and how they can adopt inclusion practices to promote acceptance and belonging in the workplace.

This section concludes with two questions: i) How can organizations and academia collaborate to promote the inclusion of gender dissident groups in the formal labor market? ii) How can gender watchers unlearn cis-binary gender perspectives and embrace and practice inclusion and belonging policies in a continuous movement of learning and embracing gender differences (and other social markers of difference) in the workplace??

6 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study aimed to map organizational research that discusses non-binary gender in the formal labor market globally, to identify and problematize the mechanisms of inclusion and/or exclusion operating in work environments. The identified research discusses the exclusion processes that lead non-binary people to precarious jobs and informality, such as prostitution. The articles also address how binary cisnormativity is naturalized in organizational culture, marginalizing any manifestations of gender identities that do not conform to the established standard.

Cultural diversity and perceptions on the subject, due to the decision not to geographically limit the searches, enabled an understanding that the discriminations and challenges faced by non-binary people are not restricted to specific countries or cultures. The multiple violences to which

this group is subjected are directly related to the colonizing process that various countries were historically subjected to, particularly those colonized by European countries, which evangelized indigenous peoples by imposing Catholic and patriarchal ideologies.

The studies in this Integrative Literature Review shared common understandings regarding inclusion actions. Firstly, organizations need to recognize the gender diversity present in society and in the formal labor market, as well as the responsibility they have in promoting the inclusion and belonging of non-binary people in organizational environments. It is essential for companies to provide training on gender identity diversity and the proper use of personal pronouns. The studies also highlight the urgency for professionals in human resources management to reflect on how they are managing gender diversity in the workplace.

This study presented limitations regarding the scarcity of research on non-binary people in organizations, as well as gender studies in organizations that exclude non-binarism as an identity or act with subsumption, hiding non-binarism alongside the multiplicity of transgender and/or LGBTQIAPN+ identities.

Finally, it is suggested for future studies to investigate how exorsexism (discrimination against non-binary gender identities) manifests depending on gender expression in the workplace. Additionally, a gap identified from the analysis of the seventeen works included in this research is the scarcity of investigations into the legal implications that a company may face by omitting or neglecting gender discrimination in the workplace context. Furthermore, the importance of conducting such investigations from an intersectional perspective is highlighted, considering how social markers of difference such as race, class, and sexuality amplify the inequalities faced by non-binary people in organizations.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare no conflict of interest regarding this submitted work.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Roles	1st Author	2ndAuthor	3rd Author
Conceptualization	♦	♦	♦
Data curation	♦	♦	
Formal analysis	♦		♦
Funding acquisition			
Investigation	♦	♦	♦
Conceptualization	♦	♦	♦
Project administration	♦		
Resources			
Software			
Supervision	♦		
Validation	♦	♦	♦
Visualization	♦	♦	♦
Writing – original draft	♦	♦	♦
Writing – review & editing	♦	♦	♦