



Article

Social Representations of Trans People in the Workplace

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Abstract: Organizations show tendencies to discriminate against trans people, making them significantly more likely to face barriers in the professional context, where the highest rates of discrimination against trans people are reported. This study intends to acknowledge the SRs that are associated with trans people in the workplace since the Theory of Social Representations suggests that Social Representations (SRs) are useful to regulate perceptions and the way we act in the world. Also, through Intergroup Contact Theory, by suggesting that contact with a minority population will reduce the associated prejudice, we also intend to understand the impact contact has on SRs. By applying a questionnaire between 20 January and 21 February 2022 on a random sample of 217 people, and respective analyses in MAXQDA 2022 and EVOC 2005 software, the results indicate that the SRs most associated with trans people in a professional context are discrimination, normality, equality, difficulties, and prejudice. Although the term “discrimination” was the most mentioned, it is worth underlining the appearance of positive (and neutral) terms, which may, according to Intergroup Contact Theory, be justified by contact since the majority of the sample (57.6%, $n = 125$) have had contact with trans people.

Keywords: diversity and inclusion; EVOC; Gender Studies; Human Resources; Intergroup Contact Theory; LGBT; MAXQDA; organizational diversity; Theory of Social Representations; trans



Citation: Baptista, José, Dália Costa, and Sónia P. Gonçalves. 2023. Social Representations of Trans People in the Workplace. *Social Sciences* 12: 449. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci12080449>

Academic Editors: Maria Helena Santos and Carla Cerqueira

Received: 26 June 2023

Revised: 3 August 2023

Accepted: 5 August 2023

Published: 9 August 2023



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1. Introduction

Work is an essential element in any person’s life and should, in its optimal form, represent a source of financial security, social relationships, personal development, and self-esteem, among other health determinants (Ramalho and Costa 2017). Considering that, on average, 0.4% to 1.3% of the world’s population over 15 years old do not identify with the gender assigned at birth, the known number of trans people in the labor market is very reduced, which constrains the emergence of a collective force that leads all stakeholders towards change and better integration of this minority population (Winter et al. 2016). In this sense, when inferring that trans people represent a minority in the workplace, organizations do not prioritize these situations (McFadden and Crowley-Henry 2016).

It is recognized that the fact that gender is still viewed as something binary in many ways leads to many people not being aware of the existence of trans people and, consequently, not having any kind of contact. However, several empirical studies have examined how contact with trans people leads to greater support for their rights (e.g., King et al. 2009) and lower levels of prejudice and understanding (e.g., Willoughby et al. 2010). Intergroup Contact Theory or Contact Hypothesis is the name given to this relationship, elaborated by Gordon Allport (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 1998), arguing that prejudice (unless it is deeply rooted in the character structure of the prejudiced person) may be reduced by contact of equal status between majority and minority groups in pursuit of common goals (Allport 1954; King et al. 2009).

The binary gender system postulates that gender is determined by the sex assigned at birth—male or female—which is immutable (Davies et al. 2017). The biological basis, on the one hand, and essentialist attributions, on the other, justify why trans people are stigmatized in Western societies (characterized by this system) since the existence of these people challenges the notion of the gender binary, which contravenes the assumption that gender categories derive from biological sex (Aguirre-Sánchez-Beato 2018). The term trans is a broad term, used to describe all people whose gender identified at birth is incomplete or corresponds to an incorrect description of who they are or how they identify (Cobb and McKenzie-Harris 2019). In turn, the term cis refers to all people who have a gender experience that is congruent with the gender identified at birth (Bauerband et al. 2018).

Despite progress in the social acceptance of trans people, there are still high levels of prejudice in the labor market, as well as a lack of understanding of trans people's realities in the context of career development, where many forms of discrimination are found (Cobb and McKenzie-Harris 2019). Even before entering the workforce, they are able to feel differences when accessing education, coming up against the lack of inclusive politics (Dias and Bernardineli 2016; McFadden and Crowley-Henry 2016). However, the difficulty accessing work is not always related to the lack of access to education or qualifications but mainly to the prejudice associated with being trans (Dias and Bernardineli 2016). In a professional context, discrimination can be expressed in different ways, such as difficulties in getting a job, redundancies or denial of promotions, health problems, and moral or sexual harassment (McFadden and Crowley-Henry 2016).

When joining the labor market (working in different sectors and professions), numerous personal, professional, and legal challenges are faced as the discrimination experienced by trans people in a professional context is multidimensional. It is systemic as there are higher unemployment and poverty levels when compared with cis people; it is institutional when working in organizations that do not have anti-discrimination policies; and it is interpersonal when suffering discrimination and/or harassment from strangers or work colleagues (Almeida and Vasconcellos 2018).

In Europe, it is in the professional context where the highest rates of discrimination against trans people are reported, not only when looking for a job but later in the workplace, as well as in unemployment levels. In Portugal, the literature is limited, with little content that situates trans people in a professional context (Hines and Santos 2017). Despite this, trans people are perceived by the Portuguese population as the most discriminated group in the country, encountering significant barriers in school environments and access to work and employment (Costa et al. 2010). Transphobia is the designation given to the type of discrimination and prejudice associated specifically with gender identity, and it includes discomfort, fear, hate, repulsion, and prejudiced treatment against trans people (Hill and Willoughby 2005).

The Theory of Social Representations (TRS) suggests that social representations (SR) are useful to regulate the perception and the way we act in the world (Moscovici 1961), so the aim of the present study was to identify the SRs within a sample of the working population in Portugal related to trans people, and specifically trans people in the professional context. In accordance with this objective, quantitative methods were mobilized, and, as a result, five main concepts associated, respectively, with trans people and trans people in the professional context were identified.

The TRS was developed by Serge Moscovici in 1961 and proposes a scientific study of common sense. This theory provides an explanation of the connection of phenomena that are external to the mind (the object) to an internal mental structure (the representation), which will correspond to the object in a functional or structural way in order to allow its recognition. A social representation (SR) will not be an exact copy of an existing object in a subjective reality but rather a collective construction where the knowledge structures of a given group recreate the object based on already existing representations, replacing it (Moscovici 1961).

The Structural Approach to SRs or the Central Core Theory, proposed in 1976 by Jean-Claude Abric, is currently the most adopted theory regarding the structure and functioning of SRs, defining an SR as a structured and organized socio-cognitive field (Abric 1976, 1993; Wachelke 2011). According to this approach, an SR is formed by two distinct systems of qualitative elements: the central core and the peripheral system (Sá 1996).

The central core will assign meaning, identity, coherence, and continuity to the SR, containing some key elements that create its global meaning and organize its structure. In turn, the peripheral system is the flexible and individual part of the structure, with content that is not necessarily shared, composed of private information and non-central elements, responsible for updating and contextualizing the SR (Abric 1993; Wachelke 2011).

In this type of approach, the Free Word Association Technique can also be used to identify both the central core and the peripheral system. This technique consists of providing an inducing term to the respondent, who should then write the first words or terms that come to mind and that they directly associate with the inducing term (Merten 1992; Vieira 2018).

The aim of this exploratory, descriptive, and cross-sectional study is to identify the SRs of the working population concerning trans people, specifically in the workplace. Considering the scarcity of studies focused on trans people (especially in a professional context), this study is pioneering, and the results can be understood in an exploratory framework, intending to reflect the Portuguese context. The present work is defined as multidisciplinary, since, in addition to being situated in the field of Human Resources Development Policies, within the scientific area of Sociology, it is also situated in the framework of Human Rights and Gender Studies due to its theme and population under study.

2. Materials and Methods

Due to the quantitative nature of the study, a questionnaire we created was applied, with 2 qualitative open questions using the free word association, to allow access to latent or implicit elements behind the answers (Abric 2001; Merten 1992). In the questions referring to the collection of SRs, the following inductors were used: (1) trans people; and (2) trans people in the workplace. The questionnaire was subject to online pre-testing and was shared online from 20 January 2022. We ended the collection on 21 February 2022.

The sample is a convenience sample, made up of members of the working population in Portugal. The only inclusion criteria were to be 18 or over and work and reside in Portugal. The data collection ended when we were able to observe the saturation of answers, which represented a significant sample. The final sample was composed of 217 people (131 cis women, 76 cis men, 1 trans man, and 5 non-binary people; 2 people who checked the option “other” and 2 people who preferred not to disclose their gender identity), with an average age of 31.63 (SD = 9.202), with ages between 20 and 63 years.

The sample was accessed online using messages, e-mails, and other sharing methods. The ethics of the procedure were guaranteed, and confidentiality and anonymity were assured for each participant, according to the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 of the European Union, applied since 25 May 2018 in Portugal. Participation was voluntary and not paid. The study obtained a favorable opinion from the Ethics Committee of the ISCSP—Institute of Social and Political Sciences, University of Lisbon in January 2022, registered as deliberation CE-01-2022.

Using the Free Word Association Technique (Merten 1992), we have used a quantitative questionnaire (with 2 qualitative open questions) to ask the 217 people who make up the sample about the following: “Write up to five words or short expressions that come to mind immediately when you read ‘trans person’, in the order they come to mind” (Q1) and “Write up to 5 words or short expressions that come to mind instantly when reading ‘trans people in a professional context’ in the order they come to mind” (Q2).

The data were grouped into nominal categories (or codes) and a thematic categorical analysis was carried out, based on the content analysis proposed by Laurence Bardin, following a summative approach (Bardin 1977). Also, a categorization was carried out in

clusters by color, using the clustering technique (Karol and Mangat 2013): green for positive or favorable terms; red for negative or unfavorable terms; and yellow for neutral terms.

The results were analyzed using the MAXQDA 2022 software, after which we worked on uniformity and standardization of all terms collected, grouping the answers by nominal categories or group themes and their associated codes, ordering them in categories or clusters by dimension. According to the Structural Approach to Social Representations (Abric 1976), a word analysis was completed using the same codes and utilizing the software EVOC—Ensemble de Programmes Permettant L'Analyse des Evocations (version 2005), with the aim of constructing a matrix of co-occurrences, intersecting the frequency of terms evoked with the respective average orders of evocation.

3. Results

When we questioned the 217 people who make up the sample about the following: “Write up to five words or short expressions that come to mind immediately when you read ‘trans person’, in the order they come to mind” (Q1), 943 answers were obtained: 217 on the first line, 207 on the second line, 195 on the third line, 171 on the fourth line, and 153 on the last line. Further, 142 lines were not filled in. The results were analyzed using the MAXQDA 2022 software, after which we worked on uniformity and standardization of all terms collected, grouping the answers by nominal categories or group themes and their associated codes, ordering them in categories or clusters by dimension. All the words or short expressions were lexically analyzed, eliminating synonyms, plurals/singulars, masculine and feminine, possible spelling mistakes or typing mistakes, and uppercase or lowercase letters, in order to facilitate data analysis. The isolated terms and those without representation were compiled in the category “other”.

Using the Free Word Association Technique (Merten 1992), data were grouped into 60 nominal categories (or codes). Then, a thematic categorical analysis was carried out, based on the content analysis proposed by Laurence Bardin, following a summative approach (Bardin 1977). Categorization was also carried out in clusters by color, using the clustering technique (Karol and Mangat 2013): green for positive or favorable terms (257 items); red for negative or unfavorable terms (180 items); and yellow for neutral terms (506 items). The clustering technique was used in order to refine the emerging categories, identifying the unique properties associated with each category and the relationships between categories and emerging themes (Karol and Mangat 2013). The visualization of the items belonging to each cluster, ordered by recurrence, is shown in the following table (Table 1):

Table 1. Nominal codes (Q1).

Nominal Code	N	%	Color
Courage	78	8.27	Green
Freedom	38	4.03	Green
Equality	32	3.39	Green
Happiness	27	2.86	Green
Acceptance	26	2.76	Green
Integration	11	1.17	Green
Affirmation	10	1.06	Green
Love	9	0.95	Green
Beauty	9	0.95	Green
Respect	9	0.95	Green
Resilience	8	0.85	Green

Table 1. Cont.

Nominal Code	N	%	Color
Change	45	4.77	Yellow
Identity	36	3.82	Yellow
Difference	34	3.61	Yellow
People	34	3.61	Yellow
LGBT	23	2.44	Yellow
Gender	22	2.33	Yellow
Normality	21	2.23	Yellow
Transition	20	2.12	Yellow
Sex	19	2.01	Yellow
Doubt	18	1.91	Yellow
Man	15	1.59	Yellow
Present	13	1.38	Yellow
Body	13	1.38	Yellow
Rights	13	1.38	Yellow
Choice	13	1.38	Yellow
Other	13	1.38	Yellow
Woman	12	1.27	Yellow
Choice	11	1.17	Yellow
Trans	10	1.06	Yellow
Transsexual	10	1.06	Yellow
Diversity	9	0.95	Yellow
Society	9	0.95	Yellow
Drag	8	0.85	Yellow
Media	8	0.85	Yellow
Sexual orientation	8	0.85	Yellow
Process	8	0.85	Yellow
Non-binary	7	0.74	Yellow
Operation	7	0.74	Yellow
Transvestite	7	0.74	Yellow
Truth	7	0.74	Yellow
Colours	6	0.64	Yellow
Discovery	5	0.53	Yellow
Disphoria	5	0.53	Yellow
Eccentricity	5	0.53	Yellow
Hormones	5	0.53	Yellow
Health	4	0.42	Yellow
Transgender	4	0.42	Yellow
Unknown	3	0.32	Yellow
Feeling	3	0.32	Yellow
Intersex	2	0.21	Yellow
Pronouns	2	0.21	Yellow
Prejudice	45	4.77	Red
Suffering	42	4.45	Red
Difficulties	28	2.97	Red
Discrimination	23	2.44	Red
Fight	15	1.59	Red
Oddity	11	1.17	Red
Exclusion	10	1.06	Red
Transphobia	6	0.64	Red

According to the Structural Approach to Social Representations (Abric 1976), a word analysis was conducted using the same codes and utilizing the software EVOC—Ensemble de Programmes Permettant L'Analyse des Evocations (version 2005), with the aim of constructing a matrix of co-occurrences, intersecting the frequency of terms evoked with the respective average orders of evocation.

The intention was to understand, through the analysis of intermediate frequencies, whether a given term has a high or low frequency—which will be fundamental for the

construction of the table of four quadrants, where all terms will appear according to their level of meaning, making it possible to identify the central core and the peripheral system. A minimum frequency of $n = 10$, an intermediate frequency of $n = 17$, and an average order of evocation of 2.40 were used. All values have been rounded to two decimal places. The output obtained is shown in the following table (Table 2):

Table 2. Table of the four quadrants (Q1).

Interm. Freq.	Terms Evoked	<i>f</i>	<2.70 AOE	Terms Evoked	<i>f</i>	≥2.70 AOE
≥30	Central core			1st peripheral		
	Courage	78	2.64	Identity	36	3.00
	Difference	34	2.29	Freedom	38	2.92
	Equality	32	2.45	Prejudice	45	3.27
	Change	45	2.04	Suffering	42	3.05
	Person	34	2.03			
<30	Contr. core			2nd peripheral		
				Acceptance	26	3.42
				Difficulty	28	3.25
	Gender	22	1.70	Discrimination	23	3.35
	Man	15	2.30	Doubt	18	3.11
	Sex	19	1.73	Happiness	27	3.59
	Transition	20	1.67	LGBT	23	2.96
				Fight	15	3.12
				Normality	21	2.81

Notes: four quadrant table of $N = 217$ with 943 evoked terms; minimum frequency of $n = 15$; intermediate frequency of $n = 30$; AOE (average order of evocation) = 2.70.

The concepts that best represent the central core are found in the quadrant located in the upper left corner, showing the most used terms (with higher frequencies) and the lowest evocation orders (words evoked mainly in first or second place). The lower left quadrant represents the contrasting core concepts, showing terms with low frequencies, which were used by a reduced number of people. Finally, the words on the right side (in the upper and lower corners) correspond, subsequently, to the first and second periphery of the SRs (Abric 1993, 2001). The terms that stand out in the central core are courage, difference, equality, change, and person. In turn, in the contrasting core, the terms gender, man, sex, and transition stand out.

We obtained 813 answers to the second question (Q2) “Write up to 5 words or short expressions that come to mind instantly when reading ‘trans people in the workplace’ in the order they come to mind”. When looking at the answers, 217 were on the first line, 190 were on the second line, 162 were on the third line, 132 were on the fourth line, and 112 were on the last line; 272 lines were left blank and not filled in. The data analysis followed the same procedures as the previous question (Q1). Using the clustering technique (Karol and Mangat 2013), cluster characterization was executed by color: green for positive or favorable terms (260 items), red for negative or unfavorable terms (286 items), and yellow for neutral terms (267 items). The following table (Table 3) shows the items in each cluster, organized by recurrence:

Table 3. Nominal codes (Q2).

Nominal Code	N	%	Color
Equality	55	6.77	Green
Integration	35	4.31	Green
Acceptance	30	3.69	Green
Valuation	21	2.58	Green
Competence	20	2.46	Green
Rights	20	2.46	Green
Courage	16	1.97	Green
Respect	16	1.97	Green
Support	14	1.72	Green
Opportunity	12	1.48	Green
Confidence	6	0.74	Green
Professional	6	0.74	Green
Resilience	5	0.62	Green
Representation	4	0.49	Green
Normality	62	7.63	Yellow
Working people	25	3.08	Yellow
Other	21	2.58	Yellow
Person	17	2.09	Yellow
Questions	15	1.85	Yellow
Colleague	14	1.72	Yellow
Work	14	1.72	Yellow
Diversity	12	1.48	Yellow
Difference	11	1.35	Yellow
Persistence	11	1.35	Yellow
Trans	10	1.23	Yellow
Unknown	9	1.11	Yellow
Profession	9	1.11	Yellow
Adaptation	8	0.98	Yellow
Change	8	0.98	Yellow
Present	7	0.86	Yellow
Minority	6	0.74	Yellow
Name	5	0.62	Yellow
Gender	3	0.37	Yellow
Discrimination	73	8.98	Red
Prejudice	58	7.13	Red
Difficulties	39	4.80	Red
Inequality	32	3.94	Red
Exclusion	17	2.09	Red
Secret	17	2.09	Red
Discomfort	9	1.11	Red
Fear	9	1.11	Red
Distrust	8	0.98	Red
Precarity	8	0.98	Red
Transphobia	7	0.86	Red
Prostitution	5	0.62	Red
Unsafety	4	0.49	Red

Afterwards, a new word analysis was completed using the same codes, with the software EVOC, version 2005. A minimum frequency of $n = 10$, an intermediate frequency of $n = 20$, and an average order of evocation of 2.10 were used. All values have been rounded to two decimal places. The terms that stand out in the core are acceptance, equality, and normality. In turn, the following terms stand out in the contrasting core: other, person, secret, working population, and work. The output obtained is shown in the following table (Table 4):

Table 4. Table of the four quadrants (Q2).

Interm. Freq.	Terms Evoked	<i>f</i>	<2.10 AOE	Terms Evoked	<i>f</i>	≥2.10 AOE
≥20	Central core			1st peripheral		
				Inequality	25	2.32
	Acceptance	23	2.04	Difficulties	21	2.43
	Equality	32	2.06	Discrimination	49	2.14
	Normality	34	2.09	Integration	26	2.46
				Prejudice	44	2.16
				Valuation	21	2.19
<20	Contr. core			2nd peripheral		
				Support	13	2.77
	Other			Competence	17	2.59
	Person	18	1.89	Courage	13	2.39
	Secret	10	1.80	Rights	17	2.35
	Working	16	2.06	Exclusion	12	2.33
	people	19	1.84	Opportunity	12	3.00
	Work	11	1.82	Questions	13	2.46
				Respect	15	2.73

Notes: four quadrant table of N = 217 with 813 evoked terms; minimum frequency of $n = 10$; intermediate frequency of $n = 20$; AOE (average order of evocation) = 2.10.

In order to analyze Intergroup Contact Theory (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 1998) validity, by analyzing the variable of contact (of any type) with trans people, it was possible to understand that the majority of the sample (57.6%, $n = 125$) responded affirmatively, while 21.7% ($n = 47$) responded negatively. Further, 20.7% ($n = 45$) of the sample disclosed that they did not know how to answer the question.

When analyzing this matter, it was possible to deduce that, with regard to the first question, considering the answers of people who have had contact, 155 positive terms appear, as well as 305 neutral terms and 104 negative terms. When looking at the second question, 155 positive terms are present, as well as 153 neutral terms and 175 negative terms. Concerning people who have not had any type of contact, 52 positive terms were recorded, as well as 105 neutral terms and 29 negative terms (for the first question). The second question shows 44 positive terms, 56 neutral terms, as well as 61 negative terms.

4. Discussion

In the first question (Q1), the following concepts emerged: courage, prejudice, change, suffering, and freedom, representing, respectively, two positive terms, two negative terms, and a neutral term. In the second question (Q2), the main concepts were discrimination, normality, prejudice, equality, and difficulties, representing, respectively, three negative terms, a positive term, and a neutral term. In this way, it is possible to infer that trans people seem to be associated with a greater number of terms quoted as negative when in the workplace or in a professional context.

We can also see that, in the first question (Q1), the most mentioned term was a positive one (courage), and, when in a professional context, the most mentioned term was a negative one (discrimination). It should be noted that, from the first to the second question, 106 more negative terms appeared. Thus, these results suggest accordance with the literature, which states that the professional context is the one where, at the European level, the highest rates of discrimination against trans people are reported (Hines and Santos 2017).

It is important to acknowledge that respondents' perceptions are being measured, meaning they may or may not map onto the actual lived experiences of trans working people. Also, it is important to mention that the results must be read taking into consideration the composition of the sample—young, educated, qualified, and urban—who were motivated to respond to this type of questionnaire. Also, the sample it is mostly made

up of women and includes several people who self-identify as non-heterosexual (29%, $n = 63$), with the vast majority of the sample already having contact with trans people (57.6%, $n = 125$).

In this sense, using the Central Core Theory to analyze the results about trans people, the terms in the central core are courage, difference, equality, change, and person. When applied to the professional context, the terms that appear are acceptance, equality, and normality. It should be noted that, in both questions, no element was quoted as negative, which is a satisfactory predictor that the results seem to point to terms of a more positive or neutral nature over time (Abrie 1993; Wachelke 2011).

With regard to Intergroup Contact Theory (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 1998), the results show that more than half of the sample (57.6%, $n = 125$) have had contact with trans people, even though the measurement in this study does not indicate the frequency or the intimacy of said contact, which could justify the sizable number of positive answers, as put forth by Allport (1954). In this way, it was possible to note that, on the items specified by people who had already had contact with trans people, 310 (29.61%) positive items appear, as well as 279 (26.65%) negative items. With regard to the items mentioned by people with no contact with trans people, 96 (27.67%) positive items and 90 (25.94%) negative items emerged. These results can be justified by the large number of neutral items that appear in the answers of this part of the sample, which may stem from the absence of contact with trans people or with a lack of knowledge. It is also important to note that most of the negative terms generated did not necessarily represent negative assessments of trans people but, rather, awareness of the negativity directed against members of this marginalized group.

It is also necessary to pay attention to the social desirability and the influence of normative pressures on SRs contents, especially when collected through questionnaires (Wachelke 2011). This phenomenon seems to happen in studies of self-reports when the answers exaggerate or minimize real behavior, which can alter the results that are collected (Kwak et al. 2021). Despite the efforts to avoid this, by using a data collection method that allows anonymity in an attempt to increase the honesty of people's answers, it is not possible to assure the absence of social desirability.

There are some limitations in this study—which do not question its validity but could serve as clues for future investigations. Aside from social desirability, the sample size also represents a limitation. Although the results cannot be generalized to all the working population in Portugal, as the country has a population of 10,344,802 people, according to the 2021 census (INE 2021), a sample of 217 people is questionable in its dimension when intending to mirror the Portuguese reality. In the future, this investigation could be replicated with a larger sample or in several countries in order to compare different realities and understand cultural differences on this topic. Then, regarding the fact that we have only used one method of data collection (questionnaire), it could be interesting to combine that method with others (such as interviews) in the future. Finally, it could also be interesting to explore the relation between SRs and Human Resources Policies that promote organizational diversity to understand the effective impact.

Regarding the practical application of this study, it is important that a social posture exists—especially from organizations and HR professionals—to bring attention to the topic, allowing for inclusive and comprehensive politics related to diversity in an organizational environment, specifically gender diversity and consequent integration of trans people in the workforce. As well as the main objective of this study and due to the social relevance of the topic and its constant negligence, another contribution is that the results can reinforce and deepen the theoretical knowledge available in the literature, expanding its theoretical maturity.

5. Conclusions

The results obtained allowed us to conclude that the SRs most associated with trans people in the workplace are, respectively, discrimination, normality, equality, difficulties,

and prejudice. The results suggest accordance with the literature, which indicates that, in the Portuguese context, trans people are perceived by the general population as the most discriminated group in the country (Costa et al. 2010), with “discrimination” being the most mentioned term, referred to a total of 93 times. Considering Intergroup Contact Theory (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 1998), which suggests that contact has a positive effect on attitudes towards a minority population (King et al. 2009), it was also possible to conclude that results for the portion of the sample with contact are aligned with this theory.

Lastly, the results demonstrate that SRs of a sample of the working population in Portugal about trans people in a professional context are still associated with discrimination, prejudice, and difficulties. However, the appearance of terms such as “equality” and “normality” with a larger expression within the SRs suggests a positive change on the path to acceptance and integration of trans people in society and in the workforce. Nonetheless, not only are trans people’s experiences still segregated but also the information and resources to facilitate their understanding and legitimacy remain the same. This reinforces the importance of SRs studies to better understand where certain behaviors and less positive or discriminatory attitudes come from, allowing work to be conducted or even changes made on these—individually, socially, or organizationally. It is also important to reinforce that SRs vary according to each person’s life story, which influences their behavior and actions, so there is always room for change (Austin 2016).

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, J.B., D.C. and S.P.G.; methodology, J.B., D.C. and S.P.G.; software, J.B.; validation, D.C. and S.P.G.; formal analysis, J.B., D.C. and S.P.G.; investigation, J.B., D.C. and S.P.G.; resources, J.B., D.C. and S.P.G.; data curation, J.B.; writing—original draft preparation, J.B.; writing—review and editing, J.B., D.C. and S.P.G.; visualization, J.B., D.C. and S.P.G.; supervision, D.C. and S.P.G.; project administration, J.B., D.C. and S.P.G. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki and approved by the Ethics Committee of ISCSP—Higher Institute of Social and Political Sciences of the University of Lisbon (protocol code CE-01-2022, January 2022).

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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