Discrimination in a University Context

Report for University of Algarve (UAlg)

Report Work Package 2 – Activity 2.1.

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1. Introduction

This report summarizes the main results of a survey on descriptive and quantified instances of discrimination in a university context. The results cannot be generalized to all university contexts; however, they can serve as a reliable indicator of the situations that most commonly occur among the various stakeholders of the higher education community, providing insights into the prevalence of discrimination in the specific university. They may offer valuable information about the types of discrimination experienced by different members of the university community, including students, non-teaching staff, and teaching staff.

These data correspond to the survey conducted over a period of four weeks, between the months of April and May 2023. The survey was administered during this specific timeframe to gather information about the prevalence of discrimination in the university context during that period.

This document provides a brief description of what can be understood as discrimination and the main theories about why we discriminate. It presents the methodology and data analysis, as well as the discussion of the key findings from this survey.

1.1 What is discrimination?

Gordon Allport (1954) defined discrimination as any conduct based on distinctions made according to social or natural categories, unrelated to the merit or abilities of individuals, or their individual behavior (Mummendey & Otten, 1998). This definition sheds light on the pervasive nature of discrimination, upon factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, or other societal classifications, leading to differential treatment and unequal opportunities for certain groups.

It involves treating members of the outgroup differently compared to how we treat those who belong to our own group, being inherently negative since results in a disadvantage for the outgroup.

This disadvantage is manifested primarily through favoritism towards members of our own groups and, secondly, through disparagement and hostile acts towards members of groups to which we do not belong (Yzerbyt & Demoulin, 2019). This negative actions can be expressed in various ways and contexts, ranging from overt and explicit forms, to institutional or structural expressions, as well as through microaggressions or less explicit means that diminish or humiliate others (Demirtaş-Madran, 2020). However, while favoring the ingroup does not have a primary intention to ill-treat the outgroup, the second form of discrimination against the groups we don't belong has the intent to persecute and harm outgroup members, usually resulting in a more extreme and aggressive form of actions. A third expression can be assumed as preference for the outgroup (outgroup favoritism), usually observed within low social status groups, which due to internalized negative stereotypes tend to reject the ingroup.

However, alongside this common understanding of the term, discrimination can also be advantageous to outgroups. In this case, it is referred to as positive discrimination. Practices of positive discrimination have been developed with the purpose of "correcting" existing social inequalities between groups (Yzerbyt & Demoulin, 2019).

1.2. How do we discriminate?

Demirtas-Madran (2020) in her paper about discrimination and stigmatization about Covid-19, reviews several theories, from intra-personal to societal intergroup-level that might explain the tendency to aggressively behave towards minorities (for further knowledge, consult the original paper).

At the intra-personal level, the psychoanalytic theory suggests that aggression towards minority groups may result from social and individual frustrations. The evolutionary perspective posits that discrimination is rooted in evolutionary success, aiming to protect individuals and their groups. Terror Management Theory explains prejudice as a defense against existential anxiety, while Attribution Theory explores biases related to attributions, leading to ingroup favoritism and outgroup derogation.

Moving to the individual level, the Authoritarian Personality Approach suggests that certain individuals are more prone to violence and discrimination due to their obedience to authority figures. Social Dominance Theory highlights social hierarchy and discrimination based on individual differences in social dominance orientation. Schwartz's Theory of Basic Human Values relates prejudice to personal values and traits.

At the intergroup level, Scapegoating Theories point to the selection of outgroups as scapegoats to blame for frustration and misfortunes. Realistic Conflict Theory emphasizes intergroup competition for resources, leading to discrimination. Relative Deprivation Theory proposes that perceived unfairness and deprivation motivate discrimination. Social Identity Theory explains discrimination based on ingroup favoritism and outgroup derogation.

Lastly, at the ideological level, Social Representations Theory explores collective beliefs and values shaping social understanding and behaviors. System Justification Theory suggests that people tend to defend and justify existing social systems, even if it perpetuates inequality.

Despite the diversity of perspectives, common themes emerge. Many theories emphasize the role of group identity and the need to maintain a positive self-image through ingroup favoritism and outgroup derogation. Additionally, several theories highlight the impact of perceived threats and anxieties on prejudice and discrimination. These theories collectively contribute to our understanding of discrimination, shedding light on its complexity and multidimensional nature.

1.3. The interplay of perception on discrimination

Discrimination seems to be supported by the way targets are perceived. From an intra-personal perspective, the target may be perceived as an object of aggression resulting from individual and social frustrations of the discriminator; the target may also be perceived as a potential carrier of threats, such as diseases, leading to discriminatory attitudes as means of protecting the ingroup. The Terror Management Theory posits that the target represents a threat to existential security of others, prompting discriminatory behaviors to protect their identity and values.

At the individual level, individuals with a high social dominance orientation endorse ideologies of cultural inequality and value individualism, may hold prejudice and discriminatory behaviors against groups threatening their sense of personal autonomy, in order to maintain social hierarchy.

Attribution Theory highlights that we tend to attribute negative characteristics to the target as part of an attribution bias, wherein the ingroup (the discriminator's own group) is perceived more favorably compared to the outgroup (the target of discrimination). This bias can lead to differential treatment based on stereotypes and prejudices.

Social Representations Theory addresses how the group internalizes shared social beliefs and values that influence their perception and interpretation of the target. Social representations can lead to a "us-them" categorization, wherein the target is perceived as different and inferior, justifying discriminatory attitudes and behaviors.

Ideological Level Theories, such as System Justification Theory, shed light on how we may support and defend the existing social system, even if it means discriminating against disadvantaged groups. The endorsement of the status quo may be driven by a need to reduce uncertainties and maintain social cohesion, even at the expense of perpetuating inequality and discrimination.

2. Objective

- Characterize the prevalence of discrimination in a university context as reported by students, non-teaching staff, and teaching staff.

- Categorize the main types of perceived discrimination in a university context.

3. Target Audience

- National and international students from the University of Algarve, across all educational cycles, with an approximate total of 8,650 students.

- Non-teaching staff: operational, technical, senior, and managerial staff, with an approximate total of 110 individuals.

-Teaching staff: tenured professors, invited lecturers, researchers, and scholarship holders, with an approximate total of 475 individuals.

- Total population: ≈9,235

4. Measures and Procedure

Sociodemographic data. Participants were asked to fulfill some information concerning sociodemographic data, namely age, gender and to classify their role in the university community. They were also asked to inform for how long they have been enrolled or worked at UAlg.

Discrimination. An objective measure of discrimination was used, where participants were asked whether they had ever felt or experienced discrimination in a university context. Participants were also requested to describe the situation(s) of discrimination and the emotional impact caused by these situations. Both questions were qualitative, allowing participants to provide descriptions of varying levels of detail according to their personal discretion.

Intersectional Discrimination Index – day-to-day form (InDI-D). Lifetime day-to-day discrimination was used as a general measure for discrimination, and its instructions were adapted to asked for these situations specifically in academic context. Items were coded as 1 for yes (versus 0 for no). If respondents completed at least 80% of items, missing item values were imputed to "no/never"; if not, sum scores were not calculated (Scheim & Bauer, 2019).

The target audience was contacted through their institutional email addresses after the questionnaire was approved by the Data Protection Officer responsible for enforcing the General Data Protection Regulation and authorized for dissemination by the Rector of the University of Algarve.

Two links were generated, one in Portuguese and one in English, ensuring that international students could respond to the survey in at least one of the languages they are proficient in. These links were sent via email, along with a project introduction, the purpose of data collection, and informed consent.

The survey instrument was available for a period of four weeks, after which data collection was suspended. During this time, participants had the opportunity to access and respond to the questionnaire.

It should be noted that the use of the formal email addresses of the University of Algarve may have excluded individuals from the higher education community who do not have a direct affiliation (e.g., contracted companies for cleaning or maintenance). This limitation could potentially result in the exclusion of important perspectives and experiences related to discrimination in the university context. Future studies or surveys could consider alternative methods of reaching out to a broader range of stakeholders, including individuals from contracted companies or other relevant

groups within the university community, to ensure a more comprehensive understanding of the issue of discrimination.

5. Results

5.1. Response rate

Based on the obtained data, we can observe that the response rate to the questionnaire was approximately 3.5% (326 responses out of a total universe of 9,235 individuals). While this is a relatively low percentage, it's important to consider that participation in surveys of this nature is not always mandatory and depends on the interest and availability of the participants.

Furthermore, it is relevant to mention that out of the 326 individuals who started filling out the questionnaire, 10 discontinued before completing it. These dropouts represent a small proportion of the total responses received and may have occurred due to various reasons such as lack of time, lack of interest, or technical difficulties.

Although the results are based on a relatively small sample, they can still provide valuable insights into the prevalence of discrimination in a university context. However, it is important to acknowledge that the data does not necessarily represent the opinions of the entire university population, as the sample may not be fully representative of all groups within the higher education community.

5.2. Sample characterization

The sample consisted of a total of 316 participants who responded to the questionnaire. The data indicates the distribution of participants across different categories:

Table 1. Frequencies for Academic Category

Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Missing	1	0.316	0.316	0.316
Student	173	54.747	54.747	55.063
Teacher/Researcher/Fellowship	97	30.696	30.696	85.759
Staff	45	14.241	14.241	100.000
Total	316	100.000		

- Student: Most of the participants, 173 individuals (approximately 54.7% of the sample), fell into this category. Out of the 9,236 students, 173 participated in the questionnaire. Therefore, the student group represents approximately 1.9% of the total student population.

- Teacher/Researcher/Fellowship (faculty): A total of 97 participants (approximately 30.7% of the sample) belonged to this category. Out of the 475 individuals in this group, 97 participated in the

questionnaire. Thus, the teachers, researchers, and fellows group represent approximately 20.4% of the total population in this category.

- Staff: There were 45 participants (approximately 14.2% of the sample) categorized as staff members. Out of the 111 individuals classified as non-teaching staff, 45 participated in the questionnaire. Therefore, the non-teaching staff group represents approximately 40.5% of the total population in this category.

5.2.1. Students

The average age of the students was 28.031 years, with a standard deviation of 9.682. The minimum age reported was 18 years, while the maximum age was 58. In terms of gender identification, a total of 71% students identified themselves as women. Regarding experiences of discrimination, 46 students reported having felt discrimination at some point, while 14 were unsure if they had experienced discrimination. On the other hand, 113 students stated that they had not been subjected to any form of discrimination.

5.2.2. Faculty

The sample of teachers, researchers, and fellowship holders exhibited the following characteristics. The average age of this group was 35.263 years, with a standard deviation of 13.935. The age range varied from 18 to 68 years. In terms of gender identification, approximately 70.7% of the participants in this group identified themselves as women. When it comes to experiences of discrimination, 23 individuals reported having personally faced instances of discrimination. Additionally, 13 participants indicated uncertainty regarding whether they had ever experienced discrimination, while 61 individuals stated that they had never been the target of any form of discrimination.

5.2.3. Staff

The average age of the staff members was 50.558 years, with a standard deviation of 9.415. The age range varied from 27 to 64 years. In terms of gender identification, approximately 84.44% of the staff members identified themselves as women. Regarding experiences of discrimination, 6 individuals reported having faced instances of discrimination. Additionally, 7 participants expressed uncertainty about whether they had ever experienced discrimination, while 32 individuals stated that they had never been the subject of any form of discrimination.
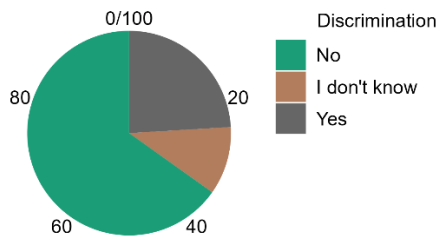
5.3. Discrimination measures

The first measure aimed at assessing the prevalence of discrimination asked participants if they had ever felt they had been discriminated against in a university context. The response options of yes, no, or I don't know were analyzed.

Figure 1. Have you felt discriminated against?

Out of the 316 participants, 206 individuals (65.19%), reported that they had not felt discriminated against in a university context. A total of 76 participants (approximately 24.051%) indicated that they had experienced discrimination.

Regarding uncertainty about experiencing discrimination, 34 participants (10.76%) responded that they were unsure if they had been subjected to discrimination. No missing values were reported in the data.

Participants who responded "yes" to the previous question were asked to describe the situation in which they had experienced discrimination and, at the same time, to describe the feelings that these situations provoked in them.

Responses were provided in a qualitative format. Therefore, it was necessary to conduct a thematic analysis of the responses by categorizing the experiences according to the source of discrimination (colleague, professor, or staff member), the target, and the category of membership in which they were subjected to discrimination. Table 3 summarizes the content analysis to the discrimination descriptions.

Table 2. Content Analysis for Discrimination Reported by Respondents

Discrimination against / for…	Examples
Age	"I felt discriminated against by my colleagues several times because I am older and a mother."
Appearance	"During the first week of classes, a teacher stopped the class to ask me what career path I intended to follow in the future, considering that with my hair (which at the time was in dreadlocks), I would not be accepted in certain areas of my field of study."
Differential treatment	"The professor made a distinction among students during the explanation of the subject matter. Some were asked to read the book, while others truly deserved the teacher's attention."
Financial	"Lack of appreciation for the work I do because it generates little income."
Gender	"The leadership of my research group shows a preference for male members. This preference is evident in the way they value the work and ideas of men. There's also a certain brotherhood-like treatment within the group." "I was discriminated against by a lecturer because I am a woman. He said the following: "You won't be a good professional in the field because you only think about getting married and having children. To be good, you should prioritize your career." This happened when I sought support from this lecturer for a research project I was working on."
Hazing	"Hazing"
Hierarchy	"Discrimination through hierarchy, that is, there are several situations where more senior professors discriminate against the less senior ones."
Nationality	"Because I was a foreigner, they assumed I didn't understand the subject being taught, and that my answers were less important than those of others." "A student made comments about Brazilians, likening them to indigenous people and implying that they marry Portuguese individuals to obtain Portuguese citizenship."
No response	--------
Personal context	"Due to having the status of a working student and having children, it becomes difficult for me to attend all classes. Therefore, I decided to divide the 1st year into two. Since I no longer attend all the courses and, due to work-related reasons or school strikes, I have to miss classes, I feel that I am often "forgotten" or that my efforts are undervalued."
Psychological Harassment	"A group of colleagues, upon realizing the potential of my master's thesis work, decided to make baseless accusations in order to diminish its quality. The group joined forces, and the attacks continued during the presentations of my work to the faculty. They also made numerous accusations in our WhatsApp group. In class, they wouldn't speak to me. I was left with only 3 supportive colleagues. " "Ignored, even when present."

Table 2. Content Analysis for Discrimination Reported by Respondents

Discrimination against / for…	Examples
Sexual Orientation	"Homophobia"
Special needs	"Non-existence of conditions that allow access for people with reduced mobility and lack of respect for these conditions when they do exist." "I am a student with special educational needs, and I was discriminated against during an exam by a professor who told me that if I had "that problem," I should not be taking the course."

The frequencies of occurrence for each of the identified categories were recorded and are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Frequencies for Categories of Discrimination

Discrimination against / for…	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Age	4	5.263	5.263	5.263
Appearance	1	1.316	1.316	6.579
Differential treatment	14	18.421	18.421	25.000
Financial	1	1.316	1.316	26.316
Gender	10	13.158	13.158	39.474
Hazing	2	2.632	2.632	42.105
Hierarchy	3	3.947	3.947	46.053
Nationality	23	30.263	30.263	76.316
No response	9	11.842	11.842	88.158
Personal context	1	1.316	1.316	89.474
Psychological Harassment	5	6.579	6.579	96.053
Sexual Orientation	1	1.316	1.316	97.368
Special needs	2	2.632	2.632	100.000
Missing	0	0.000		
Total	76	100.000		

The table displays the frequencies and percentages of different categories of discrimination reported by the respondents.

The first notable aspect concerns the nine participants (11.8%) that chose not to provide a specific response regarding discrimination, which might indicate a reluctance to disclose discriminatory experiences or lack of motivation to do so. These participants signalized to have been discriminated against but choose not to disclose information regarding those situations.

The category with the highest frequency was nationality, with 23 responses (30.2%). This indicates that a significant number of participants reported experiencing discrimination based on their nationality or country of origin.

After discrimination against nationality, comes the differential treatment. This category had the second highest frequency, with 14 responses (18.4% of the total). It suggests that a significant number of participants experienced discriminatory treatment compared to others in the university setting.

Gender discrimination was reported by 10 participants, accounting for 13.2% of the total. This highlights the presence of discriminatory experiences based on gender within the university environment.

Psychological Harassment is disclosed in five descriptions (6.6%) indicating experiences of psychological harassment, pointing to instances of non-physical mistreatment or abusive behavior that had a negative impact on the individuals.

A contingency analysis was performed between the source and target of discrimination. The source was identified based on the description provided by the individuals about the situations they considered to have been discriminated in. In cases where there was insufficient information, it was classified as undefined.

**Table 4. Distributions of discrimination agents: target by origin.**

Target		Origin						Total
		Institution	No response	Non-teaching Staff	Student	Teacher/Faculty members	Undefined	
No response	Count	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	1.000
	% of total	0.000 %	0.000 %	0.000 %	0.000 %	1.316 %	0.000 %	1.316 %
Non-teaching Staff	Count	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	2.000	3.000	6.000
	% of total	0.000 %	0.000 %	1.316 %	0.000 %	2.632 %	3.947 %	7.895 %
Student	Count	2.000	7.000	1.000	5.000	26.000	6.000	47.000
	% of total	2.632 %	9.211 %	1.316 %	6.579 %	34.211 %	7.895 %	61.842 %
Teacher/Researcher/Fellow	Count	0.000	5.000	0.000	0.000	16.000	1.000	22.000
	% of total	0.000 %	6.579 %	0.000 %	0.000 %	21.053 %	1.316 %	28.947 %
Total	Count	2.000	12.000	2.000	5.000	45.000	10.000	76.000
	% of total	2.632 %	15.789 %	2.632 %	6.579 %	59.211 %	13.158 %	100.000 %

The table displays the distribution of discrimination agents categorized by their origin and target.

Among the reported cases, teachers or faculty members were the primary origin of discrimination, accounting for 59.21% of the total instances.

Students were the target in most cases (61.84%), with 6.58% experiencing discrimination from their peers. However, 34.21% of discrimination from this group was originated at teachers or faculty members.

Figure 2. Day to day discrimination in academic context measured with InDI-D
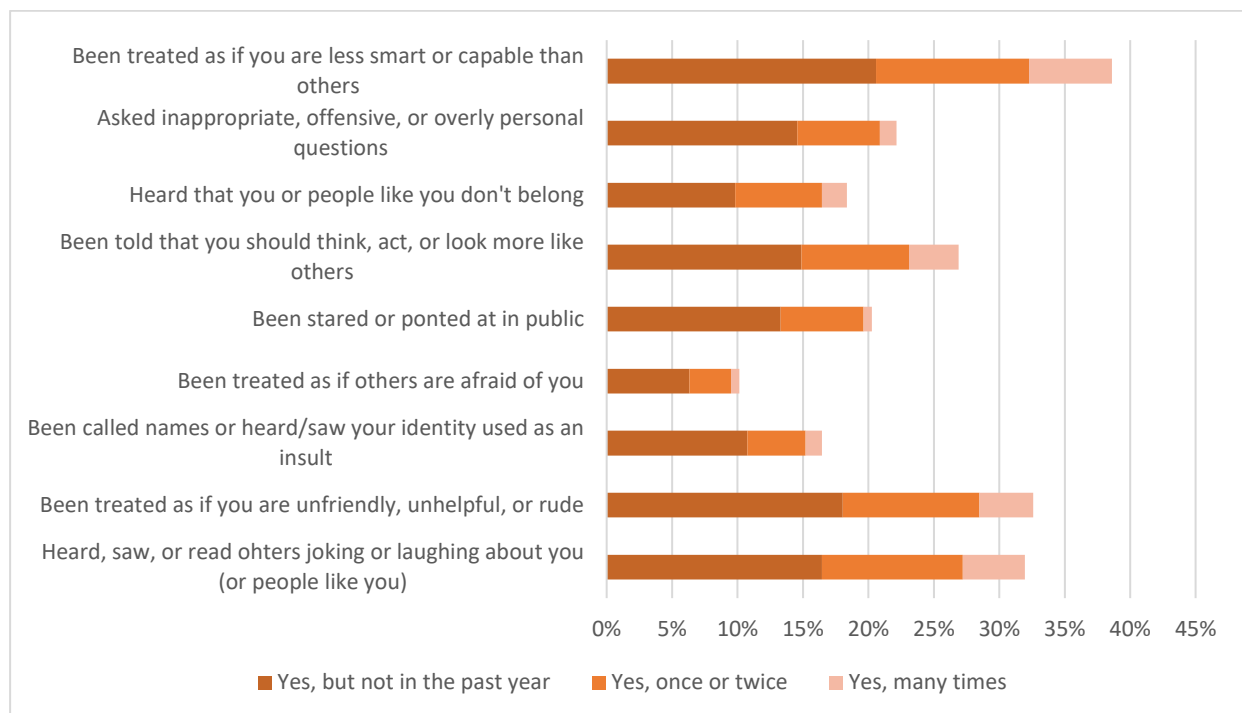
It is notable that "being treated as if you are less smart or capable than others" presents as the most common form of discrimination, with almost 40% of the sample reporting it. The less expressed form is "treated as if others are afraid of you".

The bar chart represents the frequency of discrimination on three levels: not in the past year, and in the present year, once or twice or many times. The answer "no" was suppressed from the chart for interpretation purposes.

5.4. Emotional responses to discrimination

Participants were asked, in an open-ended question format, about the feelings and emotions they experienced during the previously described episode of discrimination. These responses were categorized to identify the prevailing sentiments and emotions. This categorization resulted in a total

of 146 occurrences, comprising 74 distinct vocabulary forms, with 66.22% being unique words. The average number of occurrences (vocabulary forms) per response is 2.25.

The frequency analysis of the categorized emotional and sentimental expressions is presented in Figure 2, included below, which depicts a word cloud. All words with an absolute frequency greater than 2 were included.

The data gathered from the participants' responses regarding their emotions and feelings during episodes of discrimination at the university provides valuable insights into the impact of such experiences. These emotions can be categorized into several distinct themes, shedding light on the complex psychological responses triggered by discrimination.

Figure 3. Word cloud representing the most frequently reported emotions and feelings.

Anger (17 occurrences): Anger appears to be one of the most prevalent emotions experienced by individuals who faced discrimination. This intense feeling suggests a strong reaction to perceived unfair treatment or prejudice, indicating the potential harm caused by discriminatory incidents.

Sadness (11 occurrences): The presence of sadness in the participants' responses highlights the emotional toll of discrimination. Experiencing discrimination can lead to feelings of disappointment, helplessness, and sorrow, further emphasizing the need for addressing such issues within the university community.

Malicious (6 occurrences): The occurrence of the term "malicious" suggests that some individuals perceived the discriminatory acts directed at them as intentional and driven by ill intentions. This perception can contribute to a sense of vulnerability and distrust among the affected individuals.

Unjust (5 occurrences): The term "unjust" reflects a sense of perceived unfairness and inequity in the treatment of those subjected to discrimination. Such feelings can foster resentment and hinder the establishment of an inclusive and supportive university environment.

Humiliated (5 occurrences): The emotion of humiliation denotes the detrimental impact that discriminatory incidents can have on an individual's self-esteem and dignity. This feeling of shame can have long-lasting effects on one's mental well-being and sense of belonging.

Frustration (5 occurrences): Frustration arises from the perception of barriers and obstacles imposed by discrimination. The individuals experiencing discrimination may feel hindered in their academic pursuits and overall university experience.

Indignation (4 occurrences): The term "indignation" signifies a righteous anger or strong displeasure at perceived injustice. This emotion reflects a sense of moral outrage, indicating the importance of addressing discriminatory practices within the university.

Excluded (4 occurrences): The feeling of exclusion suggests that individuals who experienced discrimination felt marginalized and isolated from the university community. This exclusionary sentiment can hinder their academic and social integration.

Insecurity and Inferiority (2 occurrences each): The presence of emotions like insecurity and inferiority highlights the damaging impact of discrimination on individuals' self-perception and confidence. Such feelings can impede personal growth and hinder academic performance.

Fear (2 occurrences): The experience of discrimination may elicit fear in individuals, leading them to anticipate future incidents or consequences, thereby creating a climate of apprehension within the university setting.

Demotivation and Depression (2 occurrences each): The presence of demotivation and depression in the responses underscores the potential mental health implications of discrimination. These emotions indicate the need for appropriate support and resources to address the well-being of affected individuals.

We also consider the need to conduct an analysis of all the content mentioned as a response to this question. The following table is the result of a systematic categorization of a set of the full emotional responses described by the participants. The categorization process involved carefully analyzing each word's inherent emotional content and grouping them into relevant categories and subcategories based on shared themes and emotions. Emphasis was placed on distinguishing between negative emotions, positive emotions, neutral emotions, self-reflective emotions, and social issues and injustices. Subcategories were created to further refine and specify the emotions and experiences represented by the words. This methodology aimed to provide a structured and comprehensive framework for understanding and organizing the diverse emotional states and experiences expressed by the given word set.

Table 5. Emotional word categorization.

Category	Subcategory	Words
Negative Emotions and States	Sadness and Despair	abandon, demotivation, depression, despair, disheartened, humiliated, inadequacy, regret, sadness, shame, tiredness, upset
	Anger and Frustration	angry, frustrated, fury, indignation, irritated
	Fear and Anxiety	anxious, fear, nervous
	Rejection and Isolation	despised, excluded, neglected, unheard, unrecognized
	Injustice and Discrimination	discriminated, disdain, disrespected, injustice, oppressed, violation
	Negative Self-Perception	difficult, diminished, inferior, inferiority, insecure, nonconformity, overwhelmed, subordinated, uselessness
	Negative Social Interactions	embarrassment, injustice, rude, malicious
	Negative Outlook	misplaced, pessimism
	Feeling Powerless	impotence, unable
Positive Emotions and States	Empowerment and Gratitude	explored, support, trust, return
	Neutral Emotions and States	astonishment, commotion, normal
Self-Reflective Emotions		regret
Social Issues and Injustice		inequality
		ingratitude

6. Discussion

The data revealed that discrimination is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that can manifest in various forms and target all considered groups. The most frequently reported form of discrimination was differential treatment, indicating that unequal treatment and favoritism within the university environment are prevalent issues. Additionally, discrimination based on nationality was another significant category, suggesting that individuals from different countries or cultural backgrounds may face challenges related to their origin.

The definition of discrimination provided by Gordon Allport (1954) as "any conduct based on distinctions made according to social or natural categories, unrelated to the merit or abilities of individuals, or their individual behavior," serves as a guiding framework to evaluate the instances of discrimination reported by the participants.

Based upon the definition, some of the scenarios described can be classified as textbook discrimination, as they involve clear and explicit differential treatment based on social categories such as nationality, gender, appearance, and age. For example, discrimination based on nationality, as participants reported experiences where they were treated differently or subjected to negative stereotypes and comments due to their foreign nationality. Discrimination based on nationality

appears to be described in the literature as a common scenario. The study by Krahé et al. (2005) shows that individuals who felt they could be identified as foreigners by their appearance reported more serious discrimination than those who felt less identifiable. In this survey, most students report discrimination upon their nationality were Brazilian and are highly identifiable by their accent.

Also, gender discrimination, where individuals were subject to biased treatment, including prejudiced remarks and unequal opportunities, based solely on their gender. Discrimination based on appearance shows participants facing discriminatory treatment due to their physical appearance, such as hairstyle or clothing choices. This type of discrimination falls under discrimination definition, as it is based on superficial characteristics rather than individual merits or actions.

Nevertheless, the prevalence of discrimination is relatively low, which seems to be in line with a set of studies that defend that widespread bias and discrimination may fall into a fallacy. Campbell and Brauer (2021) paper, over 9 studies, discusses the two competing accounts of discrimination in society: the Dispersed Discrimination Account and the Concentrated Discrimination Account. The Dispersed Discrimination Account posits that discrimination is widespread, with most individuals engaging in subtle or overt discriminatory behaviors due to their implicit biases. The Concentrated Discrimination Account, on the other hand, suggests that discrimination is mainly perpetrated by a numerical minority of individuals who repeatedly engage in discriminatory behaviors. The findings are more consistent with the concentrated discrimination account than with the dispersed discrimination account. In this survey, we observed that situations of discrimination seem to be concentrated in the teacher-student axis, with the former being the perpetrators of discriminatory actions and behaviors.

The results do not support the idea that discrimination is propagated by a vast majority of individuals engaging in negative behaviors. Instead, discrimination appears to be primarily perpetrated by a numerical minority of individuals. The Campbell and Brauer (2021) study acknowledges that discrimination still exists and that individuals from marginalized groups face barriers and bias and suggest that if discrimination is concentrated, initiatives should be targeted to specific individuals who discriminate. Preventative measures and behavioral expectations for interactions with marginalized groups should be put in place, and non-discriminatory peers should be encouraged to engage in more inclusive behaviors.

It is also important to note that not all scenarios described may perfectly align with textbook discrimination, as discrimination can manifest in more subtle or nuanced ways. Some instances reported in the study may involve more complex and contextual factors, and they may not fit the classic textbook definition but can still be considered discriminatory. For instance, the reports on differential treatment: participants reported experiences of being treated differently in academic settings, with some students receiving more attention and support from professors while others felt

neglected. Although the differential treatment may not explicitly be based on social categories, it can still be considered discriminatory if it results in unequal opportunities or disadvantages for certain individuals or groups. Also, some participants reported instances of psychological harassment, where they were subjected to baseless accusations and negative comments by colleagues or peers. While this form of discrimination may not directly emerge from natural or social categories, it can still have a discriminatory impact on the targeted individuals' mental well-being and sense of belonging.

In summary, while some of the scenarios described by the participants can be classified as discrimination, not all instances may fit this precise definition. Discrimination is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, and it can manifest in various forms, ranging from explicit and overt actions to more subtle and indirect behaviors. The participants' experiences illustrate the need for a comprehensive understanding of discrimination, recognizing its diverse manifestations, and addressing both explicit and implicit biases to create an inclusive and equitable university environment.

The high frequency of discrimination based on nationality and gender underscores the need for targeted interventions to address these specific areas of concern. Social Identity Theory and Social Representations Theory offer valuable explanations for these findings, as they emphasize the role of group identity and shared social beliefs in shaping discriminatory attitudes and behaviors. Discrimination based on nationality and gender can stem from perceived differences and stereotypes associated with these social categories, leading to differential treatment and exclusionary practices.

The emotional responses to discrimination shed light on the profound impact such experiences can have on individuals. Anger, sadness, fear, and frustration emerged as prevalent emotional reactions, indicating the significant harm caused by discriminatory incidents. The emotional responses align with the theoretical perspectives of Terror Management Theory, which suggests that discrimination can be perceived as a threat to one's existential security, leading to strong emotional reactions such as anger and fear.

Furthermore, the experience of humiliation reported by participants corresponds to the detrimental effect of discrimination on an individual's self-esteem and dignity. This aligns with the insights from Social Identity Theory, as discrimination can lead to feelings of rejection and isolation, hindering one's sense of belonging within the university community. The presence of the emotion "unjust" reflects a sense of perceived unfairness and inequity in the treatment of those subjected to discrimination. This emotion resonates with System Justification Theory, as individuals may seek to justify and defend the existing social system even when it perpetuates inequality and discrimination.

7. References

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