

Review articles (systematic or scoping)

Psychology and Migration: A Systematic Review of Brazilian Literature

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Abstract

Between 2010 and 2020, the number of applications by foreigners to reside in Brazil increased almost tenfold, rising from 105,094 to approximately 1.2 million. This period was marked by migratory flows from a diverse range of origins, with a notable presence of migrants from South America, the Caribbean, and Africa. In light of this scenario, the objective of this study was to map how Brazilian Psychology has investigated the migratory flows of foreigners to the country. To this end, a systematic review of the national literature was conducted using the databases of the Virtual Health Library (BVS) and the Virtual Library of Psychology (BVS Psi Brasil), with no restrictions on year or language. A total of 17 articles were selected and analyzed regarding samples, constructs, instruments, data collection and analysis procedures. Flows from Haiti (35%) and African countries (25%) were the most investigated. The main constructs addressed included mental health, quality of life, and cultural adaptation. Regarding methodological aspects, 10 studies were qualitative and 7 were quantitative. As for procedures, the following were identified: seven surveys (41.17%), three case studies, two bibliographic studies, two documentary studies, two field studies, and one ethnographic study. The results indicate a field in consolidation, with a diversity of approaches and growing attention to specific migratory contexts.

Keywords: International Migration. Foreigners. Psychology. Human Migration. Systematic Review

PSICOLOGIA E MIGRAÇÃO DE ESTRANGEIROS PARA O BRASIL: UMA REVISÃO SISTEMÁTICA DA LITERATURA BRASILEIRA

Psicologia e migração: revisão sistemática

Resumo

Entre 2010 e 2020, a quantidade de solicitações por estrangeiros para residir no Brasil aumentou quase dez vezes, passando de 105.094 para aproximadamente 1,2 milhão. Esse período foi marcado por fluxos migratórios com uma diversidade de origens, com destaque para migrantes da América do Sul, Caribe e África. Diante desse cenário, este estudo teve como objetivo mapear como a Psicologia brasileira tem investigado os fluxos migratórios de estrangeiros para o país. Para tanto, realizou-se uma revisão sistemática da literatura nacional nas bases da Biblioteca Virtual em Saúde (BVS) e da Biblioteca Virtual de Psicologia (BVS Psi Brasil), sem restrição de ano ou idioma. Foram selecionados 17 artigos, analisados quanto a amostras, construtos, instrumentos, procedimentos de coleta e análise de dados. Os fluxos oriundos do Haiti (35%) e de países africanos (25%) foram os mais investigados. Os principais constructos abordaram saúde mental, qualidade de vida e adaptação cultural. Quanto aos aspectos metodológicos, 10 estudos foram qualitativos e 7 quantitativos. Quanto aos procedimentos, identificaram-se: sete survey (41,17%), três estudos de caso, dois bibliográficos, dois documentais, dois de campo e um etnográfico. Os resultados indicam um campo em consolidação, com diversidade de enfoques e atenção crescente a contextos migratórios específicos.

Palavras-chave: Migração Internacional. Estrangeiros. Psicologia. Migração Humana. Revisão sistemática

PSICOLOGÍA Y MIGRACIÓN: UNA REVISIÓN SISTEMÁTICA DE LA LITERATURA BRASILEÑA

Psicología y Migración: Revisión Sistemática

Resumen

Entre 2010 y 2020, la cantidad de solicitudes de extranjeros para residir en Brasil aumentó casi diez veces, pasando de 105.094 a aproximadamente 1,2 millones. Este período estuvo marcado por flujos migratorios con una diversidad de orígenes, destacándose los migrantes de América del Sur, el Caribe y África. Ante este escenario, el objetivo de este estudio fue mapear cómo la Psicología brasileña ha investigado los flujos migratorios de extranjeros hacia el país. Para ello, se realizó una revisión sistemática de la literatura nacional en las bases de datos de la Biblioteca Virtual en Salud (BVS) y de la Biblioteca Virtual de Psicología (BVS Psi Brasil), sin restricción de año o idioma. Se seleccionaron 17 artículos, los cuales fueron analizados en cuanto a muestras, constructos, instrumentos y procedimientos de recolección y análisis de datos. Los

flujos provenientes de Haití (35%) y de países africanos (25%) fueron los más investigados. Los principales constructos abordaron la salud mental, la calidad de vida y la adaptación cultural. En cuanto a los aspectos metodológicos, 10 estudios fueron cualitativos y 7 cuantitativos. Respecto a los procedimientos, se identificaron: siete encuestas (41,17%), tres estudios de caso, dos estudios bibliográficos, dos documentales, dos de campo y uno etnográfico. Los resultados indican un campo en consolidación, con diversidad de enfoques y una atención creciente a contextos migratorios específicos.

Palabras-clave: Migración Internacional. Extranjeros. Psicología. Migración Humana. Revisión Sistemática

Migration and human displacement have been impacted by recent global transformations, causing geopolitical, environmental, and technological changes. The geopolitical resurgence has recently generated new regional conflicts in areas considered stable (OIM, 2024a). The effects of these global systemic transformations have intensified even further in recent decades, and migratory flows have emerged as central themes of governmental actions aimed at promoting social transformation (Castles, 2000; OIM, 2024a; Tashima, 2018). According to the International Organization for Migration (OIM, 2024), in 2020 there were approximately 281 million international migrants worldwide, representing 3.6% of the global population. Of this total, approximately 135 million were women, 146 million were men, and 28 million were children.

There are several factors that direct and motivate human displacement. When there is a possibility of choice, one of the main motivators for human mobility is often the economy. Many migrants are attracted to more economically developed countries in search of better job opportunities and quality of life (Berry et al., 2011). For other people, this process is forced due to adverse situations experienced in their countries of origin. In these cases, protection can be requested and granted in the destination countries, as provided for in international agreements. The motivations of these migrants are diverse and may include fleeing armed conflicts, persecution, or climate catastrophes, for example (Danfá & Aléssio, 2020).

The new era of globalization has redefined the pattern of human mobility, driven by technological advances in the areas of information, transport, and international financial transactions, which have favored the displacement of thousands of people in search of leisure, work, and housing in other countries. Other factors that contribute to this process include: a) the search for transnational networks – communities of migrants that encourage and favor the migration of their friends and family, and b) the demographic imbalance between developing countries and more economically developed countries, where there is a demand for workers to fill jobs, and many of which are low-skill or low-wage positions (Jesus, 2020; Tashima, 2018).

Regardless of the initial intention, many migrants end up settling in the new land. For the reasons mentioned and for many other reasons, migration modifies the configuration of the societies involved. In receiving societies, demographic, economic, political, social, and cultural restructuring is witnessed (Castles, 2000; OIM, 2024a; Tashima, 2018). Migration causes inevitable changes, enabling the creation of an environment of cultural diversity or threats and intergroup conflicts. It is up to political leaders to prepare their populations for these social transformations and to anticipate or minimize emergent problems related to migration (OIM, 2024a; Tashima, 2018).

There is an increasing interest from governments in the migrant population's well-being. In 2013, the World Migration Report addressed migrants' well-being for the first time, highlighting the importance of this issue for the development of societies and for the phenomenon of migration (OIM, 2013). The main focus of this report, unlike the frequent emphasis on socioeconomic data, was on migrants as people and the repercussions of migration on these

individuals' and their families' lives. The focus on the human element requires a change in state policy in order to treat migration as a human rights issue and no longer as a matter of national security and labor market protection (OIM, 2013). The 2022 and 2024 Reports present the geopolitical scenarios that are directly connected to migratory flows, considering recent and projected dynamics (OIM, 2024a).

Migration in Brazil began with the arrival of the Portuguese in the context of colonization, whose objective was the military and economic appropriation of the land, as well as the implementation of large-scale export agriculture. This economic model gave rise to the trafficking of enslaved people from the African continent, a forced migratory flow that lasted for three centuries, until 1850, and introduced approximately four million people into the colony. This process consolidated the slave-owning society, which profoundly marks Brazilian history, leaving significant traces in the national culture even after abolition in 1888 (Danfá & Aléssio, 2020; Patarra & Fernandes, 2011).

At the beginning of the 19th century, the migratory movement began to diversify with experiences of free migration directed at people of other nationalities, in addition to the Portuguese. An agricultural colonization project, with the objectives of defense and populating land through small poly-culture properties, attracted Germans, Italians, and other foreigners to the country's southern region. By the middle of that same century, migrants began to head to the coffee-growing region in western São Paulo, while other groups were destined for work on infrastructure projects, such as the opening of roads and tracks (Gonçalves, 2017; Oliveira, 2021; Patarra & Fernandes, 2011).

Migrants and enslaved people marked the population displacement driven by both the great internal demand for labor, resulting from the expansion of export agriculture in Brazil, and the specific circumstances of the regions of origin of those who arrived in the country. Both flows were embedded in the world economic order, historically transformed by the industrialization of the main European countries and the United States, whose temporal landmark dates back to the 19th century (Audebert et al., 2023; Gonçalves, 2017).

The 1888 Abolition of Slavery brought new challenges and demands. The great expansion of coffee production, associated with the scarcity of national labor, made it possible for Brazil to open up to migration. An intense period of migration from Europe to the Americas – especially to Brazil – occurred between 1870 and 1930. It is estimated that, in this context, about 40 million people migrated from Europe to the Americas (Patarra & Fernandes, 2011).

With the 1929 world economic crisis and, consequently, the coffee crisis, migratory flows to Brazil entered a new phase. The progressive reduction in international immigration, resulting from these economic transformations, generated a growing demand for labor, which began to be met by internal migrations. In 1930, the first measures restricting the entry of international migrants were published, which intensified until the establishment of quotas in the Constitutions of 1934 and 1937 (Patarra & Fernandes, 2011).

As a consequence of the hostilities in Europe and the East, which culminated in the Second World War (1939–1945), migratory flows to Brazil were practically interrupted. According to Patarra and Fernandes (2011), in the second half of the 20th century, migration occurred in an incipient manner, without the occurrence of large-scale flows. This indicates that, until the mid-1980s, Brazil could be considered a country closed to migration.

Starting in the 1980s, Brazil began a new phase regarding the displacement of its population, a period in which the flow of Brazilians to reside outside the country began to be both discussed by the media and investigated by researchers from various fields. From a country historically receptive to migrants, Brazil began to emigrate, with the main destinations being the United States, Europe, and Paraguay (Patarra & Fernandes, 2011). If in the 1980s most of the migratory flows of Brazilians were to the USA, from the 1990s onwards, the flows were to various European countries. The first important migratory flow, for historical and cultural reasons, is the entry of Brazilians into Portugal. This flow remained stable until the first decade of the 2000s, when countries such as Spain and Italy (Martes & Fazito, 2010) and the United Kingdom and Ireland (Patarra & Fernandes, 2011) stood out in the migratory context with the presence of Brazilians.

In the period mentioned in the previous paragraph, new trends in international migration began to be observed in the country, which started receiving Koreans, Chinese, Bolivians, Paraguayans, Chileans, Peruvians, and Africans from various countries. In the period from 2008 to 2011, the annual number of foreigners who applied for a visa to work or reside in Brazil increased by 60%, from 43,993 in 2008 to 70,524 in 2011 (Patarra & Fernandes, 2011).

Between 2013 and 2022, approximately 1.2 million migrants were registered in Brazil requesting long-term or temporary residence, representing an increase of more than ten times compared to the number registered at the beginning of the period (Cavalcanti et al., 2023). In this context, the increased presence of women and children in migratory flows stands out. During this period, some historically relevant origins of migratory flows lost prominence, such as those from Portugal, Spain, Germany, and Italy. In 2013, Haitians – whose migratory flow began to intensify in 2010 – represented the main nationality among applicants for long-term residence (Cruz et al., 2024). With the humanitarian crisis worsening in Venezuela in the 2010s, Brazil became part of the Venezuelan migration route, and this nationality came to occupy first place in the applications for long-term residence (Oliveira, 2022a).

Psychological studies on migration

As already highlighted, international migrations cause changes in the dynamics of the societies of origin and destination, being a complex phenomenon studied by several areas of knowledge, such as Sociology, Economics, Anthropology, History, Political Science, Geography, and Psychology (Faqueti et al., 2020; Patarra & Fernandes, 2011). Regarding Psychology, what is observed is a late contribution compared to the contributions of other areas. In 1994, an academic event in the United States symbolized the late interest of Psychology in the subject. Along the

various representatives of different disciplines, there were no psychologists at the event (Tashima, 2018).

The American Psychological Association (APA, 2013a) states that studies on migration are gradually increasing, but still lack a more consistent theoretical and methodological understanding of the phenomenon, given its complexity. This organization recommends that, to expand knowledge of migrants, Psychology should consider some important aspects when dealing with this population. Psychology professionals are increasingly serving migrants and their families in various contexts, including schools, social and community centers, clinics, and hospitals, among others. Therefore, these professionals must be aware of the complexity of demographic transformation and consider its implications as citizens, professionals, and researchers (APA, 2013a).

According to APA (2013a; 2017), the US studies are focused on understanding the migration process from leaving the country of origin to entering the host country, the acculturation process, discrimination in the social context and in the reception process, acculturation and mental health, intergenerational differences in the acculturation of migrants, and on educational and clinical contexts. It is important to highlight that there is some strangeness among researchers regarding the concept of acculturation.

According to Rudmin et al. (2017), etymologically, the word *acculturation* refers to the idea of direction, that is, movement towards a culture or acquisition of a second culture. In this study, one uses the concept of *acculturation* understood as the process by which individuals or groups adapt their social, cultural values, ideals, beliefs and behaviors, adapting them from the culture of origin to the new culture with which they maintain direct and continuous contact (APA, 2023b; Michaelis, 2023a).

Therefore, the construct of *acculturation*, originating from Social Psychology, should not be confused with the concept of *deculturation*, which refers to the loss or suppression of a cultural identity as a result of contact with a distinct (usually dominant) culture, intentionally or not (APA, 2023c; Michaelis, 2023b). The *Dicionário Crítico de Migrações Internacionais* (Critical Dictionary of International Migrations) (Cavalcanti et al., 2017) defines acculturation as synonymous with adaptation, understood as a multicausal process, influenced by individual and social, internal and external factors, involving sociocultural, psychological, and economic dimensions.

In Brazil, there are studies on different aspects of the international migration process, such as psychopathology (Bustamante et al., 2019), post-traumatic stress (Brunnet et al., 2017), mental health (Dantas, 2016), quality of life and cultural aspects (Weber et al., 2019), and social representations (Franken et al., 2012). The largest amount of research on migration in Brazil focuses on internal migration, when human mobility occurs in search of employment and a better quality of life within the country (Fonseca, 2020); international migration of Brazilians to other parts of the world (Tashima & Torres, 2018), and return migration, which occurs when Brazilians who have migrated to other countries return to Brazil — as is the case with the *dekaseji*, for example (Pessôa & Kohatsu, 2023).

Nevertheless, despite the relevant studies on these migratory movements, it was not possible to find systematic literature reviews that focused on mapping the lines of Psychology research on the migration of foreigners to Brazil. To date, we have identified reviews of: Bustamante et. al. (2018); Silva & Bucher–Maluschke (2018); and Danfá & Aléssio (2020). Bustamante et. al. (2018) conducted a review of migration, trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), with the aim of investigating the specific stressors related to the migratory experience. Silva and Bucher–Maluschke (2018) analyzed pieces of Psychology research on forced displacement and migration in the period from 2006 to 2016. Danfá and Aléssio (2020) studied how Psychology has analyzed the migration of Africans to Brazil.

Given this gap, this study had the general objective of mapping how Brazilian Psychology research on the migration of foreigners to Brazil is characterized. As specific objectives, based on the reviewed studies, we sought to describe the methodological aspects of these studies and identify the nationalities and contexts in which the analyzed samples are inserted.

Method

This is a systematic review of Brazilian scientific production in Psychology regarding migration processes to Brazil. This study used the PRISMA (Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) protocol to guide the procedures (Page et al., 2021). The search and selection of works were made independently by two reviewers. Initially, the references retrieved in the database search process were exported to EndNote Web (Thomson Reuters, 2020) – a cloud-based reference management software –, where duplicates were excluded. The reviewers evaluated the selected articles at the beginning of each screening stage to establish the screening consistency, considering 100% agreement between the reviewers.

The searches were conducted from November 2021 to February 2022, in the databases of the Virtual Health Library (BVS) and the Virtual Health Library – Psychology Brazil (BVS Psi Brasil), using the combined descriptors: “migration AND brazil AND psychology” in English, and “migração AND brasil AND psicologia” in Portuguese. The choice of these databases is justified because they are references in Brazilian and international literature on scientific information in the areas of Psychology and Health in general, including indexes for technical-scientific journals, theses, books, and other works with scientific dissemination. In addition, they cover the main national indexes of full text databases: Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO), Periódicos Eletrônicos em Psicologia (PePSIC), Latin American and Caribbean Literature Health Sciences Literature (LILACS), and Journals from the Brazilian Federal Agency for Support and Evaluation of Graduate Education (CAPES).

Study inclusion and exclusion criteria

The inclusion criteria were defined as Brazilian articles in the field of Psychology whose theme was the migratory flow of foreigners of any nationality to Brazil, without restrictions on language and year of publication. The exclusion criteria were adopted for studies: a) that did not

address the topic of migration; b) whose object of study did not consist of the migratory flow to Brazil (e.g., migratory flow of Brazilians to other countries), and c) that addressed return migration (e.g., Brazilians who are returning to Brazil after migrating abroad).

Analysis of selected studies

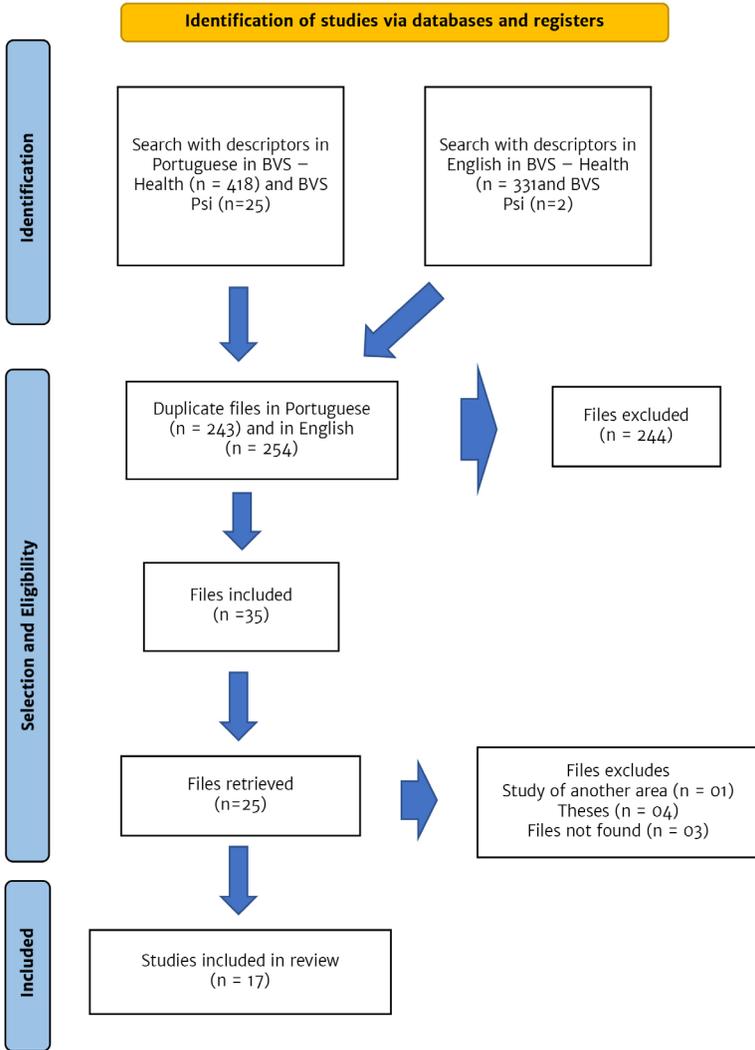
The eligibility assessment of each work for review initially included screening titles, keywords, and reading abstracts. After selecting the articles for review, studies were read in full and analyzed with regard to: a) years of publication; b) characteristics of the samples studied; c) constructs evaluated; d) instruments used; e) methods of data analysis; f) nationalities and social and historical contexts of the migratory movements analyzed; g) the most studied flows; and h) types of migration (i.e., return migration and refuge, among others).

Results

Searches in the Portuguese language resulted in 443 articles, with 418 retrieved from BVS – Health (2021), and 25 from BVS – Psychology (2021). Using the descriptors in the English language, 331 articles were retrieved from BVS–Health, and two from BVS – Psychology. Next, 200 duplicate articles were excluded. After evaluating the titles, keywords, and abstracts, a further 559 articles were excluded, which met one or more of the exclusion criteria adopted. Thus, 17 fully reviewed articles were selected, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Study selection flowchart



Regarding the excluded articles, initially 230 duplicates were removed. The other articles excluded – 254 works – can be separated into the following categories: two studies on return migration of Brazilians (Baptista et al., 2017), which refer to migrants who left their place of origin, resided for some time in another region, and then returned to their place of origin; five studies on internal migrations (Dota & Queiroz, 2019), which refer to migrants who moved from

one region to another within the same country; 16 studies on migrations of Brazilians to other countries; 11 studies on international migrations of non-Brazilians to other countries, except Brazil; 14 theses and dissertations; 110 studies that addressed other themes in Psychology; 91 studies on themes unrelated to Psychology and belonging to other areas of knowledge, and seven files not found and/or unavailable.

The 17 articles included for review were published between 2004 and 2020, with 2019 standing out with four publications, and 2018 and 2017 with three publications each. In contrast, there were no publications in 2005, 2006, 2008, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2015.

With regard to article authorship, 15 of the studies have multiple authorship, ranging from two to twelve authors. The researchers who stood out with the highest number of publications were: Bustamante (2018, 2019), with two publications as first author, followed by João L. A. Weber, Alice E. Brunnet, and Adolfo Pizinato, who published one article as first authors and one article as co-authors. As to periodicals, the articles were published in 15 scientific journals. No concentration of publications in specific journals was observed. Considering the reviewed articles, the journals with the highest number of publications were *Psicologia & Sociedade* and the Brazilian Journal of Psychiatry, with two articles each.

Studied migrants

In relation to the nationalities or social groups that comprised the samples in the 17 reviewed articles, five articles studied Haitian migrants (Barros & Borges, 2018; Brunnet et al., 2017; Gomes, 2017; Leão et al., 2017; Weber et al., 2019); five articles studied groups containing more than one nationality: Bolivians, Colombians, Argentinians, Chinese, Portuguese, and Paraguayans (Bustamante et al., 2018); Bolivians, Haitians, Congolese, Tongans, Bissau-Guineans, Nigerians, Peruvians, Ivorians (Gondim et al., 2016); African migrants (in the analyzed studies they refer to the continent) who came from various countries such as São Tomé and Príncipe, Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Cape Verde, Cameroon, Benin, and Mozambique (Lima & Feitosa, 2017); and Barreto et al. (2009) analyzed migrants from Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe, Angola, Mozambique, and Equatorial Guinea. Pizinato & Sarriera (2004) conducted research on Brazilians and migrants, and among the latter, Peruvians, Uruguayans, Angolans, and Germans, Colombians, Chileans, Americans, Bolivians, Japanese, Lebanese, Italians, Argentinians, Russians, and Israelis were studied.

Greeks (Costa & Garcia, 2014), Japanese (Sagawa, 2010), Sardinians (Carta et al., 2020), and Bolivians (Bustamante et al., 2019) were addressed individually in studies conducted on each nationality. Another category adopted studied Muslim women migrants in São Paulo (Zaia, 2007). Two literature reviews or document reviews were also published, without direct mention of a specific nationality (França et al., 2019; Prado & Araújo, 2019).

Revised databases and study participants

Regarding the studies selected, four were literature reviews (23.53%). In relation to the samples studied, only Prado and Araújo (2019) do not describe the characteristics of the sample used for their literature review. In the study by Bustamante et al. (2018), the authors used as a sample articles published in Portuguese, English, Spanish, or French, indexed up to the year 2017 in the PubMed, SciELO, LILACS, and ISI Web of Science databases. França et al. (2019) conducted a documentary review of legislation using 13 studies (articles, theses, and dissertations) found in BDTD and SciELO, published from 2007 to 2017. In addition, the authors reviewed official documents and legislation, selecting six states to exemplify the existence and/or absence of public policies at the state and municipal levels.

Researcher Sagawa (2010) analyzed a historical episode and reviewed archives and documents that reported what happened. This event occurred in July 1946 in the city of Osvaldo Cruz, in the state of São Paulo, where an episode of mass violence by Brazilians against Japanese people was recorded, in which groups of Brazilians went in search of any and all Japanese people in the region in order to inflict verbal and physical assaults, lynching, and physical and moral humiliations.

Thirteen studies used samples with human beings (76.47%). In Barreto et al. (2009), the sample studied consisted of 102 African migrants between 18 and 35 years old, mostly male (53.8%), single (78.8%), and students (82.7%). Barros and Borges (2018) analyzed a sample composed of seven Haitians, over 18 years of age, living in Brazil for more than 12 months, and who resided in Haiti when the 2010 earthquake occurred. In the study by Brunnet et al. (2017), the sample was composed of 66 Haitians selected from four different locations in three cities in the southern region of the country. Carta et al. (2020) used a sample of 218 adults, men and women, residing in the cities of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Curitiba, and Belo Horizonte.

Costa and Garcia (2014) interviewed 10 migrants residing in Brazil for more than 10 years, eight men and two women, collecting the data in the state of Espírito Santo. Gomes (2017) studied a sample of two groups of Haitians (students and workers) in the city of Florianópolis, state of Santa Catarina, but the author did not specify the number of participants. Gondim et al. (2016) used as a sample the account of 11 migrants of different nationalities during the presentation of works at an event.

In the study by Leão et al. (2017), 452 Haitians – 373 men and 79 women – residing in the cities of Cuiabá and Várzea Grande, in the state of Mato Grosso, were analyzed. In the research by Lima and Feitosa (2017), eight African migrants of different nationalities participated, aged between 19 and 27. Pizzinato and Sarriera (2004) used a sample of 572 Brazilian children and adolescents and 32 migrant students in public and private schools in the city Porto Alegre, state of Rio Grande do Sul. In the study by Bustamante et al. (2019), the sample consisted of 104 Bolivians residing in the city of São Paulo for at least 30 days, aged between 18 and 80. In Weber et al. (2019), the sample was 67 Haitian migrants, aged between 19 and 58 ($M = 33.87$;

SD = 5.47), with 77.6% of men, presenting high levels of education (M = 10.5; SD = 4.53), and 56.7% spoke Portuguese.

Finally, Zaia (2007) made a study with first-generation female migrants of different ages and countries of origin. All identified themselves as religious and Muslim. The author did not describe the number of women in the study.

Analysis procedures and data used

Regarding the analysis of data from qualitative studies and case studies, two studies performed content analysis (Barros & Borges, 2018; Gondim et al., 2016), two studies did discourse analysis (Gomes, 2017; Lima & Feitosa, 2017), and one study carried out thematic analysis (Costa & García, 2014). As for quantitative and survey studies, four studies used techniques for comparing proportions and means. Brunnet et al. (2017) used MANOVAs, Pearson correlations, chi-square, and t-test. The study by Carta et al. (2018) used the comparison of scores of the dependent variable and independent variables with a direct standardization method. Statistical significance was calculated using a χ^2 test (1 degree of freedom), and measures were expressed as odds ratios (OR) with a 95% confidence interval (95% CI), calculated using Miettinen-Nurminen score method.

Leão et al. (2017) used the procedures by Lwanga & Lemeshow and chi-square test with a 5% significance level. In the study by Bustamante et al. (2019), descriptive statistics, histograms, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, Student's t-test, Pearson correlation, and multiple linear regression analysis were used. The research by Weber et al. (2019) used variable comparison, Pearson correlations, chi-square, and Student's t-test.

Assessed constructs

The analyses carried of the 17 articles in this study are from diverse areas of knowledge and practice in Psychology (e.g., Social Psychology, Educational Psychology, and so on). The central themes that appeared in more than one study were: acculturation (Bustamante et al., 2018; Weber et al., 2019; Zaia, 2007), mental health (Brunnet et al., 2017; Bustamante et al., 2018, 2019), quality of life (Barreto et al., 2009; Weber et al., 2019), post-traumatic stress disorder (Brunnet et al., 2017; Bustamante et al., 2018), and public policies (França et al., 2019; Prado & Araújo, 2019).

Acculturation is defined as a multidimensional, bidirectional, and reciprocal process (Berry, 1997; Sam & Berry, 2016). Both groups in contact with each other are influenced, encountering aspects of engagement with the new culture and maintaining traits of the original culture. In the studies by Bustamante et al. (2018) and Weber et al. (2019), the acculturation process is related to quality of life and mental health, suggesting that the more culturally integrated and adapted the individual is, the lower the level of stress will be, thus resulting in a positive picture regarding health status and quality of life.

The study by Zaia (2007) aimed to present a theoretical understanding of the acculturation process and the role that religiosity/religion plays in this process. With regard to the use of acculturation strategies, the author observed that there is an option for the separation strategy – where the individual tends to value only the aspects of their original culture and refuses integration into the new country (Berry, 1997) –, favoring the maintenance of a sense of community and the permanence of original cultural values that may conflict with the habits found in Brazil. Acculturation involves several changes in the migrants' life aspects, including language, ethnic and cultural identity, and attitudes and values, among others (Bustamante et al., 2018; Zaia, 2007). Conflicts in the acculturation process are often the reasons that lead migrant families to psychological or psychiatric treatment (Bustamante et al., 2018).

In studies on mental health and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), Bustamante et al. (2018, 2019) highlight that several risk factors for PTSD are reported in the literature, such as multiple traumatic events, being a victim of violence (physical, psychological, moral, sexual, and patrimonial), and economic difficulties, in addition to factors related to post-migration difficulties, such as poor social networks (e.g., loneliness and boredom, weak social integration), poor access to counseling services, socioeconomic and political instability (e.g., not having legal migrant status, unemployment), and imprisonment. In a study with Bolivian migrants in the city of São Paulo, state of São Paulo, Bustamante et al. (2019) assessed barriers to healthcare and associated the results with scores on the Barriers to Access to Care Evaluation (BACE) scale and the risk of non-psychotic psychiatric disorders in this sample, finding that more than half of the sample had scores above 7 on the Self-Report Questionnaire (SRQ), thus indicating a high probability of non-psychotic mental disorder and also prevalent symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Brunnet et al. (2017) investigated the prevalence and factors associated with PTSD, anxiety, and depression. As a result, the PTSD prevalence in the sample was 9.1%. Symptoms of depression and anxiety were recorded in 10.6% and 13.6% of the total sample, respectively. Qualitatively, the sequence of traumatic events, difficulties in acculturation, discrimination, and difficulties with social support networks are associated with difficulty in cultural adjustment and to mental disorders.

In studies on quality of life, Weber et al. (2019) aimed to describe an overview of Haitian migration in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, investigating psychosocial aspects, acculturative orientations, prejudice, and quality of life. In relation to the domains related to quality of life, the migrants' means were higher in the physical ($M = 83.65$; $SD = 14.46$) and personal relationships ($M = 82.86$; $SD = 18.14$) domains, while the psychological ($M = 72.78$; $SD = 15.96$) and environmental ($M = 61.27$; $SD = 16.15$) domains presented slightly lower means. These means were compared by Weber et al. (2019) to the studies of Belizaire and Fuertes (2011), and the authors assumed that Haitian migrants would be predisposed to integrate into the Brazilian community, presenting better quality of life and less perception of prejudice when compared to Haitian migrants who are in other countries, such as France and the USA.

Barreto et al. (2009) analyzed the African students' quality of life in the city of João Pessoa, state of Paraíba, and the means were: physical domain ($M = 3.87$; $SD = 0.45$), social domain ($M = 3.69$; $SD = 0.60$), psychological domain ($M = 4.14$; $SD = 0.48$), environmental domain ($M = 3.08$; $SD = 0.53$), and general domain ($M = 3.87$; $SD = 0.66$). The study results revealed that the migrants assessed wanted to return to their country of origin, with the intention of becoming good professionals. For the students investigated, the concept of quality of life is associated with having better financial conditions, access to health, housing, education, and being at peace with yourself and with your friends.

Data collection instrument

With respect to the instruments used to collect data, six studies used semi-structured interviews (Barros & Borges, 2018; Costa & Garcia, 2014; Gomes, 2017; Gondim et al., 2016; Lima & Feitosa, 2017; Zaia, 2007). Two studies used the World Health Organization Quality of Life BREF (WHOQOL-BREF) (Barreto et al., 2009; Weber et al., 2019). Brunnet et al. (2017) used the Hopkins Symptom Checklist 27 (HSCL), the List of Migration Experiences (LiMEs), and the PTSD Checklist. In Carta et al. (2020) the Mood Disorder Questionnaire (MQD) was applied. Leão et al. (2017) used a structured interview. Pizzinato and Sarriera (2004) used the Revised Class Play (RPC). In the study by Bustamante et al. (2019) the Self-Reporting Questionnaire (SRQ) and the Barriers to Care Assessment (BACE) scale were used. And finally, in addition to the WHOQOL-BREF, Weber et al. (2019) used the Immigrant Acculturation Scale (IAS).

Other methodological aspects

As to the ethical aspects of research with human subjects, six studies mentioned approval from a research ethics committee, usually linked to a university institution. Five studies reported presenting the participant with an Informed Consent Form (ICF), including confidentiality clauses. Only two studies did not mention this ethical aspect. In total, 13 studies with human subjects (76.47%) and four exclusively theoretical studies (23.53%) were identified.

The types of research analyzed were classified according to their nature and procedures (Günther, 2006). In relation to *nature*, 10 studies were described as qualitative and seven as quantitative. Regarding *procedures*, seven studies conducted survey research, three made case studies, two conducted bibliographic research, two did documentary research, two made field studies, and one carried out an ethnographic study.

Migratory flows

Two migration flows were most frequently analyzed in the reviewed studies. Haitian migration was present in six of the studies with human subjects (46.15%), while migration from different African countries was addressed in three (25%). Haitian migration intensified towards Brazil after the 2010 earthquake. With the granting of residence visas for humanitarian reasons,

Brazil promoted the legal entry and residence of Haitian migrants (Barros & Borges, 2018; Brunnet et al., 2017, Weber et al., 2019).

Considered a natural disaster, the 2010 earthquake, whose epicenter was in Port-au-Prince (capital of Haiti), left approximately 300,000 dead and affected about 3 million people to varying degrees. The event caused changes in family structures, material and economic losses, exceeding the State's capacity to handle it with its own resources, further aggravating the country's precarious conditions. The earthquake became a historical landmark, leaving deep marks on the survivors – from the traumatic experience of surviving to the difficult decision to leave their homeland (Barros & Borges, 2018).

According to Leão et al. (2017), there were approximately 39,000 Haitians residing in Brazil that year, with the south and southeast regions being the main destinations for this migratory flow. In their research, conducted in the Central-West region, they addressed the sociodemographic and work conditions of 452 Haitian migrants residing in Cuiabá and Várzea Grande, cities in the state of Mato Grosso. The results indicated precarious social, economic, and labor conditions among the participants. The integration of these migrants has been associated with productive sectors historically subjected to unfavorable working conditions, with negative repercussions on workers' health (Leão et al., 2017)

Discussion

International migrations cause changes in the dynamics of the societies of origin and destination, constituting a complex phenomenon studied by various areas of knowledge (Faqueti et al., 2020; Patarra & Fernandes, 2011; OIM, 2024a). In this study, the late interest of Brazilian Psychology in the subject is observed, with the first publication recorded only in 2004, according to the sample analyzed. There is no concentration of studies on nationalities or migratory flows, which contrasts with the diversity of origins that make up the history of Brazilian society. Nor is there a concentration of publications in journals.

Although late, it is possible to relate the interest in researching the theme of foreign migration to Brazil, as demonstrated by the results of this study, to changes in international migratory flows, especially in the Global South. In other words, Brazilian Psychology has sought to keep up with this social phenomenon. For example, the presence of Haitians in Brazil has altered the dynamics of foreign inflows into the country: in 2013, they began to occupy the first position in the Brazilian formal labor market among migratory flows. Moreover, from that period onwards, Haitians began to use basic and higher education services in order to remain in the country, improving working conditions and quality of life (Cruz et al., 2024). Brazilian Psychology has been following this movement, although still modestly, as demonstrated by the five articles reviewed here on the subject (Barros & Borges, 2018; Brunnet et al., 2017; Gomes, 2017; Leão et al., 2017; Weber et al., 2019).

Changes in migration flows to Brazil in the 2010–2020 decade indicate the emergence of South–South human mobility, driven by inter–regional displacements in Latin America, the

reduction in transportation costs, and prevailing political conditions in the region, such as bilateral agreements. In 2022, following this dynamic, Venezuelans constituted the main group requesting refugee status in Brazil, representing 67% of the total requests (Cavalcanti et al., 2023). As reported by Jarochinski-Silva and Baeninger (2021), the migratory flow of Venezuelans to Latin American countries as main destinations constitutes the most significant human mobility in contemporary times. Psychology, following the interest in migratory processes, already registers new research on the subject, such as that of Santos et al. (2025).

The reviewed studies, such as those of França et al. (2019) and Prado and Araújo (2019), highlight that the reception of migrants, due to the absence of legislation until 2017, was largely carried out through Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). They also emphasize the centrality of religious institutions in the process of welcoming migrants, such as the *Pastoral do Migrante* and *Rede Cáritas*, which is linked to the National Conference of Bishops of Brazil (CNBB). In addition to NGOs and religious institutions, universities also stood out in relation to offering language courses for this population.

The services offered by NGOs and institutions are solutions to the precariousness of public policies aimed at migrants who arrive in the country in a situation of social vulnerability. In addition to precarious access to public services, there is a need for professional training in order to reduce communication difficulties and the lack of knowledge on the part of both professionals and migrants regarding their rights (Bezerra, 2021; Cruz et al., 2024). This point is highlighted by the studies reviewed here, such as those by França et al. (2017) and Prado and Araújo (2019), which point to deficiencies in promoting in-depth debates and in the effective application of public policies.

On this matter, there are no current Technical Reference standards for the actions of psychologists in the reception and care of migrants in the country. However, discussions are already underway at the Federal Council of Psychology (CFP), within the scope of the *Centro de Referência Técnica de Psicologia e Políticas Públicas* (Center for Technical Reference in Psychology and Public Policies) (CREPOP). In 2024, one published the full transcript of the XII *Seminário Nacional de Psicologia e políticas públicas: interface entre Psicologia e populações em situação de refúgio, migração e apatridia* (National Seminar on Psychology and public policies: Interface between Psychology and populations in situation of refuge, migration, and statelessness) (CFP, 2024). The event responded to a request for the development of a technical standard, a demand made at the 11th *Congresso Nacional de Psicologia* (National Congress of Psychology) (CNP) in 2022. Another event on the CFP's agenda, the 1st *Congresso Brasileiro de Psicologia e Migração* (Brazilian Congress of Psychology and Migration), also held in 2024, marks the recent interest in migration studies. It is possible to suppose that the research conducted so far has played a motivating role in these initiatives, as well as that these events have the potential to stimulate new studies on the subject.

Outside Brazil, the topic of migration has been receiving the Psychology attention. In the US, for example, APA developed guidelines focusing on psychological factors related to the

migratory experience, guiding practices and suggesting public policies (APA, 2013a). In 2017, APA updated the Multicultural Guidelines, reaffirming the commitment of Psychology to diversity and multicultural practices (APA, 2017).

In 2024, IOM, together with the Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger (MDS), launched the manual *Orientações para o atendimento a migrantes internacionais no Sistema Único de Assistência Social* (Guidelines for serving international migrants in the Unified Social Assistance System) (SUAS). The SUAS Policy is a consolidated space and a field of action for Psychology professionals throughout the country. The manual guides professionals with the aim of improving the care and reception of migrants in social assistance bodies and service (OIM, 2024b), guaranteeing the rights of migrants impacts the reception and adaptation process. Weber et al. (2019) highlight the importance of an acculturative orientation towards integration, in the sense of cultural adaptation, associated with access to social assistance, reiterating the relevance of access to social policies.

Studies that used the narratives and stories of migrants from countries in Latin America, the Caribbean, and the African continent (Barros & Borges, 2018; Gondim et al., 2016; Gomes, 2017; Lima & Feitosa, 2017) report the presence of prejudice and xenophobia in the insertion of migrants into Brazilian society. For Gondim et al. (2016), there is a feeling of ambivalence regarding the Brazilian interaction and receptiveness. In their study, these researchers report the identification of discriminatory behaviors and hostile feelings at the workplace. Reports and evidence of prejudice and discrimination by Brazilians against migrants, mainly from the African continent and Latin America, cast doubt on the myth of Brazilian hospitality (Bezerra, 2021; Gondim et al., 2016).

Gomes (2017) reported that most Haitians, students and workers, did not feel discriminated against and that Brazilians did not exhibit prejudiced attitudes towards them. Despite this, during field observations, scenes of evident exclusion and segregation were witnessed: in a square in the central region, which is usually used by workers during their lunch break, the shaded areas were mostly occupied by Brazilians, mostly white, and at a university cafeteria, the division by race and nationality was evident. Another observation made by Gomes (2017) is about the segregation in urban geography: about 60 Haitians were invited to work in a certain factory, being housed in a region far from the city, on the edge of a road and distant from any type of social assistance service. Cruz et al. (2024) report the perception of prejudice against Haitian migrants at the workplace, such as segregation and division of services that benefited Brazilians, among others. They also highlight the housing conditions of these people, emphasizing the need for residential crowding to overcome low wages and high rents, exemplified by the fact that 14 people lived in the same house.

Analyzing the reviewed studies, regarding the use of analysis techniques and instruments to study the phenomenon of migration, the conclusion is that there is no prevalence of analytical methods. Moreover, there are no studies on the creation and validation of instruments for

investigating the phenomena involving migration. Only two pieces of research used specific instruments to investigate the target populations (Brunnet et al., 2017; Weber et al., 2018).

The studies that used the migrants' narratives and lifestyles point to difficulties with cultural adaptation, language, homesickness, family ruptures, prejudice and discriminatory practices, difficulties related to work, the hospitality of some Brazilians, and the search for better living conditions. The studies that proposed to investigate issues related to mental health and psychopathology focused on topics such as post-traumatic stress, anxiety, and depression, considering the psychosocial impacts of the migration process. The literature and documentary reviews sought to investigate migrants' access to public policies for access to health, education, work, and human rights, also analyzing the agenda of laws and decrees that result in the reception of these migrants.

This study made it possible to map and describe how Psychology has been analyzing international migratory flows to Brazil, also describing the samples studied, constructs investigated, instruments, data collection, and analysis procedures. One limitation of this research relates to the number of databases used to search for empirical documents, which could be expanded to ensure greater coverage of available studies. Based on a research agenda developed by the authors, the intention is to conduct a systematic review of theses and dissertations from graduate programs in Psychology, in order to describe and compare the results with this study. Given the importance of the phenomenon and scope of migration to Brazil, the suggestion is the conduction of new literature reviews in the field of Psychology involving nationalities, specifically related to the creation and validation of instruments that investigate the phenomena involved in the migration process and cultural adaptation. The expectation is that new studies will encourage the development and improvement of public policies aimed at reception, health, education, and assistance for migrants.

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