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Alone Among Many:Faculty and Student Perceptions of Harassment and Violence Toward Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Students.

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Faculty and Student Perceptions of Harassment and Violence

Toward Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Students.

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Acknowledgments

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to assess faculty and student perceptions of GLBTQ harassment at an affluent suburban high school in the Northeast. It was hypothesized that faculty would perceive a friendlier environment towards Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (GLBTQ) individuals than students. The survey results found that students more often reported hearing derogatory comments towards GLBTQ students on a typical day versus faculty. However, there was no difference between faculty and student observations of physical violence towards GLBTQ students. Students were also more likely to report negative non-verbal actions towards GLBTQ students than faculty. Indirect derogatory language such as *that's gay* appeared to be prominent. Efforts should be made in either developing new polices or ensuring faculty are aware of harassment and policies implemented, to ensure a safe environment for all students.

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Results

Faculty and Student Perceptions of Harassment Towards

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Students.

Janus & Janus (1993) estimated that approximately 3 to 7 % of the population is said to be gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or queer. According to the Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN) (2005) 83 % of junior and senior high school students experienced verbal harassment and 37 % experienced physical violence. Alderson (2003) suggested that Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (GLBTQ) youth can be affected by verbal harassment and physical violence and it can be an internal hindrance to GLBTQ youths' identity development. The author of this study hypothesized that similar risks of verbal harassment and physical violence towards GLBTQ student occurred at an affluent suburban high school in the northeastern United States. Therefore, to assist at-risk GLBTQ youth, the author administered a survey, to assess student and faculty perceptions with harassment of GLBTQ people. The goals of the survey were to identify experiences and perceptions of harassment, to take measures that would reduce any harassment, and to ultimately guide policies to ensure a safe environment for all students.

Literature Review

Because literature on student and faculty perceptions of GLBTQ harassment is virtually non-existent, the following literature review will cover identity formation of GLBTQ youth, internal hindrances (verbal harassment or physical violence) and external hindrances or catalysts (levels of social support) for this GLBTQ youth identity development, the effects on these students, and implications for counselors.

Definitions of GLBTQ Terms

The following section will include definitions related to GLBTQ issues. These definitions will be important for understanding terminology used later on in the manuscript. Definitions such as *gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, coming out* and derogatory terms will be discussed.

Coming out of the closet: *Coming out* or *coming out of the closet,* is a common phrase used to describe the process of revealing one's GLBTQ identity (Campos, 2003). The antithesis of this is the term *closeted,* which refers to keeping one's sexual orientation a secret.

Gay: According to Campos (2003), *gay* is similar to that of the term *homosexual* and connotes attractions to or romance with a person of the same sex. Progressive literature according to Middleton and Anderson (2005) suggest using the term *gay* for men and *lesbian* for women. Related to the word *gay,* derogatory words may be used. One such word is *fag,* which Campos (2005) explained is a negative term describing someone who is gay, feminine, or weak. Campos (2003) also stated that this could have been derived from the medieval practice of executing gay people through burning, by lighting a bundle of sticks called a *faggot*. The term *gay* may be used in phrases such as *that's so gay* or *you're so gay* implying something is *stupid* or *dumb*, or used in an indirect way of harassment and discrimination (GLSEN, 2003).

Heterosexist: Middleton and Anderson (2005) described the heterosexist system as one that

denies and stigmatizes any non-heterosexual behavior, identity, relationship, or community.

Campos (2005) explained how the heterosexist system assumes that everyone is heterosexual,

and heterosexuality is the norm and any other sexuality is unnatural. Furthermore, this system

may reinforce subtle forms of oppression and silence of GLBTQ people by excluding their

needs, concerns, and life experiences (Blumenfeld, 1992).

Homophobia: Homophobia describes an irrational fear, aversion to, or discrimination towards

GLBTQ people (Middleton & Anderson, 2005). This fear can affect both heterosexuals and

homosexuals. This fear may be internalized, if homosexual people develop self-hatred related to

consistent anti-gay sentiment from society (Campos, 2003). Homosexual people with

internalized homophobia may even go to enormous lengths to prove they are heterosexual by gay

bashing or having a heterosexual relationship (Campos, 2003).

Lesbian: Campos (2003) described the term *lesbian* as a word used to define sexual desires or

strong emotional ties of women towards other women. One derogatory word associated with

lesbian is that of the word *dyke* (Campos, 2003). *Dyke* can be used as a slang term for *lesbian* but

some lesbians use it for empowerment and to symbolize their pride (Campos, 2003).

Bisexual: Bisexuality as stated by Campos (2003) is the emotional and sexual attraction to people

of either gender. Westheimer (2000) added that some people have sexual relations with men and

women at the same time, whereas others switch their male and female partners.

Transgender: Campos (2003) described people whose gender identity does not correlate with

their anatomy. For example, a female may feel more inclined to that of the gender norms of a

male and a male may be more inclined towards gender norms of that of a female. Campos (2003)

further discussed that these people can be either heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual, may cross

dress, or if no emotional attachments are linked to their current body, may seek sexual

reassignment surgery.

Queer: The term *queer* according to Campos (2003) was used during the beginning of the last

century by masculine gay men to distinguish themselves from effeminate gay men. Later the

term was replaced by *gay*, and *queer* became an offensive word in the 1930s and 1940s

(Campos, 2003). Currently, queer is often used as a term of empowerment (Campos, 2003).

GLSEN (2006) stated that queer is a term used to describe people who are not heterosexual, but

are gender neutral. Gender neutral describes someone who may not lean towards either gender

norm and may be heterosexual, bisexual, or homosexual (Campos, 2003).

Identity Formation of GLBTQ Youth

Identity formation is an essential process for the stage of adolescence. GLBTQ youth not

only have to deal with typical adolescent challenges, but also various other challenges as well in

forming their GLBTQ identity. Social influences and the interplay of cognitions, affects and

behaviors (seen in Figure 1) are influences that can affect a GLBTQ youth throughout their

stages to identity development and they will be discussed. Also, the three stages such as the

Before Coming Out Stage, the During Coming Out Stage and the Beyond Coming Out Stage will

be briefly discussed.

To start off, this author will discuss influences that occur throughout the stages of

GLBTQ identity development. Alderson's (2003) model, describes three main stages for a

GLBTQ youth in developing their identity as GLBTQ. During all these stages, social influences

(seen in Figure 1) such as societal, familial, cultural, spiritual, and peer influences can either be a

support for students GLBTQ identity development or not (Alderson). Also, internal processes

can such as cognitive dissonance can affect GLBTQ student's identity development when two or

more cognitions, affects or behaviors (seen in Figure 1) are incompatible with each other (Festinger, 1957). One example of an incompatible affect and behavior is that a homosexual student may feel attracted towards others of the same sex, but may then date someone of the same sex. These internal processes and social factors (seen in Figure 1) influence a GLBTQ student throughout the 3 stages and processes of GLBTQ identity achievement (Alderson).

During the first stage, the Before Coming Out stage, various factors can either serve as catalysts or hindrances to GLBTQ students' identity development (Alderson, 2003). Social influences such as parental or familial, cultural or spiritual, and peer influences are either supportive or non-supportive to GLBTQ youth's identity development (Alderson). If they are supportive they are called an *external catalyst*, if they are non-supportive they are called an *external hindrance* (Alderson).

Internal catalysts and internal hindrances can also impact a GLBTQ student's identity development (Alderson). Internal catalysts inform a student of the possibility that they might be GLBTQ. For example, internal catalysts for a gay student might consist of realizing feelings or having dreams towards other same sex students and then dating other gay students (Alderson). Internal hindrances consist of the experience of harassment or violence towards GLBTQ people either directly or indirectly, suppression or repression of homosexual feelings (if gay), which may result in internalized homophobia (Alderson). If GLBTQ students experience more internal and external catalysts than hindrances they may come out and move onto the During Coming Out stage in their identity development (Alderson).

The second stage is During Coming Out Stage when students' self-information and awareness of their GLBTQ identity progresses, and they slowly begin to move away from their default heterosexual identity (Alderson, 2003). As exploration continues, students may encounter

hetero-centric norms and values expressed by peers, family, books, discussions, films, on TV,

speakers, and field trips revolving around heterosexual information which society deems as the

normal life, with little or no information about GLBTQ people (Marinoble, 1998). However,

they may further solidify their orientation as either gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or queer if

internal and external catalysts outweigh the hindrances (Alderson).

Last, in Alderson's (2003) model the Beyond Coming Out Stage GLBTQ youth embrace

a positive view of being GLBTQ, connect with the gay world, and reconnect with the

heterosexual world. GLBTQ youth in this stage still may face the challenges of internal

hindrances by experiencing discrimination or harassment, or external hindrances such as lack of

social support, which may affect what developmental stage they stay in or move to (Alderson).

GLTBQ youth may travel between stages depending on the stability of internal and external

catalysts (Alderson).

Figure 1   Ecological Model of Gay Male Identity
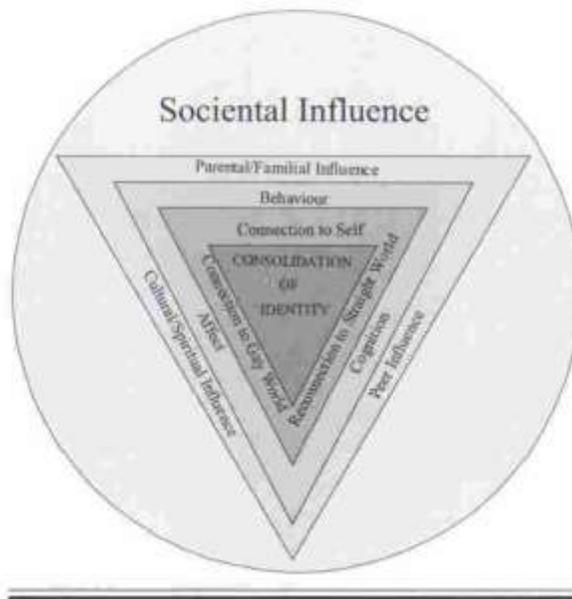
From "The Ecological Model of Gay Male Identity", K. Alderson, 2003,

The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality, *12*, 75-85. Copyright 2003 by Insomniac Press.

Alderson's (2003) model discussed GLBTQ students' experience of questioning and coming to terms with their identity. Alderson focused on the impact that catalysts and hindrances can have on a GLBTQ student's identity development. The next sections will explore internal hindrances such as verbal harassment and physical violence GLBTQ youth may experience, the effects, and then discuss then discuss implications for counselors in assisting GLBTQ youth identity development.

<div align="center">GLBTQ Youth Identity Development in Schools</div>

Internal Hindrances

There have been many significant gains in society for GLBTQ people in the past few years. One such gain in society has to do with the federal government providing victim compensation fund relief to a lesbian similar to that of a married spouse (Campos, 2005). This fund relief was granted after the September 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City. Another example of this is when gay kindergarten teacher Randy Heite was awarded "Outstanding Teacher of the Year" (Campos, 2005). Although the climate for GLBTQ people is improving, there appears to be more that can be done. GLBTQ youth in particular may need support with developing their identity. For the purposes of this study, the literature review will cover internal hindrances and external catalysts or hindrances to the development of a students GLBTQ identity (Alderson, 2003). Verbal harassment and physical violence are the internal hindrances that will be explored and various supportive or non-supportive social influences are the external catalysts or hindrances explored (Alderson).

Verbal harassment. As discussed in Alderson's (2003) model, internal hindrances such as experiencing and being affected by verbal harassment may affect the development of a

GLBTQ youth's identity. One example of an internal hindrance as discussed by Alderson can occur as early as elementary school when a youth observes such words as *fag* or *queer*, and if a youth is greatly affected by such words, it could be the start of internalized homophobia (Campos, 2003). During the schooling years any slight deviation from the gender norm that students notice is generally termed as *gay* and those students may get ranked into a targeted group (Satterly & Dyson, 2005). Van Wormer & McKinney (2003) attributed some of this harassment to the jock culture in schools, which creates a pecking order where males harass either insecure males or non-masculine males. From this early experience a GLBTQ youth may learn to follow traditional sex role behaviors or risk ridicule by being out (Gordon, 1994).

This verbal harassment may affect GBLTQ youth either directly or indirectly and can be a strong hindrance to GLBTQ youth's identity development and can occur throughout their educational career. On a positive note for GLBTQ people, nationwide studies by GLSEN (2001, 2003, & 2005) have shown a decrease in the levels of verbal harassment toward GLBTQ students. The GLSEN (1999) reported that 91.4 % of GLBTQ students experienced verbal harassment. By 2003, this harassment had declined to 84 % (GLSEN, 2003; Kosciw, 2003). In 2005 83 % of GLBTQ students had been verbally harassed. However, language such as *that's so gay* has not declined according to research done by GLSEN (2001, 2003, & 2005). As discussed in the definitions, *that's so gay*, is often used in an indirect derogatory way to describe something *stupid* or *dumb* that may not be seen by speakers as derogatory related to their meaning of *stupid* or *dumb* (GLSEN, 2003). However, GLBTQ people may still view phrases such as *that's so gay* as derogatory or hurtful (GLSEN, 2003).

Campos (2005) suggested there is a sense of silence around addressing GLBTQ verbal harassment and a vicious cycle occurs. For example, students in schools use gay and lesbian

words such as *faggot*, *dyke*, *you're so gay*, or *queer*, to humiliate one another. Teachers do not

intervene, and students then believe such comments are acceptable. GLBTQ students then feel

devalued and alienated, then close up and become distressed and once again other students

continue to use the inappropriate language (Campos, 2005). Furthermore, Campos (2005)

suggested by teachers' dismissing derogatory behavior of students, they essentially validate it

and the unaddressed derogatory behavior may be in-and-of-itself hurtful to open or closeted

GLBTQ people. Overall, if this derogatory behavior from other students goes unaddressed, it

may further enforce internal hindrances to a GLBTQ youth's identity development.

　　　Physical violence. Physical violence towards GLBTQ students can occur in the same

cycle. One such example a teacher assumed students were just horse playing; however the

victimized student was not only verbally humiliated but physically harmed (Campos, 2005).

According to Shenitz (2002) lack of teacher intervention resulted in the perpetrating student

learning that he could bully people he considered fags. In another example, Derek Henkle, a gay

student, was beaten in the schoolyard while two security officers did nothing to intervene

(Shenitz, 2002). This physical violence toward GLBTQ students according to the nationwide

GLSEN (2001, 2003, & 2005) studies appears to be slightly rising. During 2001, 21% of

GLBTQ students reported being physically assaulted (GLSEN, 2001). Later, it rose to one-third

in 2003, and then to 37% in 2005 (GLSEN, 2003, 2005). Intervening in such matters as verbal

harassment and physical violence would appear to be crucial to stop the vicious cycle that may

be occurring.

　　　As discussed there may be a lack of teacher intervention when verbal harassment and

physical violence occurs toward GLBTQ youth. If faculty intervention does not occur there may

be a vicious cycle of harassment or violence towards GLBTQ students. Furthermore, if

intervention of verbal harassment or physical violence does not occur, these internal hindrances may affect a GLBTQ student's identity development and health (Alderson, 2003). External catalysts and hindrances will be explored in the next section.

External Hindrances and Catalysts

As discussed earlier, coming out in a school environment can be challenging for GBLTQ youth who fear harassment and rejection (Marinoble, 1998). Other difficulties in coming out may have to do with the possibility of being thrown out of the house, being forced to undergo psychotherapy, being treated differently by teachers and peers, experiencing embarrassment or shame, or being judged and criticized (Besner, 1995). One lesbian stated her struggles by saying "I am being encouraged on one hand to speak and reveal myself, and then silenced and pushed back into the sameness of the crowd on the other hand. I am acknowledged, but not visible" (Anderson & Middleton, 2005, p. 66). This comment describes how, although there may be some acceptance of GLBTQ people and issues today, being fully out may still be a challenge. Related to this Middleton and Young (1999) discussed how GLBTQ youth identity may yet go unacknowledged and feel apart from friends and family who see it as just a phase. To help assist GLBTQ youth in establishing their identity development, they may need to find external catalysts or supports (Alderson, 2003).

In pop culture there are role models who may serve as external catalysts such as Melissa Etheridge, Greg Louganis and Ellen Degeneres, however, Campos (2003) suggested that finding supportive faculty to assist with coming out can be difficult. Johnson (1996) agreed that finding gay or lesbian teachers for support may be a challenge because these teachers cannot risk being out for fear of prejudice and discrimination. Hunter, Shannon, Knox, and Martin (1998) pointed out that there is a possibility of teachers being dismissed from their jobs if they open up about

their sexuality. This can be one roadblock to assisting GLBTQ youth (Hunter, Shannon, Knox, & Martin, 1998). Because of a possible absence of GLBTQ faculty, Campos (2003) suggested that GLBTQ youth may then perceive GLBTQ adults according to the false negative stereotypes as seen in the media. Examples from the media could vary from portraying most gay men as extremely effeminate or having unhealthy lifestyles, lesbians as extremely masculine or portrayed as an object of a heterosexual mans fantasies. Lastly, the media may represent GLBTQ people as mainly concerned with sexuality and other groups like GLBTQ church groups might not be shown on the news during gay pride parades. Furthermore one teacher said, "If you portray gay/lesbian relationships unbiasedly, students will label you as one of them" (Van Wormer, Wells, & Boes, 68). Thus, it may be challenging for either GLBTQ teachers to be out and for heterosexual teachers to present GLBTQ education without bias.

However, today there have been GLBTQ teachers who are out in the school environment, but GLBTQ harassment and lack of support still seem to exist. The GLSEN (1999) study found that one out of three gay and lesbian students said that they heard comments from faculty that were homophobic. Also, this study found that students were more likely to intervene with harassment issues towards GLBTQ people than school staff (GLSEN, 1999). Is this the case of homophobic faculty and students taking more of a responsibility to intervene when harassment occurs towards GLBTQ?

Some studies would disagree with the idea of low levels of safety and support for GLBTQ students in schools. Campos (2005) stated that youth are feeling safer about coming out related to the legal obligation of schools to protect them from harassment and bullying. A study done by Russell, Serif and Dricoll (2001) supported this thought by finding that one third of the harassed youth agreeing with the statement, "My teachers really care about me and give me a lot

of encouragement". Also, according to the GLSEN (2003) studies, there is a greater percentage

of youth who feel comfortable talking to teachers, counselors, and principals about GLBTQ

issues. Beyond this, various supportive influences of schools such as safe space stickers and gay-

straight alliances are on the rise according to Middleton and Young (1999). Therefore, finding

supportive faculty may be sometimes difficult for GLBTQ youth, but there appears to be an

increasing amount of efforts to assist GLBTQ youth with their identity development.

In summary, if a GLBTQ youth can find social supports such as faculty and friends, it

can serve as a catalyst for their identity development. If supportive faculty, friends or family

cannot be found, it can serve as a hindrance to their identity development. However, it appears

from the literature review supportive faculty are increasingly more likely to be found, but

GLBTQ faculty may still have difficulty in being out at their jobs.

The Effects of Harassment

Harassment and its subsequent effects may take their toll on GLBTQ students if external

catalysts are not strong enough to counterbalance such internal hindrances as verbal harassment

and physical violence. If internal and external catalysts are not found, GLBTQ youth identity

development may be stunted (Alderson, 2003). A GLBTQ youth who do not find these catalysts

to assist in their identity development may even resort to self-destructive behavior or suicide

(Ginsberg, 1998). The negative effects of harassment, quotes from struggling GLBTQ people,

and the issue of GLBTQ suicide and difficulties for GLBTQ people in finding external catalysts

will be discussed.

When GLBTQ youth, whether they are out or not, experience verbal or physical

harassment, a variety of effects may occur. A study done by Meyer (2005) indicated that

oppression, discrimination, rejection (or anticipated rejection), harassment, and internalized

homophobia are linked to both negative mental and physical effects. According to a study by

Donovan (1993), some direct or indirect effects of harassment or lack of GLBTQ related

information can result in school failure, poor choices on health practices, mental and social

health issues. Safren and Heimberg (1999) also discussed the maladaptive emotional and

behavior adjustment in sexual minority youth who had low social supports and high

victimization. In a book by Kasl (1989), a young lesbian spoke of her lack of positive social

support (external catalysts) by saying, "keeping secrets, feeling defective, not fitting in, knowing

that your parents are uneasy about you at best and threatened and afraid of you at worst creates a

fertile breeding ground for despair". Califia (1994) attributed self-hatred as the meaning behind a

refusal by some GLBTQ people in refusing to practice safe sex. Some quotes by GLBTQ people

in Califia (1994), included "we're guilty about being queer" and "We can't get rid of all that

programming that says we are inferior, filthy, disgusting, godless, and pathological." The last

quote would suggest the challenge experienced by some GLBTQ youth in accepting internal

catalysts to their GBLTQ identity development. Therefore, there can be a variety of negative

effects of GLBTQ verbal and physical harassment, but they may range in their level of impact.

One tragic effect of verbal harassment or physical violence is that gay youths are 2 to 3

times more likely to commit suicide than heterosexual youths (Marinoble, 1998). Suicide is also

the leading cause of death among the population (Marinoble, 1998). Laux (2002) stated that it

not so much that sexual orientation causes higher rates of suicide, but rather the compounding

factors of family dysfunction, identity confusion, social dilemmas, alcohol use and the stress of

coming out. Savin-Williams (2001) explained how GLBTQ youth may even be playing into

suicidal script as a rite of passage for being a GLBTQ youth. They may play into this suicidal

script because of influences from popular culture and the high suicide rates among gay youths expressed in the news (Savin-Williams).

As discussed earlier, information, notions, or role models in pop culture may serve either as an external catalyst or a hindrance to GLBTQ identity development. Also, without positive external catalysts it may be challenging for GLBTQ youth to continue their development. In addition, there may be some things that can get in the way of GLBTQ youth with utilizing the positive external catalysts that are available to them. GLBTQ may find it too fearful to risk rejection with discussing their orientation with non-GLBTQ friends and family and thus, may spend less time with them and search out GLBTQ social networks (Cramer & Roach, 1988).

However, if they isolate themselves within GLBTQ community networks other problems may occur. An example of a problem that might occur is that bisexual students may not feel supported by either the homosexual or heterosexual community. According to Herdt, (1984) bisexuals may be pressured by heterosexual family and friends to conform to heterosexual standards and that their bisexual behavior is just either acting out or merely an experimentation phase. Homosexual people may see bisexuality as a transition point and are in denial of their own homosexuality and may, in effect, minimize the legitimacy of a bisexual's identity (Matteson, 1995). Klein (1993) stated that these phenomena and negativity may occur between these groups related to heterosexuals and homosexuals feeling threatened by bisexuals who say they have sexual feelings for both males and females. Ultimately, finding supportive external catalysts within the GLBTQ community may even be a challenge for developing GBLTQ youth

In summary, the negative effects of harassment can have a variation of impact on GBLTQ youth from mild to quite severe. Such effects can be in school failure, poor choices on health practices, mental and social health issues, and even suicide. Finding external catalysts may

not always be easy for GBLTQ youth even if they can identify a GLBTQ community source. A

school counselor can be vital by providing a source of external catalyst for the GBLTQ youth or

with helping shape the environment to assist in their development.

Implications for Counselors

As talked about in earlier sections, harassment can have many effects on the development

of a GLBTQ youth. This section will explore some counseling strategies and how agencies and

schools are assisting GLBTQ youth in their development.

Black and Underwood (1998).suggested that an effective counseling strategy would be to

use the words of the student in identifying his or her sexual orientation. One counseling strategy

with GLBTQ youth is in using the sexual orientation phrases that the student uses (Black &

Underwood, 1998). The thought behind using the sexual orientation terms students use is that

they may appear confused about their sexual orientation, but the observed confusion or

discomfort may, instead, be due to feeling uncomfortable with the term or labels used (Black &

Underwood,1998). P-flag (1994) suggested addressing feelings first allowing them to vent and

validate their feelings while also showing support. Counselors can also let them know that many

people have dealt with similar issues in the past and not only have survived, but are health and

happy. Confusion in the process may be natural and P-flag (1994) suggested that one should not

mistake confusion as an opportunity to set them straight by stating that sexual orientation is

primarily a biologically determined phenomenon and, rather, provide information at the students

own pace. Beyond possible feelings of confusion, fear, guilt, and shame, Lewis (1984) talked

about being aware of the possibility these depression symptoms may result of GLBTQ people

going through a process of grieving the loss of their societal expected heterosexual identities.

Exploring and redefining reality and experiences with a student may be helpful in the sense of

shifting self-blame to societal-focused blame associated with oppression and discrimination (Black & Underwood, 1998).

The use of role-plays to allow students to practice different situations may also be helpful (Black & Underwood, 1998). Last, Black and Underwood suggested that when making needed referrals counselors should be well aware of the agency that they are referring to because some agencies disguise their intent and are really seeking to try to convert GLBTQ to heterosexuality. Appropriate fit of the agency or referral program should correspond to the student's level of outness. For example, if a student is very nervous and not out, a highly vocal and visible agency or program may not be a right match at the time (Black & Underwood, 1998).

One agency, for example, The Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gay (PFLAG), has implemented 150 safe school programs that work towards developing non-discrimination polices, forming allies with parent-teacher organizations, bringing in GLBTQ speakers, donating GLBTQ books to the library, and supporting gay-straight student alliances (Marinoble, 1998). Middleton and Young (1999) suggested including GLBTQ books that are unbiased and not associated with problems such as AIDS or drug abuse. They further explained that associating AIDS or drug abuse with homosexuality in books or courses may be in direct opposition to viewing GLBTQ identity development as normative. This may then increase marginalization of GLBTQ people. However, to counterbalance this, 700 gay-straight alliances throughout the educational system worldwide have been made available to GLBTQ students to help with the coming out process (Peyser & Lorch, 2000).

Therefore, there are many different direct strategies one can do along with individual counseling to help positively impact GLBTQ students' lives. Ways to help the school environment to become a place of acceptance are various educational opportunities such as

actively led gay-straight alliances, seminars, stricter policies on GLBTQ harassment, positive GLBTQ books, and more safe space stickers.

Post Literature Discussion

In my extensive search of the literature, this author was able to find information about GLBTQ youth identity development, verbal and physical harassment and their effects, and counseling strategies to use with the GLBTQ student population. However, this author was unable to find any research specifically related to student and faculty perceptions of GLBTQ harassment. Thus, the current study is treading new ground this researcher cannot make a hypotheses based on the literature review. Consequently, not having much information on faculty and student perceptions of GLBTQ harassment provides grounds for this study. The research question would then be: Is there a difference in faculty and student perceptions of GLBTQ harassment in the school climate? It was hypothesized that (a) student and faculty would perceive or interpret harassment towards GLBTQ people differently; (b) they may or may not intervene when the harassment occurs depending on their perception; and (c) if no intervention occurs, the harassment may have an impact on GLBTQ student development.

Therefore, by examining perceptions of harassment towards GLBTQ students, it may be helpful to know when to intervene and assist in their development. Furthermore, the working hypothesis is that students would perceive more harassment than faculty would perceive. In other words, faculty would perceive a friendlier environment towards GLBTQ individuals than students.

Methods

Participants

The participants for this study were drawn from an affluent suburban high school with

952 students in Western New York. Students enrolled in an Advanced Placement Psychology

class and Minority Issues classes were invited to participate in the study. Students under 18 years

of age were required to obtain parental permission before participating. Demographics of the

respondents were given in Table 1.

Table 1. Description of respondents

Students (n=129)	Frequency	%
Year		
Junior	2	1.5%
Senior	127	98.5%
Gender		
Male	43	33.3%
Female	86	66.7%
Ethnicity		
Caucasian	107	83.0%
African American	2	1.6%
Asian American	10	7.8%
Native American	1	0.8%
Hispanic American	1	0.8%
Other	6	4.7%
Orientation		
Straight	122	94.6%
Bisexual	3	2.3%
Other	1	0.8%
Faculty (n=28)	Frequency	%
Years at School		
0-2	6	21.4%
3-4	3	10.7%
5-10	9	32.1%
10-20	7	25.0%
21+	3	10.7%
Gender		
Male	6	21.4%
Female	22	78.6%

Ethnicity			
	Caucasian	28	100%
Orientation			
	Straight	26	92.8%
	Lesbian	1	3.6%
	Other	1	3.6%

Materials

The participants were administered a survey designed by the author. The survey had both

an Internet version and a paper version that included open and closed ended questions. The

survey has a total of 25 questions for the faculty version and 26 questions for the student version.

The first six questions were about background information in Section one. Questions one through

six asked the role (student or faculty), student class (if a student), number of years at the school,

sexual orientation, gender orientation, and ethnicity. The next 19 questions are about

observations of what the climate is like for GLBTQ people at the assigned high school. These

questions focused on types of discrimination witnessed by GLBTQ people or heterosexual

people and beliefs about GLBTQ and heterosexual people. Question number 25 was a qualitative

item that asked how participants perceived the climate, the environment, and the attitudes toward

GLBTQ people at the school. The last question on the student survey asked for suggestions on

improving the environment based on topics discussed in the survey. A sample of the survey can

be seen in Appendix B and the consent form can be seen in Appendix A.

*Procedure*s

The students were instructed of the purposes of the survey and given permission slips if

under 18. Any student who had a signed permission slip from their parent or who was 18 was

allowed to take the survey. Students were instructed to remain quiet for the duration of the

survey and if they had any questions to raise their hands and they would be addressed

individually.

The faculty sample was drawn from the total faculty body that was given notice of the survey via a mass faculty email. Faculty were given a choice to take the survey online or to pick up a paper version at the counseling office. No faculty chose to take the paper version.

Data Analysis

The analysis itself was mainly descriptive. The answers in the survey were given tallies and percentages using the PHP surveyor program (PHPsurveyor, 2005). Some of those tallies and percentages are given in Figures 2-10. Beyond this, different groups within the study were compared. The variables consisted of levels of harassment, attitudes towards GLBTQ and heterosexual people, and levels of intervening observed by faculty and students**.** Faculty and student responses to several questions regarding observed derogatory comments, negative non-verbal behavior, supportive comments, and physical violence towards GLBT students were compared using chi-square tests

To analyze the data, responses to questions were tallied between either no levels of harassment or one or more episodes of harassment. Response to questions regarding whether faculty or student intervened when they witnessed verbal or physical harassment towards GLBTQ people were analyzed with a chi square test. All statistical tests were performed using SAS statistical software version 9.1 (SAS, 2002-03).

Further analysis examined responses to the question "I believe that gay/lesbian/bisexual people are disgusting and unnatural". Student responses about gay, bisexual, and lesbian orientations were compared using a chi-square test.

Results

Harassment

As shown in figure 2 a greater percentage of students perceived verbal harassment towards GLBTQ people versus the faculty with a statistical significance of (p<.00001). *Faggot*, *dyke*, *queer*, *fairy*, *homo*, *pansy, rugmuncher* and *that's so gay* were some of the types of verbal harassment that were used.

Figure 2
Q2: Verbal Harassment
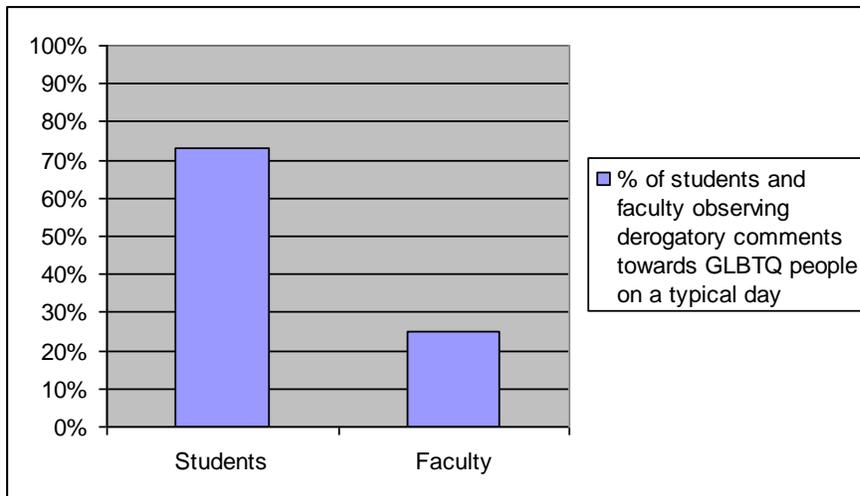
The figure is a representation of how 73 % of student respondents more often reported hearing derogatory comments towards GLBTQ students on a typical day versus 25 % of faculty with a significance level of (p<0.001). Below various quotes from student and faculty are listed to show opinions of what they believe the climate is like for GLBTQ people at the high school, based on question 19 in the survey. Quotes that related to verbal harassment of GLBTQ people were included.

"Words like "faggot" or "dyke" are common, and I've heard plenty of snide remarks about gay students at the school, including that they "do not belong at the high school" and even that they "should be kicked out." -Student

"The saying "that's gay" is used frequently around school, and I think this could damage a GLBT person's emotional well being." –Student

"The word "gay" is used towards other settings besides harassing GLBT such as saying a homework assignment is "gay" or a song is "gay." I feel people misused the term. -Student

"The fact is kids will not harass gays openly if they act normal about it."-Student

"Gay remarks aren't normally directed towards people who are actually gay. It's more of a dis towards heterosexual people." -Student

"As a whole, the environment is not a welcome one for GLBT people at the high school. Although there are several people that are accepting, the majorities are not, and GLBT people are often made fun of. I have a friend who is bisexual, and she endures nasty comments and has lost friends because of it. Many people say they are ok with it, and then act otherwise." -Student

"People may use terms such as "Fairy", "Fag", or "Queer", but it is never in a derogatory way towards homosexual but more because it is unfortunately become accepted terminology in our culture." –Student.

Physical harassment toward GLBTQ (Figure 3) people had the same results; however,

significantly less physical harassment was observed and there was no statistical difference

between faculty and students (p=.49). The physical harassment came in the form of pushing,

hitting, throwing something, or beating GLBTQ people up.

Figure 6

Q 15 and 16 Faculty and student intervention when GLBTQ harassment/violence occurred

This figure shows that when harassment occurred towards GLBTQ students, 63 % of the time

faculty intervened and 58 % of the time students intervened. There appears to be no statistical

difference between faculty and student intervention (p=0.40). Below quotes from student and

faculty are listed to show opinions of what they believe the climate is like for GLBTQ people at

the high school, based on question 19 in the survey. Quotes relating to faculty and student

interventions towards GLBTQ were included.

> "A higher level of acceptance exists at this point than was true 10 years ago. There
>
> continues to be a significant minority of students who have negative perceptions and
>
> feelings towards GLBT individuals. A greater percentage of faculty has an awareness of
>
> the issue now, but faculty rarely address the issue in a public way" -Faculty
>
> "I believe that for bullying in general, greater intervention by faculty and staff could be
>
> helpful." -Student

"It's a vicious cycle people torment people because they think other people are doing it, some stand up but most the majority are afraid of what the response will be from the rest of the student body. Negative comments are often so casual that I do not think a lot of people see it as a problem, which is a problem in and of itself" -Student

"I doubt very much that heterosexual teachers would call them on it. I know I should, but because I am tired of always being on the defensive, I don't" -Faculty

"I don't have many personal experiences with GLBT, but I fully respect their lifestyle, and feel that most of the high school feels the same way. I haven't really seen any huge problems because I feel that the administration has done a good job with a no tolerance policy." –Student

"Some teachers stop behaviors (verbal harassment). However, many teachers do not. I imagine it would be hard to be a GLBT attending the high school because little actions are taken to reduce the verbal abuse and attitude towards them." –Student.

"Our school is really safe, there may be the occasional teasing but people get more accepting as they get older. We're lucky to live in this district because the real world is entirely different from the bubble of this (affluent suburban community) we live in." –Student

Figure 3
Q4: Physical Violence
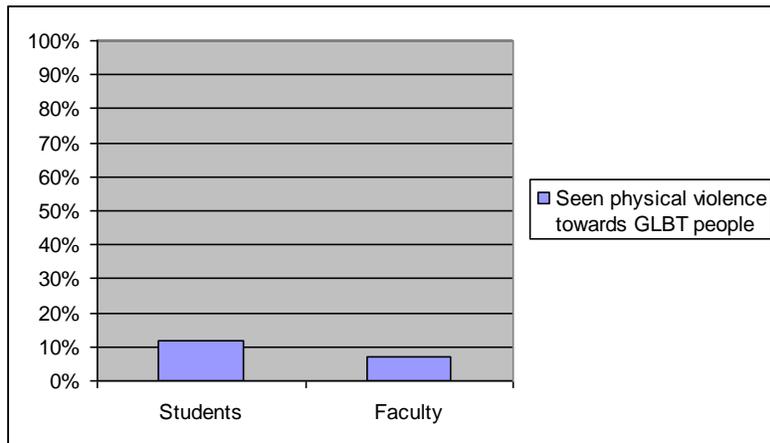
Although this graph shows 11 % of students and 7 % of faculty respondents observed

physical violence towards GLBTQ people, statistically, there was no difference between faculty

and student observations of physical violence towards GLBTQ students (p=0.49). Below quotes

from student and faculty are listed to show opinions of what they believe the climate is like for

GLBTQ people at the high school, based on question 19 in the survey. Quotes that related to

observed physical violence of GLBTQ people were included.

"The climate, environment and attitudes toward GLBTQ people at the High School are

fair. I have never seen anyone hurt or ostracized." –Student

"It doesn't seem too terrible although I'm not really close to anyone who might be

affected by bullying in this manner." -Student

"I haven't seen any physical violence here though there may be some derogatory

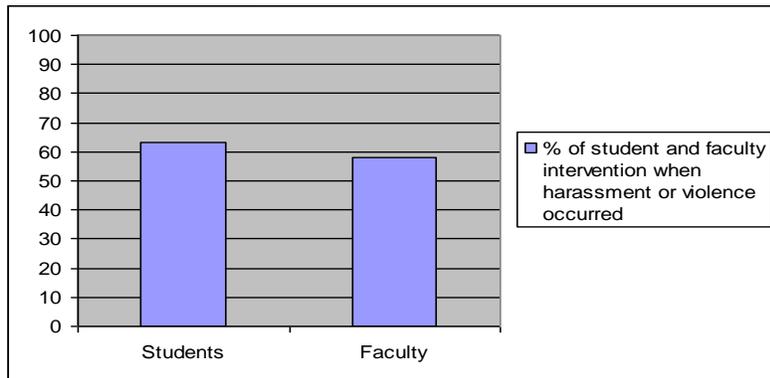comments made. I believe that we are generally accepting of GLBT people." –Student

"A few groups of people may not accept the fact gay people are present in their

educational environment, but they do not take verbal or physical action that will

purposely harm them." –Student

"Although things might be said behind someone's back, I have never seen anyone

confront someone else violently or negatively." –Student

"I am sure there are crowds that foster negative feelings towards GLBT, but few openly

express these feelings on a regular basis or in a violent manner." -Student

As far as the intervention in verbal harassment and physical violence, as seen in Figure 6,

there was no statistical difference between the levels of student and faculty interventions when

harassment or violence towards GLBTQ students occurred. However, the majority of faculty

chose the response choice, *no answer,* to perceived levels of student or faculty intervention when

harassment or physical violence toward GLBT people occurred. Also, according to student

responses, they more often perceived that students would intervene more often than faculty.

Figure 6
Q 15 and 16 Faculty and student intervention when GLBTQ harassment/violence occurred

This figure shows that when harassment occurred towards GLBTQ students, 63 % of the

time faculty intervened and 58 % of the time students intervened. There appears to be no

statistical difference between faculty and student intervention (p=0.40). Below quotes from

student and faculty are listed to show opinions of what they believe the climate is like for

GLBTQ people at the high school, based on question 19 in the survey. Quotes relating to faculty

and student interventions towards GLBTQ were included.

"A higher level of acceptance exists at this point than was true 10 years ago. There continues to be a significant minority of students who have negative perceptions and feelings towards GLBT individuals. A greater percentage of faculty has an awareness of the issue now, but faculty rarely address the issue in a public way" -Faculty

"I believe that for bullying in general, greater intervention by faculty and staff could be helpful." -Student

"It's a vicious cycle people torment people because they think other people are doing it, some stand up but most the majority are afraid of what the response will be from the rest of the student body. Negative comments are often so casual that I do not think a lot of people see it as a problem, which is a problem in and of itself" -Student

"I doubt very much that heterosexual teachers would call them on it. I know I should, but because I am tired of always being on the defensive, I don't" -Faculty

"I don't have many personal experiences with GLBT, but I fully respect their lifestyle, and feel that most of the high school feels the same way. I haven't really seen any huge problems because I feel that the administration has done a good job with a no tolerance policy." –Student

"Some teachers stop behaviors (verbal harassment). However, many teachers do not. I imagine it would be hard to be a GLBT attending the high school because little actions are taken to reduce the verbal abuse and attitude towards them." –Student.

"Our school is really safe, there may be the occasional teasing but people get more accepting as they get older. We're lucky to live in this district because the real world is entirely different from the bubble of this (affluent suburban community) we live in."
 –Student

In Figure 4, a greater percentage of students also perceived more supportive comments towards GLBTQ people than faculty did. However, there was no statistical significance for student and faculty perceptions of supportive comments (p=.19).

Figure 4
Q3: Supportive Comments towards GLBT people
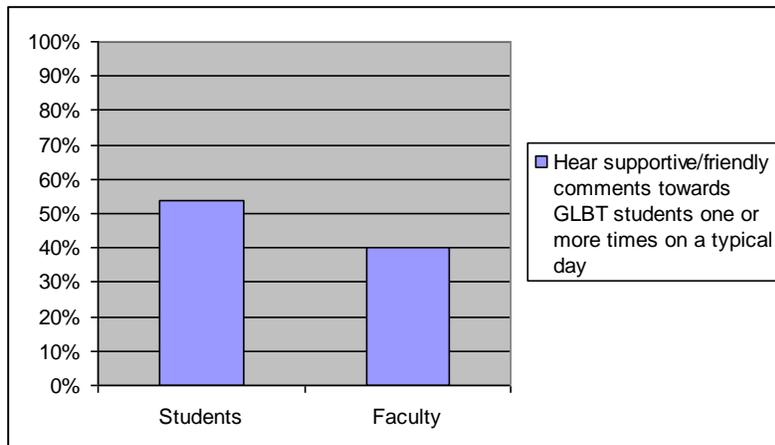
Although this graph shows that 54 % of student respondents versus 40 % of faculty respondents observed supportive comments towards GLBTQ people, there was no statistical difference between the two (p=0.19). Below quotes from student and faculty are listed to show opinions of what they believe the climate is like for GLBTQ people at the high school, based on question 19 in the survey. Quotes relating to supportive comments towards GLBTQ were included.

"Students of the High School are extremely tolerant and diverse" –Faculty

"We all love each other"-Student

"They rarely get bothered. The environment is fine. The attitude (towards GLBTQ people) is fine unless they are overly proud." –Student

"Very supportive" –Student

"As long as they are not flamboyant about it they are accepted" –Student

"Good, nobody cares; it's not a big deal." -Student

"I feel that high school students are very liberal and for the most part don't have issues

against homosexuality. Transgender people are talked about less so I'm not sure what the

general attitude is toward them." –Student

"Everyone is nice to each other" -Student

 "I feel as people are tolerant and really don't pay much attention to GLBT people.

The support group that has formed is a positive thing." –Faculty

"On the whole tolerance prevails the school."-Faculty

As shown in Figure 5, a greater percentage of students perceived negative non-verbals

towards GLBTQ people than faculty. There was also a statistical significance between the

faculty's and students' perception of negative non-verbal behavior $(p=.013)$;

Figure 5
Q6: Negative non-verbal's observed towards GLBT people
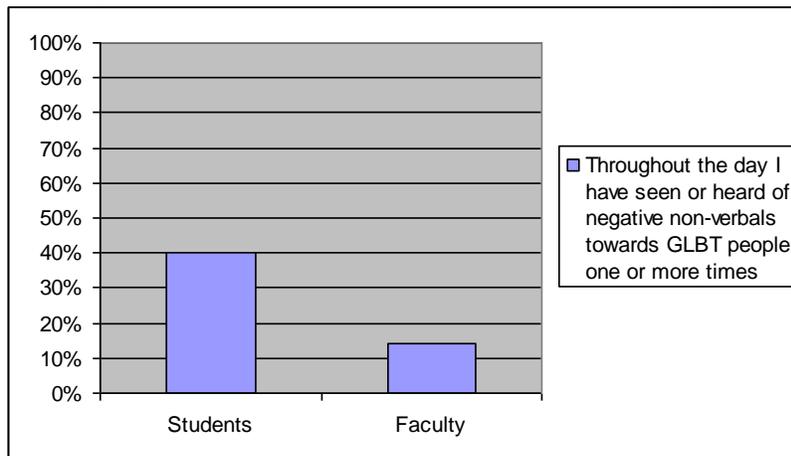
The graph shows how 40 % of student respondents and 14 % of faculty respondent

witnessed negative non-verbal's towards GLBTQ students. Students were more likely to report

negative non-verbal's towards GLBTQ students than faculty with a significance level of

$(p=0.014)$. Below quotes from student and faculty are listed to show opinions of what they

believe the climate is like for GLBTQ people at the high school, based on question 19 in the

survey.

"It's very polar ends some people are rude while others are very open and accepting about it." –Student

"From what I have seen the majority of people here at the high school don't treat GLBT p people any different than they would a heterosexual person." –Student

"They (GLBTQ people) are treated in very disrespectful ways sometimes. People should worry more about themselves than other people. Sometimes men who are gay receive more disrespectful gestures than lesbians." –Student

"I think that the climate, environment, and attitudes for GLBT people at the High School are fairly supportive. With the exception of a few incidents I hardly ever see people being out right disrespectful." -Student

"In my own experience, I think that the GLBT issue comes up more when it comes to athletics. I am a female basketball player and there are many lesbian girls around me all the time some people still cannot accept them for who they are, but I feel like people are getting better about it. I think it just takes a while for people to learn to accept and respect people's differences"-Student

"I believe there is an underlying tension with homophobia, especially among males, but generally those derogatory comments made are not directed at a particular person, but have turned into negative comments about other things in general (i.e. when there is something someone does that they did not like, they say oh that's gay.") –Faculty

Figure 7 shows that students perceived more harassment towards GLBTQ people in the hallways and cafeteria.
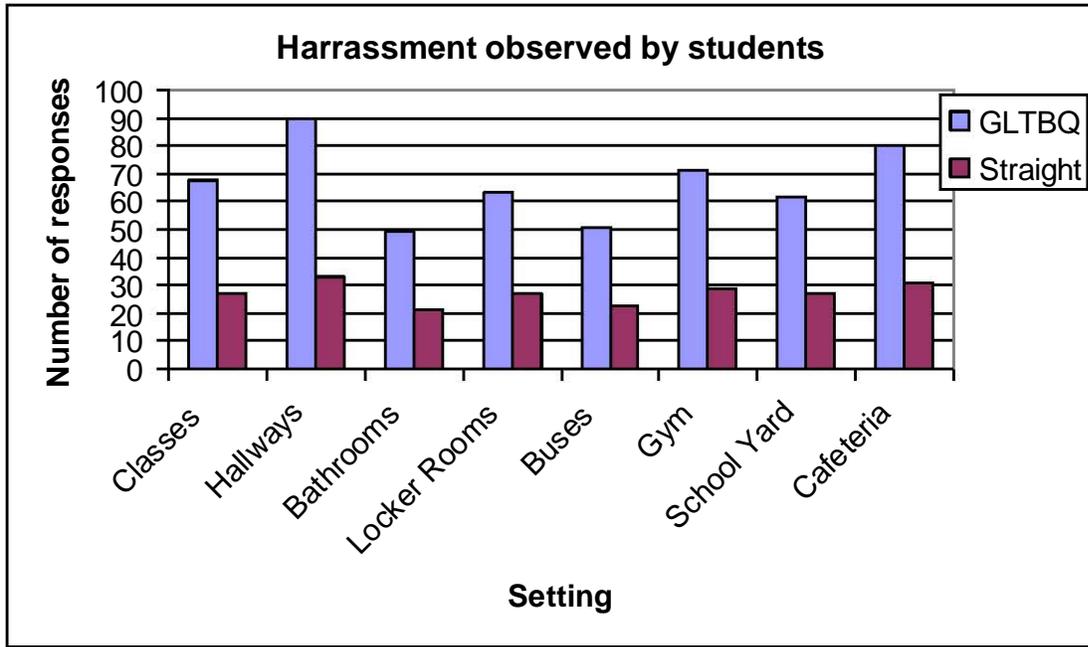
In Figure 8 faculty perceived high levels of harassment in the hallways and cafeteria as well. However, the faculty perceived significantly less harassment in the bathrooms, locker rooms, buses and gym.

Figure 8 Harassment observed by faculty in certain locations
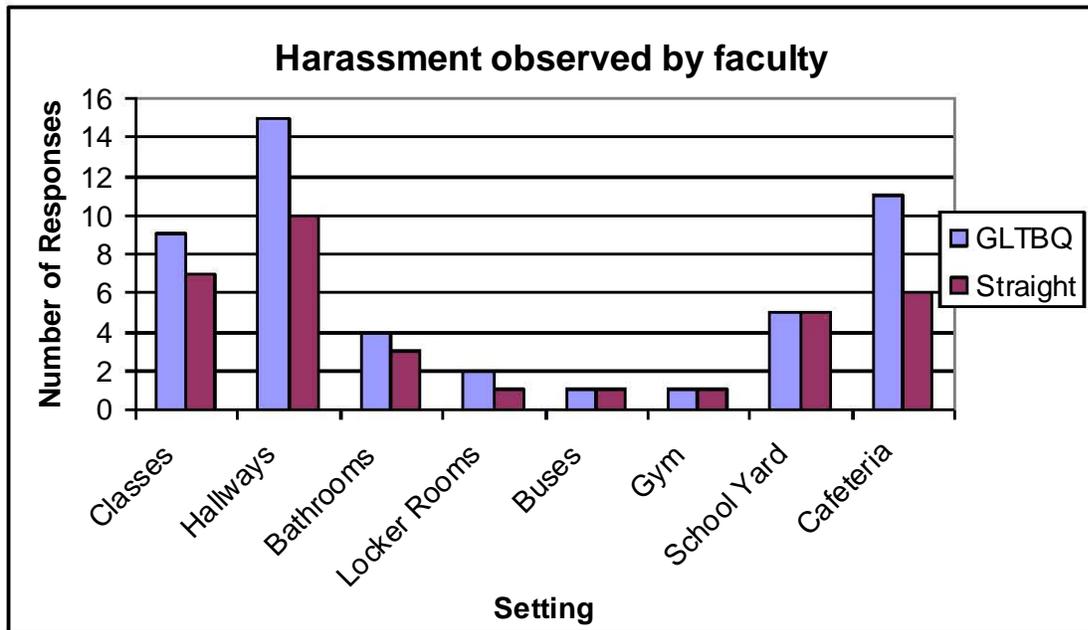
Attitudes

Figure 9 shows that students mainly viewed heterosexual, gay, and lesbian people as being born that way. However, there were different degrees in that students that thought that gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people were disgusting. Transgender people ranked the highest. In conjunction with this, a comparison was made between responses of whether GLBTQ people were disgusting and it was found that there was no difference between students' responses toward believing that gay, lesbian, or bisexuals are disgusting (*p*=0.36). However, students were more likely to believe that transgender people are disgusting compared to gay, lesbian and bisexual people (*p*<0.009).

Figure 9 Student views towards GLBTQ and Heterosexual people
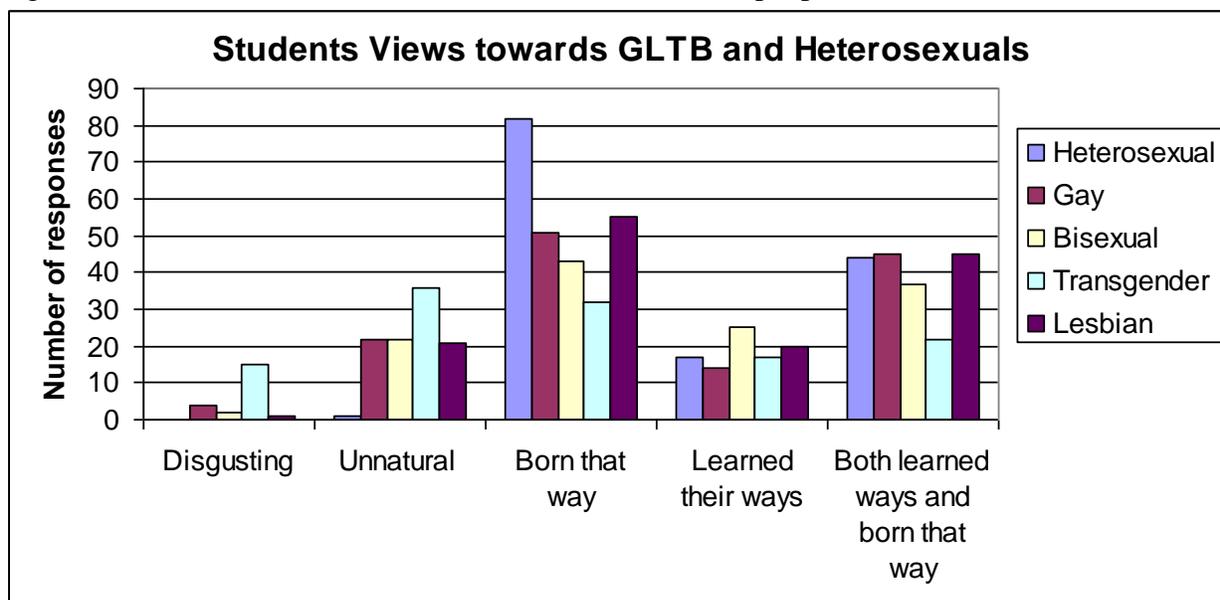
The faculty mainly viewed heterosexual, gay and lesbian people as being born that way (Figure 10). Few faculty said that GLBTQ people learned their ways or were unnatural. There was however, a female faculty member that thought that lesbians were disgusting.

Figure 10 Faculty views towards GLBT and Heterosexual people

Faculty Views towards GLTB and Heterosexuals
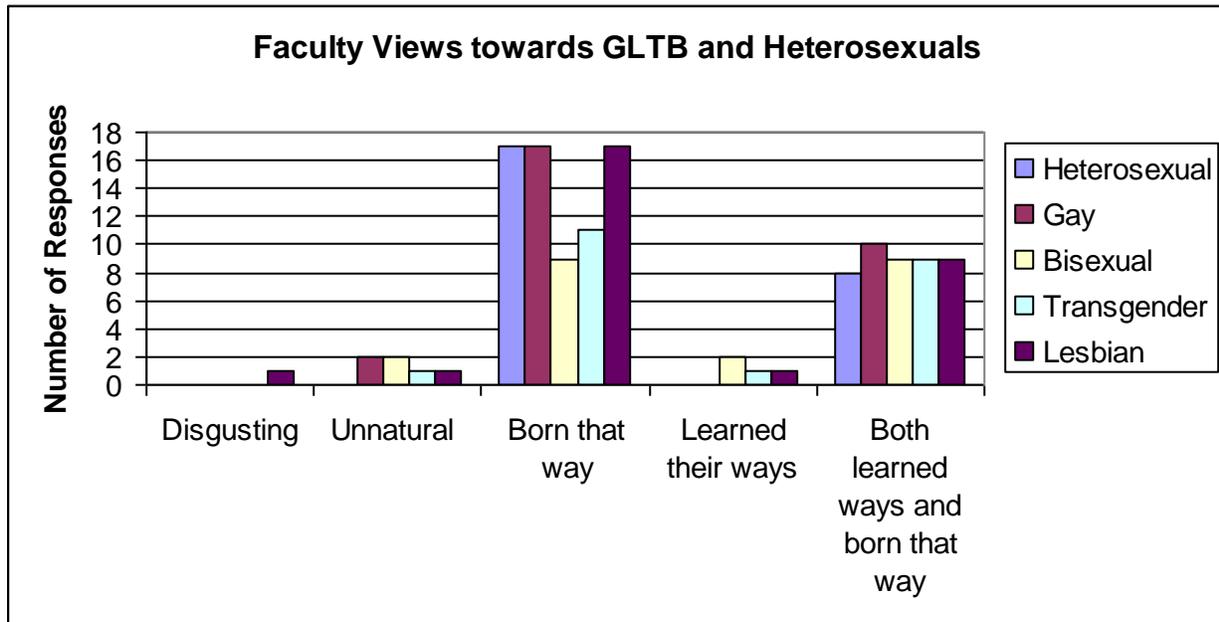
Discussion

Both faculty and students reported high levels of harassment towards GLBTQ students in areas such as hallways and the cafeteria. Possible explanations of lack of intervention may be associated with the faculty not being in hearing proximity to students' tables, not recognizing indirect derogatory words as harassment and students may refrain from harassing behaviors when faculty approached. As discussed earlier, the term *gay* may be used in phrases such as *that's so gay* or *you're so gay* implying something is *stupid* or *dumb*, or used in an indirect way of harassment and discrimination (GLSEN, 2003). As a result of this phrase being damaging in some instances for some GLBTQ students, intervening when such phrases are used may be helpful in order to assist in a GLBTQ student's identity development. In conjunction with this, one of the faculty also said that she is too tired with trying to stop derogatory language,

particularly indirect derogatory language and has just given up. It would seem possible that a

sense of discouragement is in the environment concerning how to reduce or stop indirect

derogatory comments associated to not believing it affects anyone. Also, it may be plausible that

some of the faculty or students' perception of indifference towards indirect derogatory comments

may be perpetuating discouragement in other faculty and students who desire to reduce or stop

indirect derogatory language.

Beyond this, the faculty were also less likely to perceive GLBTQ harassment occurring in

other areas such busses, locker rooms, gym, bathrooms, and the school yard. This was most

likely due to less supervision. As discussed earlier, a significant number of student and faculty

did not answer the question on intervention of GLBTQ harassment. Possible explanations of this

could be that they did not understand or appreciate the question or it could be that they simply

did not want to comment on it.

Faculty and students were also more likely to perceive gay, lesbian and heterosexual

people as being born that way versus bisexual and transgender people as seen in Figure 9 and 10.

Explanations of this may be derived from the literature review and a quote from a student found

in the study. According to the literature reviewed, bisexuality may be either seen in disbelief,

seen as a phase, or as a threat to a relationship (Herdt, 1984, Klein, 1993, Matteson, 1995). This

could be a possibility of why both students and faculty had lower scores for seeing bisexual

people as being born that way. As far as transgender people, a student said that "I feel that high

school students are very liberal and for the most part don't have issues against homosexuality.

Transgender people are talked about less so I'm not sure what the general attitude is toward

them." From this comment further education on people who are transgender may prove useful.

In short, students perceived more harassment than faculty ($p<.00001$). Both faculty and students perceived more harassment occurring in the hallways and cafeterias. Also some people see indirect derogatory language such as *that's gay* as a problem, and some do not. Transgender people were viewed less favorably by some students and one faculty did not view lesbians favorably. However, overall attitudes towards GLBTQ people were viewed in a positive light.

<div align="center">Limitations</div>

One limitation for this study was that it was done at a single high school where the students were relatively homogenous in racial, sexual orientation and socioeconomic backgrounds. Furthermore the vast majority of the students were seniors, Caucasian and heterosexual, which may provide for biased results. Beyond this, only 28 of the faculty answered the survey and 30 would have been ideal for statistical purposes. The faculty was also composed of mainly Caucasian females, which may bias the survey too. The survey instrument was also not tested for validity or reliability so no claims of validity or reliability can be made for the data. A pretest could be used next time to address validity or reliability concerns as well as surveying various high schools from diverse backgrounds. Last, the questions pertaining to staff and faculty intervention when harassment towards GLBTQ occurred, 40 people did not answer that question which was considerably fewer than other questions.

<div align="center">Implications for Counselors</div>

According to the American School Counseling Association the professional school counselor is:

> …a certified/licensed educator trained in school counseling with unique qualifications and skills to address all students' academic, personal/social and career development needs. Professional school counselors implement a comprehensive school counseling

program that promotes and enhances student achievement. Professional school counselors are employed in elementary, middle/junior high and high schools and in district supervisory, counselor education and post-secondary settings. Their work is differentiated by attention to developmental stages of student growth, including the needs, tasks and student interests related to those stages (ASCA, 2006).

Thus, according to ASCA one of the duties of a school counselor is to assist students with personal/social development needs. Alderson (2003) suggested that verbal harassment can be an internal hindrance to a GLBTQ student's identity development. Therefore, the duty of a counselor as related to this study, is to find ways to assist students with hindrances to their identity development (ASCA, 2006).

As explored earlier, there appears to be a difference in the levels of verbal harassment observed by faculty and students. Furthermore the data shows that a sizable proportion of faculty may not be intervening when harassment occurs. One example of this is expressed by a student who stated, "I believe that for bullying in general greater intervention between faculty and staff could prove helpful." Ultimately, informing faculty and counselors of the prevalence of harassments is an important first step to increase awareness.

To help the environment one student suggested "I think that, in order to improve the environment, there needs to be more of a union between the GLBTQ kids and those who aren't." Considering that this is a taboo subject, tackling issues around harassment towards GLBTQ people may be challenging. However, various attempts can be made to assist students and the environment. First, helping assist the gay-straight alliance with greater ways to increase visibility, if desired, may be one way to help unite GLBTQ students to the school population. Along with this, supporting faculty that are GLBTQ with being out can assist GLBTQ students

by providing role models and external catalysts to assist in their development (Alderson, 2003). Furthermore, bringing GLBTQ speakers to classes and including non-bias books or information in classes and the library can be helpful in spreading awareness, sensitivity and education of GLBTQ people in an attempt to reduce indifference based on a taboo subject (Marinoble, 1998). Displaying GLBTQ artwork and educational video's of GLBTQ student's school experience on various days relating to GBLTQ people such as the "Day of Silence" may increase visibility, awareness and sensitivity of the student population.

Given that harassment appears to be occurring in the hallways and cafeteria, emailing teachers the data with the suggestion of monitoring halls outside their classroom door between classes may be beneficial. In addition, adaptations to strengthen the current non-discrimination policy can be suggested in the counselor team meeting.

Alternatively, some students express different views ways that change might happen. One student said "Often, the harder adults try to make students more accepting by doing assemblies, handouts, units in health class, the more they make people see GLBTQ people seem different from everybody else".

In summary, stricter policies for discriminatory language and encouraging teachers to enforce such, further supervision of hallways and cafeteria, bringing in GLBTQ speakers, teaching GLBTQ issues in health class, positive representation of GLBTQ people in books and courses, and increasing the visibility of the gay/straight alliance are ways to strategize for a more positive environment (Marinoble, 1998). However, as some students suggest, the ultimate change happens within.

Implications for Future Research

The exploration of barriers to faculty and student intervention when harassment towards GLBTQ students takes place is one idea for future research. Also, similar studies like this could be done to further assess general harassment and bullying of student.

Conclusion

Students more often reported hearing derogatory comments towards GLBTQ students on a typical day compared to faculty. Both students and faculty have said they have perceived verbal harassment that goes unaddressed. Also students and faculty said they noticed such words as *faggot* and *dyke* to be common. Indirect derogatory language such as *that's so gay* appears to be prominent and also is not seen by some faculty and students as derogatory language.

As discussed in the literature review, verbal harassment can serve as an internal hindrance to a GLBTQ student's identity development (Alderson, 2003). Efforts to increase faculty awareness of the harassment and the development of further policies on indirect derogatory language use could be the first step to ensure a safe and positive environment for all students and faculty (Marinoble, 1998). Additional measures might include bringing in GLBTQ speakers to classes and increasing the visibility of the gay/straight alliance to improve awareness of GLBT issues and promote tolerance for all students (Marinoble, 1998).

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Appendix A

Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual and Transgender (GLBT) Climate Survey

I) Background information (Circle One)

1).Role: 2) If a student what year are you in?
   a) Student   a) Freshman
   b) Faculty   b) Sophomore
   job position_____   c) Junior
                                          d) Senior

3) How many years have you been at the High School?
   a) 0-1
   b) 1-2
   c) 3-4
   d) 5-10
   e) 10-20
   f) 21 or more

4) Ethnicity   5) Orientation
   a) Caucasian American   a) Gay
   b) African American   b) Heterosexual
   c) Hispanic American   c) Bisexual
   d) Asian American   d) Lesbian
   e) Native American   e) Other_____
   f) Other_____

6) Gender
  a) Male   e) Feminine-male
  b) Female   f) Masculine-female
  c) Transgender   g) transgender male to female
  d)Transgender female to male   h) other_____

II) Observations of what the climate is like for GLBT people at the High School

1) I have heard derogatory comments at the High School such as:
   a) Faggot
   b) Dyke
   c) Queer
   d) sayings like "that's gay"
   e) Fairy
   f) other_____
   g) I have not heard any of these derogatory comments.

2) On a typical day the amount of times I hear derogatory comments towards GLBT people is:
   a) zero times
   b) 1-2 times
   c) 3-4 times
   d) 5-6 times
   e) 7-8 times
   f) 9 or more times

3) On a typical day the I have heard supportive/friendly comments towards GLBT people:.
   a) zero times
   b) 1-2 times
   c) 3-4 times
   d) 5-6 times
   e) 7-8 times
   f) 9 or more times

4) I have seen or heard of physical violence towards GLBT people at the High School:
   a) zero times
   b) 1-2 times
   c) 3-4 times
   d) 5-6 times
   e) 7-8 times
   f) 9 or more times

5) The physical aggression towards GLBT people that I have seen or heard was used was in the form of:
   a) pushing.
   b) hitting.
   c) hitting many times (beating up).
   d) other_____.
   e) I have not seen or heard of any physical aggression towards GLBT people.

6) Throughout the day I have seen or heard of negative non-verbals towards GLBT people at High School:
   a) zero times
   b) 1-2 times
   c) 3-4 times
   d) 5-6 times
   e) 7-8 times
   f) 9 or more times

7) The negative non-verbal's towards GLBT people that I have seen or heard were in the form of:
  a) sneer.
  b) look of disgust.
  c) ill intent laughing/smile.
  d) other_____.
  e) I haven't seen or heard of any negative acts towards GLBT people.

8) I have seen or heard of positive acts towards GLBT people in the form of:
  a) helping them _____.
  b) sticking up for them.
  c) showing respect through differences through language.
  d) other_____.
  e) I haven't seen or heard of any positive acts towards GLBT people.

9) Throughout the day I have seen or heard of positive acts towards GLBT people at the high school:
  a) zero times
  b) 1-2 times
  c) 3-4 times
  d) 5-6 times
  e) 7-8 times
  f) 9 or more times

10) I believe that Gay people: (circle any that apply)
  a) are disgusting and unnatural.
  b) are unnatural but I respect them as people.
  c) live a natural way of being, they are born that way.
  d) have learned their ways of being.
  e) have both learned their ways and are born that way.
  f) haven't thought about my beliefs on them.
  g) other_____.
  h) undecided.

11) I believe that Transgender people………………(circle any that apply)
  a) are disgusting and unnatural.
  b) are unnatural but I respect them as people.
  c) live a natural way of being, they are born that way.
  d) have learned their ways of being.
  e) have both learned their ways and are born that way.
  f) haven't thought about my beliefs on them.
  g) other_____.
  h) undecided.

12) I believe that Bisexual people………………(circle any that apply)
   a) are disgusting and unnatural.
   b) are unnatural but I respect them as people.
   c) live a natural way of being, they are born that way.
   d) have learned their ways of being.
   e) have both learned their ways and are born that way.
   f) haven't thought about my beliefs on them.
   g) other_____.
   h) undecided.

13) I believe that Lesbians………………(circle any that apply)
   a) are disgusting and unnatural.
   b) are unnatural but I respect them as people.
   c) live a natural way of being, they are born that way.
   d) have learned their ways of being.
   e) have both learned their ways and are born that way.
   f) haven't thought about my beliefs on them.
   g) other_____.
   h) undecided.

14) I believe that Heterosexual people……….…..(circle any that apply)
   a) are disgusting and unnatural.
   b) are unnatural but I respect them as people.
   c) live a natural way of being, they are born that way.
   d) have learned their ways of being.
   e) have both learned their ways and are born that way.
   f) haven't thought about my beliefs on them.
   g) other_____.
   h) undecided.

15) When you witnessed verbal or physical harassment towards GLBT people or homophobic remarks how often did other students intervene?
a) rarely/none of the time
b) sometimes
c) sometimes and sometimes did not do anything
d) most of the time
e) all of the time

16) When you witnessed verbal or physical harassment towards GLBT people or homophobic remarks how often did faculty intervene?
a) rarely/none of the time
b) sometimes
c) sometimes and sometimes did not do anything
d) most of the time
e) all of the time

17) How often do you hear or see verbal or physical harassment towards GLBTQ people in:

a) classes	frequently	often	sometimes	rarely	never
b) hallways	frequently	often	sometimes	rarely	never
c) bathrooms	frequently	often	sometimes	rarely	never
d) locker rooms	frequently	often	sometimes	rarely	never
e) buses	frequently	often	sometimes	rarely	never
f) athletic field/gym	frequently	often	sometimes	rarely	never
g) school yard/grounds	frequently	often	sometimes	rarely	never
h) cafeteria	frequently	often	sometimes	rarely	never

18) How often do you hear or see harassment towards heterosexuals in:

a) classes	frequently	often	sometimes	rarely	never
b) hallways	frequently	often	sometimes	rarely	never
c) bathrooms	frequently	often	sometimes	rarely	never
d) locker rooms	frequently	often	sometimes	rarely	never
e) buses	frequently	often	sometimes	rarely	never
f) athletic field/gym	frequently	often	sometimes	rarely	never
g) school yard/grounds	frequently	often	sometimes	rarely	never
h) cafeteria	frequently	often	sometimes	rarely	never

19) Describe what you perceive what the climate, environment, and attitudes are like for GLBTQ people at the high school? If you choose to, include your personal experiences.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

20) Based on topics in this survey what are some of your suggestions for improving the

environment?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix B

Statement of Informed Consent

The purpose of this research is to assess what the climate is like at the High School for gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender people. The research is being done due to requirements for a course in counseling at SUNY College at Brockport. The research is done through a survey that is written by the researcher and administered through a computer with participants that are willing to volunteer. Once the climate is assessed possible solutions to improve the climate of High School may be implemented if it is approved by the school.

Signature of this informed consent form is required to participate in this study. If you choose to participate in the study and agree with the statements below, please sign below. You may leave the study at any time without penalty.

I understand that:
   1) My participation is voluntary and I have the right to refuse to answer any questions.

   2) My confidentiality is guaranteed.

   3) There are no perceived personal risks because of my participation in this project.

   4) My participation involves a taking a survey questionnaire through a computer

   5) There will be 30 or more participants in the study.

I have read and understand the statements above. I have no further questions about my participation in this study. I agree to participate in this study and may withdraw at any time without penalty.

_____
        (Signature)
_____
        (Date)

_____
IF THE CLIENT IS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE, HIS/HER PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN MUST ALSO SIGN THIS AGREEMENT.

_____   _____
 (PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN)   (DATE)

If you have any questions you may contact:

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