

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS' ATTITUDES, PERCEPTIONS AND
PERCEIVED COMPETENCE REGARDING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION:
A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

A MASTER'S THESIS

BY

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THE PROGRAM OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION
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The Graduate School of Education

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January 2021

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and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Curriculum and
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ABSTRACT

High School Teachers' Attitudes, Perceptions and Perceived Competence Regarding Inclusive Education: A Systematic Literature Review

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M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction

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Research highlights the ongoing marginalization, discrimination and bullying directed to minority students. The prevention of such negative behavior towards diversities is an objective of inclusive education. Teachers play a key role in implementing inclusivity by fostering a safe learning environment that promotes respect and protection for every student regardless of their differences. This study aimed to investigate high school teachers' attitudes, their perceptions towards sexual minority students. The study also examined how competent teachers feel to adapt inclusive strategies in their classroom. A systematic literature review of 33 articles found that although high school teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards homosexuality, homophobic bullying and integration of related issues in the classroom can be both negative (i.e., exclusive) and positive (i.e., inclusive), their attitudes towards their sexual minority students themselves are mostly positive. Teachers' lack of inclusivity was mostly attributed to heteronormativity, personal values, fear of losing their jobs, lack of support from administrators, parents and other staff members, fear of disapproval from them, and lack of training. The review also revealed that teachers' perceived competence towards inclusivity depends on their training, age, years of experience, gender, religion, school type and school region as well as their own sexual orientation. The findings are discussed in terms of the necessity of support from and collaboration with school staff and parents. Furthermore, recommendations are made for school policies that involve sexual minority students, adjustment and for the flexibility of curricula. Lastly, the importance of adequate and effective in-service and pre-service teacher preparation is emphasized.

Keywords: High school teachers, inclusive education, LGBT students, multicultural students, student diversity, special educational needs students, sexual diversity students, sexual minority, sexual orientation.

ÖZET

Lise Öğretmenlerinin Kapsayıcı Eğitime Karşı Tutumları, Algıları ve Yeterliliği:
Sistematik Literatür Taraması

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Öğrenci çeşitliliğine yönelik olumsuz davranışların önlenmesi, kapsayıcı eğitimin en önemli hedeflerinden biri olmasına rağmen, araştırmalar hala azınlık olan öğrencilere yönelik ötekileştirme, ayrımcılık ve zorbalığın devam ettiğinin altını çizmektedir. Öğretmenler, farklılıkları ne olursa olsun her öğrenciye saygı duyan ve onları koruyan güvenli bir öğrenim ortamını teşvik edecek kapsayıcılığın uygulanmasında kilit role sahiptir. Bu çalışma öğretmenlerin farklı cinsel yönelime sahip olan öğrencilerine yönelik tutumlarını, algılarını ve bu öğrencileri sınıfa dahil edecek eğitim stratejileri uyarlama konusunda ne kadar yetkin hissettiklerini belirlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. 33 makalenin sistematik literatür taramasıyla, lise öğretmenlerinin eşcinselliğe, homofobik zorbalığa ve ilgili konuların sınıfa entegre edilmesine yönelik algı ve tutumlarının hem olumsuz (dışlayıcı) hem de olumlu (kapsayıcı) olabileceğini ve cinsel azınlık öğrencilerine yönelik tutumlarının çoğunlukla olumlu olduğu bulundu. Öğretmenlerdeki kapsayıcı tutum ve algı eksiklikleri çoğunlukla heteronormativiteye, kişisel değerlere, işlerini kaybetme korkusuna, yöneticilerden, ebeveynlerden ve diğer personelden destek alamamalarına, kınanma korkularına ve hizmet için ve öncesi eğitim eksikliklerine atfedildi. Ayrıca, öğretmenlerin kapsayıcılığa yönelik yeterlilik hislerinin aldıkları eğitime, yaşa, deneyimlerine, cinsiyetlerine, inandıkları dinlere, çalıştıkları okul türüne, okul bölgesine ve kendi cinsel yönelimleriyle bağlantılı olduğunu bulundu. Bu bulgular ile araştırma, okul personeli ve velilerin iş birliği sağlamasının, cinsel azınlık öğrencilerini de kapsayan okul politikalarının geliştirilmesinin, müfredatın daha esnek, uyarlanabilir olmasının, yeterli ve etkili hizmet içi ve hizmet öncesi öğretmen eğitiminin gerekli olduğunu ele almıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Cinsel azınlık öğrencileri, cinsel yönelim, farklı öğrenciler, kapsayıcı eğitim, LGBT öğrencileri, lise öğretmenleri, özel eğitime muhtaç öğrenciler, çok kültürlü öğrenciler.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background

Inclusive Education as an ideology began in the late twentieth century and expanded in the beginning of twenty-first century because of the importance of equitable schooling for students with diverse and special needs. There is a range of models and ideologies that have been developed over the last decades that refer to equality and diversity. Intercultural education, integrated education, and special education are some examples of these models, although they differ greatly in terms of definition, content, strategies, objectives, targets, discourses and practices.

Inclusive education is a flexible educational approach that suggests all children can learn and that the educational system should fit the child; moreover, it values differences such as age, disability, gender, ethnicity, religion and health status (Stubbs, 2008). The main principle of inclusive education is that all differences should be cherished and the curriculum and educational system should be adjusted according to children's needs (Stubbs, 2008). Inclusive education aims to unite teachers and students in their learning and teaching environment by modifying the content, strategies, methods and approaches of schools and dominant curriculum.

Inclusivity in education is based on the exploration of theory, policy, practice, curriculum and culture to build a robust and comprehensive analysis of exclusion.

Education might challenge social and cultural relations with the aim to disassemble oppression and promote inclusion (Plows & Whitburn, 2017). Inclusive education's values are based on cherishing participation; learning and working with others

collaboratively as well as making choices about and having a say in what happens within the school community and curriculum. It recognizes and accepts every child for who they are (Väyrynen & Paksuniemi, 2020).

Inclusive education and diversity

Inclusive education was first developed as an approach that contributes to the psychological and social development of children with disabilities and special needs (Plows & Whitburn, 2017). When the term “special educational needs” first appeared in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization’s Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) as well as in United Nations Human Rights Statement towards the end of twentieth century, it referred to students with learning difficulties or deficiencies. More recently, based on UNESCO’s scope, diversity does not only refer to difficulties and deficiencies but also refers to individuals of different race, ethnicity, beliefs, gender and sexual orientation. This is also because it is acknowledged that a distinction between sub-cultures and the dominant culture sets barriers to learning (Corbett, 2001). Furthermore, many of these diverse factors might interact or act in combination and only using “special educational needs” can result in marginalization or exclusion, which would lead to misinterpreted presumptions (Winter & O’Raw, 2010, p.4). In this sense, UNESCO has had a large impact on including every diversity a child may have in education across the globe as it underscores children’s right to receive the kind of education that does not discriminate (Oh & Van der Stouwe, 2008).

More recently, inclusivity has focused on transforming the form of education so the school vision embraces everyone with respect and understanding (Gower et al.,

2018). Taken into account the sub-cultures and minorities, inclusive education's broader scope includes the integration of (i) girls and women in order to prevent child marriages, maintain gender equality and defy the traditional stereotypes and habitual discrimination; (ii) minority ethnic (e.g., Romany children) and religious (e.g., Jewish or Muslim) groups in the local societies together with the dominant ethnic or religious group; (iii) linguistic minorities and mother tongue education in order to prevent learning difficulties due to either introducing second language learning too early or the lack of education in mother tongue; (iv) children with disabilities such as deaf children and children with profound and multiple impairments; (v) children with mental and physical deficits that could result in school failure; (vi) immigrant children who sometimes have to take care of their parents and relatives for survival; (vii) working children who, due to cultural and economic reasons, are restricted from education; (viii) children who experience abusive situations such as drug or alcohol use, sexual abuse within families and HIV/AIDS infection from families that have HIV/AIDS (Stubbs, 2008). Recently, children with different sexual orientations (e.g. those who identify as a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) have also become a focus group of inclusive education all around the world. Social reforms related to the acceptance of same-sex relationships and gay marriage since the beginning of 21st century have contributed to the awareness of the needs of children with different sexual orientation.

Definition of “special needs” in education

Initially, diversity in school was referring mostly to students' special education needs. Until the middle of 1960's special education needs were perceived as abnormality and “freak of nature”; in other words, children who had disabilities were

regarded as the minorities pushed towards exclusion and isolation (Dray, 2008, as cited in Provenzo & Provenzo, 2009, p.744). Ongoing debates question whether “special education needs” or “special needs” terms are the most appropriate terms to show children’s diversity when we refer to the sub-cultures of schools.

According to Kearney (2011) language has a significant impact on the way we shape meanings to children who fall into the minority sub-cultured groups and their inclusion or exclusion in education. It has the power to determine how we see children and how children see us as educators, administrators and policy makers. Therefore, the term “special needs” is often wrongly used by researchers and educators (Kearney, 2011). Based on cultural interpretations and perceptions “special needs” may be misinterpreted because it implies a comparison of what normal and special means in mainstream schools. It may present children who have diversities as children who have extraordinary needs and these needs are sometimes perceived as deficits instead of valued differences (Kearney, 2011). Consequently, the term “learners with barriers to learning” could be more suitable in order to fully acknowledge the use of language and the ideology behind including every child in education (Kearney, 2011). Ironically, the absence of a universal and comprehensive definition to refer to the diversity of student needs, may result in children of certain populations being excluded from the school culture (Winter & O’Raw, 2010). Subsequently, with the aim to have a comprehensive – and inclusive – understanding of inclusive education, the current study identifies any barrier to learning as special needs. These barriers may be disabilities and deficiencies, refugee status, ethnic origins, and in particular, students with different sexual orientations.

Inclusive education and policy making

Today, inclusive education is concerned with political, social and cultural applications that help shape the school environment. National organizations such as UNESCO (which maintained and still cultivates The Education for All (EFA) movement), United Nations and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), National Council for Special Education (NCSE) supported by the Institute of Child Education and Psychology Europe (ICEP), International USA (MIUSA), Inclusion Europe maintained by the European Commission, International Networking carried on by the United Kingdom, International Disability Alliance (IDA), the Gender and Sexual Diversities (GSD) in Canada as well as the Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) in the USA and Canada prepare policies to prevent lack of education, lack of knowledge, any kind of harm and bullying towards people with differences regarding social class, race, ethnicity, deficiency, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity. Their aim is to enforce policy makers' commitment to inclusive education and to prevent oppression, discrimination and exclusion within societies all around the world. Their aim is also to change schools' curriculum to eliminate and lower the barriers to learning.

On the other hand, Turkey has very few organizations that include and pay special attention to sub-cultures other than students with physical disabilities. Sub-cultures are not considered in Turkish schools' approaches concerning inclusivity of diversities (Düşkün, 2016). Fortunately, the Education Reform Initiative (ERG), which cooperates with UNICEF, may contribute to special educational needs of children by taking into account of every aspect of their diversity. According to Düşkün's (2016) ERG and UNICEF supported report concerning Turkish education

system, children with disabilities have been regulated in a comprehensive manner within national legislation, but there still seems to be a gender inequality among students with disabilities as well as students who do not have disabilities in terms of education. It is also reported that there is a gap between students with disabilities and students who do not have disabilities in terms of literacy. However, there is no information about the approach taken towards children with different ethnicities, language- spoken, religion, gender identities and sexual orientations (Düşkün, 2016). There is an emphasis on the idea that inclusive education in Turkey only includes students with disabilities and there are no regulations against the discrimination of students with different sexual orientations and different gender identities (Düşkün, 2016).

Referring to the current annual report of UNICEF regarding Turkey, the most vulnerable groups within education are children with disabilities, child workers, adolescent girls and boys and especially refugee children (UNICEF, 2018). The main focus of the Ministry of Turkish Education (MoNE) as well as UNESCO's is to include thousands of Syrian refugee children who lack placement in schools because of the recent immigration from Syria due to ongoing wars. Although, this is indeed a necessity for Turkish society, there is the risk of neglecting other “barriers of learning” coming from students’ diversity. As Düşkün (2016) highlighted the barriers that students with different gender identities and sexual orientations are experiencing in Turkish education have not been considered by policy makers and education. The key factors to understand and prevent them are highly connected to the attitudes of teachers, peers and parents toward children with different gender identities and

sexual orientations (Düşkün, 2016). Therefore, there is a necessity to clarify teachers' perceptions and attitudes toward diversity.

Problem statement

Often policy makers and teacher educators underscore the necessity to apply inclusive instructional strategies to improve learning for all at schools. For instance, it is reported that teachers lack the special skills and required knowledge regarding meeting the emotional and social needs of all students with diversities (Plows & Whitburn, 2017). There is also research that refer to teachers having indecisive and negative attitudes towards inclusive education (De Boer et al., 2011). The reasons behind their negative attitudes toward inclusion are the inadequate pre-service teacher education, the lack of administrative support and inappropriate staff development programs which result in teachers' inability to provide the necessary materials, resources and strategies for instruction (Kamens, Loprete & Slostad, 2000).

In fact, only recently have school programs started to pay attention to students with different sexual orientations through GSA and by applying anti-bullying the policies due to them being regarded as the vulnerable group to be bullied (Gower et al., 2018). It seems, therefore, that the lack of support to teachers results in negative attitudes and perceptions (and sometimes preconceptions) towards students with diversities, which prevent them from using the appropriate inclusive approaches (Düşkün, 2016). For this reason, in many educational systems, there is an effort to support teachers' professional development to include students with learning disabilities, different ethnic origins and refugee students in the classrooms. Since

there is no international convention considering sexual orientation and gender identity, it is likely for countries to not implement inclusive strategies and approaches for students with different sexual orientations (Düşkün, 2016). Therefore, it is more likely for teachers show unwillingness to include students with different sexual orientations in their classroom as well as for them to have neutral or negative attitudes and perceptions towards them. As a result, teachers may feel less competent to deal effectively with the inclusion of these students compared to students with disabilities, different ethnic origins as well as refugee students.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to conduct a systematic literature review to investigate high school teachers' perceptions, attitudes and perceived competence about students with different sexual orientations. Through a systematic review of the literature, the researcher will explore teachers' beliefs about students who fall into minority sub-cultured groups, how competent teachers feel to include them in teaching and learning and what their attitudes are towards them or phenomena related to them such as homophobic bullying at school.

Research questions

- 1) What are high school teachers' attitudes towards students with different sexual orientations?
- 2) What are high school teachers' perceptions of students with different sexual orientations?
- 3) Do high school teachers feel competent to adapt strategies that support the inclusion of students with different sexual orientations?

Significance

Many schools, school administrators, teachers and trainee teachers find it challenging to include minority group's needs in education. As many studies point out it is more likely for students who fall into minority groups to be marginalized, stereotyped, excluded, oppressed and discriminated in mainstream schools. Therefore, children from minority groups may have less access to education and learning as a result and through inclusive education we can build a learning environment that promotes peace, tolerance and social justice (Stubbs, 2008). Often, educators do not know or are aware of the types of discrimination. Consequently, they do not feel comfortable to intervene when faced with discrimination and sometimes bullying related to sexual orientation and gender identities. The cause for their anxiety may be losing their jobs, being excluded, facing discrimination and negative reactions from parents (Kolbert et al., 2015).

Therefore, the findings of this study will hold significance 1) for both in-service and pre-service teachers to pay more attention to the need of using different instructional strategies, differentiation, collaboration in teaching and planning, to teachers receiving the support, necessary equipment and materials they need in schools, 2) for policy makers to be aware of the needs of teachers in terms of being active agents in the process of implementation of inclusive education and of the importance of making curricula more flexible to meet the needs of diverse students. While this research helps to understand the current situation of students with different sexual orientations through a systematic research, it also aims to guide schools, in-service teachers, pre-service teacher educators and education systems to create a more inclusive environment and the necessary practices to lead to that environment.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Findings of research conducted in different parts of the world (i.e., Asia, Europe, America and Africa) provide insights into teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards diversities from early twenties until the present time. The studies reviewed in this section include reflections from the United States, Finland, Norway, Australia, the UK, Spain, Italy, Greece, Cyprus, Turkey, South Africa, Bhutan and Japan regarding teachers' perceptions and attitudes about four contemporary prominent sub-cultures and diversities. In this chapter, there will be four sections about teachers' perceptions related to the inclusion of: a) students with disabilities and deficiencies, b) multicultural students (i.e., refugee students and ethnic diversities), and c) students with different sexual orientations.

Students with disabilities and deficiencies

With UNICEF's national and international legislation as well as with United Nations Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities (MacKay, 2007), the protection of students with disabilities and deficiencies remains on the agenda in schools. In spite of the legislation, people with disabilities and deficiencies still face social exclusion, marginalization and discrimination in different levels (Sart et al., 2016). So far, the definition of people with disabilities has varied due to countries' conceptual approaches. For the purpose of this research, depending upon the Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities (MacKay, 2007), students with disabilities and deficiencies are defined as the group of people/ students who have

mental, intellectual, physical and sensory impairments, which constrain people/ students from participating effectively in the society equally to others. This group of students often is met in the literature as students with Special Education Needs (SEN).

Teachers as the primary agents of inclusion in the schools can foster or prevent the inclusivity of students with disabilities and deficiencies in classrooms with their level of knowledge and attitudes. Since teachers' perceptions and attitudes are shown to influence schools' educational and social climate, it is necessary to understand their perceptions and attitudes towards students with disabilities and deficiencies (Vollmer, 2000). In this section teachers' attitudes and perceptions will be presented under two sub-sections: 1) teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards students with disabilities and deficiencies and factors that define them and 2) comparative studies on their attitudes towards the inclusion of students with disabilities and deficiencies.

Teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards students with disabilities and deficiencies and factors that define them

Based on relevant research there are several factors that influence teachers' perceptions and attitudes that determine their inclusive approaches in classrooms such as teachers' experiences in teaching with students who have disabilities and deficiencies. In a survey study conducted by Moberg et al. (2020), teachers who had successful experiences with students with disabilities and deficiencies were found to have more positive attitudes than teachers who had unsuccessful experiences in teaching and teachers who had unsuccessful experiences in teaching had negative attitudes towards the concept of including students with disabilities and deficiencies

in their classrooms. Similar findings were found in Dorji et al. (2019) and Avramidis et al. (2000); teachers who taught and were highly experienced in teaching students with disabilities and deficiencies had more positive attitudes and reactions towards the concept of inclusion as well as teaching those children. However, Dorji et al. (2019) showed a difference between attitudes when the matter of including students with disabilities into mainstream schools (i.e., schools that put students with special needs into the same classroom with their peers who have no learning disabilities) appeared. The study revealed that teachers were critical towards teaching them in mainstream classrooms unlike Avramidis et al (2000) who pointed out experienced teachers' willingness in including students with disabilities in mainstream classrooms. Teaching and involving students with disabilities and deficiencies in mainstream classrooms seemed to be an issue for some teachers because of the lack of support they received from the school, lack of adaptation of teachers, their heavy work load, the time spent on planning and lack of resources specific for students with disabilities and deficiencies (Avramidis et al., 2000; Coutsocostax & Alborz, 2010; Nilsen, 2020; Rakap & Kaczmarek, 2010).

Teachers in the study of Van Reusen et al. (2000) also mentioned that students with disabilities and deficiencies had a negative impact in the learning environment because of their difficulty of delivering instruction and the low quality of learning, while some teachers from Nilsen (2020)'s study held beliefs that those students should leave the mainstream schools in order for their needs to be met since mainstream schools could not refer to students with diverse needs. In other words, students with disabilities and deficiencies were only seen fit in special schools unlike mainstream schools by teachers.

Some studies, such as Koutrouba, Vamvakari and Steliou's (2006) study, focused on the positive effect of teachers having only one student with disabilities in their classroom throughout their careers. The study findings indicated that experience in teaching with students with disabilities led to teachers' having positive attitudes in mainstream schools as well as teachers' tendency to feel responsible to deal with prejudice and develop strategies to address the difficulties regarding students with disabilities. As a result of that responsibility both teachers and students with disabilities began to fight the bias and prejudice in mainstream schools. On the contrary, teachers reported having difficulties to meet the emotional, social and academic needs of students with disabilities due to their small number of years in teaching. That was explained by their misinterpretation of inclusivity as integration (Solis, Pedrosa & Mateos-Fernández, 2019).

There are also studies presenting the opposite finding such as; the more teachers had students with disabilities and deficiencies in their classrooms, the more they showed unwillingness to include them in their classrooms (Rakap & Kaczmarek, 2010). A large number of Turkish teachers in Rakap and Kaczmarek's (2010) study reported negative attitudes and unwillingness to include students with disabilities and deficiencies due to their own lack of knowledge, experience, time and appropriate conditions to include them in classroom activities and exercises. Teachers' willingness and comfort level also changed due to the disability and deficiency type. Teachers showed more willingness and comfort level towards including students with physical disabilities, moderate willingness and comfort level to include students with cognitive problems and less willingness and unfavorable feelings to include students with behavioral problems. Their unwillingness and unfavorable feelings to

include students with behavioral problems was highly associated with how those students interrupted and disturbed the classroom environment, therefore they felt greater concern and stress level to manage their classrooms. Similar to Avramidis et al (2000), the study also found a relationship between teachers' positive attitudes towards inclusion of students with disabilities and deficiencies and their experience, education and training they receive regarding special education. Teachers who had more experience regarding inclusive practices, in-service education, special education certificates or received special education courses in the university, reported positive attitudes towards including those students in their classrooms (Rakap & Kaczmarek, 2010).

Besides, some studies reported the impact of teachers' age, experience and special education they received on their attitudes such as; teachers who were younger, had little teaching experience and especially who had special education training had significantly more positive attitudes towards the inclusion of students with complex learning disorders (Coutsocostax & Albortz, 2010). Alongside with having students with disabilities in classrooms, teacher training and education for students with disabilities and deficiencies also proved to affect teachers positively in terms of attitudes and perceptions (Coutsocostax & Albortz, 2010; Solis et al., 2019; Van Reusen et al., 2000).

Other factors that have an effect on teachers' attitudes and perceptions based on literature are identified as teachers' level of confidence, self-efficacy, willingness and competency level. In a study conducted by Savolainen et al. (2012) concerning South African and Finnish teachers, self-efficacy was found highly connected to

teachers' having negative or positive attitudes towards including students with disabilities and deficiencies. Similar findings were found in other studies (Meijer & Foster, 1988; Soodak, Podell & Lehman, 1998; Weisel & O Dror, 2006). South African teachers held less concerns with including students with disabilities in the classrooms unlike Finnish teachers. Finnish teachers showed no difference concerning the general idea of inclusion because they considered it as a human right to include students with disabilities into their classrooms. Also, the feeling of competency to implement inclusive strategies in classrooms proved to help teachers maintain more positive attitudes. Some studies revealed teachers' high competency level related to their personal beliefs of fairness and compassion while referring to students with disabilities and deficiencies found to be connected with teachers having a strong sense of intrinsic motivation (Dorji et al., 2019).

As the aforementioned studies indicated, teachers who had special training and education to teach students with disabilities and deficiencies showed positive attitudes. In relation to having positive attitudes, teachers also showed high confidence to describe students with disabilities and deficiencies as well as to include and teach them in their classrooms compared to teachers who had little or no training for inclusive education (Avramidis et al., 2000; Coutsockstax and Alborz, 2010). A study from Cyprus connected teachers' concerns and incompetency of teaching students with disabilities to teachers' lack of differentiation, teaching and assessment techniques for teaching students with disabilities and deficiencies (Koutrouba et al., 2006). Besides, teachers' attitudes and perceptions were observed to change based on their genders. While some studies found out that male teachers had more positive attitudes towards teaching students with disabilities and deficiencies as well as the

general idea of inclusive education compared to their female colleagues (Dorji et al., 2019), other studies showed that female teachers had more positive attitudes compared to their male colleagues (Boyle, Topping & Jindal-Snape, 2013). Another study focused on the gender restrictions in teacher training related to students with disabilities, in which female teachers were the main participants reported that female teachers had less teacher training in terms of teaching students with disabilities and deficiencies compared to male teachers. The same study made a connection between female teachers with social norms, their ability to help and their attitudes of inclusion (Solis et al., 2019).

Comparative studies on teachers' attitudes and perceptions of students with disabilities and deficiencies

Various research from different countries and cultures compared teachers' attitudes, beliefs and perceptions of students with disabilities and deficiencies. For instance, Moberg et al. (2020) compared Finnish teachers' attitudes with Japanese teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education through a survey. Finnish and Japanese teachers' general attitudes of students with disabilities and deficiencies were slightly negative. Findings from this study indicated that Japanese teachers were more concerned with students being negatively labeled in classrooms and less concerned with teachers' efficacy to implement inclusive practices comparing to Finnish teachers. Besides, Japanese teachers did not appear to be concerned with the quality of inclusivity of students who were not disabled even though Finnish teachers were found more concerned. Considering the themes of social justice and efficacy, Japanese teachers did not differentiate social justice and efficacy, but focused more on efficacy comparing to Finnish teachers. Finnish teachers were reported to care

more about social justice rather than efficacy when they justified inclusive education (Moberg et al., 2020). In terms of confidence level, Finnish teachers were more confident in accepting students in their classrooms than their Japanese associates, especially those students with visual and hearing impairments and physical disabilities. However, Japanese teachers appeared to be more confident with accepting students with emotional, behavioral and intellectual disabilities than Finnish teachers in their classrooms. Japanese teachers showed lower willingness to accept children with visual and hearing impairments and physical disabilities even though a special attention was given to having more special classes for those children (Moberg et al., 2020).

Likewise, another study focused on Finnish teachers' attitudes and compared them with South African teachers' attitudes in a mixed method research. While South African and Finnish teachers showed a neutral attitude, Finnish teachers again showed more positive attitudes towards implementing inclusive practices for students with disabilities and deficiencies. However, thinking of the consequences of including those children in mainstream classrooms, they reported similar concerns with issues related to classroom management, individualized learning and instruction etc. Nonetheless, the research still indicated that teachers had a higher sense of ability to meet the diverse needs of students in classrooms (Savolainen et al., 2012). Another comparative study from Sharma et al. (2018) analyzed Australian and Italian teachers' attitudes, concerns and intentions to include students with disabilities in the classrooms through a survey. Based on the results Italian teachers held more positive attitudes to teach in inclusive classrooms compared to Australian teachers. Italian teachers displayed high commitment and a lower level of concern to teach those

students compared to Australian teachers due to the fact that Italy started to implement inclusive approaches in their schools earlier than Australia. The study revealed that in order teachers to be more inclusive towards students with disabilities and deficiencies, positive attitudes combined with a high sense of teaching efficacy were necessary. Likewise, their attitudes and efficacy were significant predictors of teachers' intentions to teach children with disabilities and deficiencies.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards students with disabilities and deficiencies differ based on their culture, personal attributes, teaching experience, training, context and ongoing educational reforms. While there are studies that showed negative attitudes of teachers to teach students with disabilities as well as towards inclusive education (Boyle et al., 2013; Coutsocostax & Alborz, 2010; Koutrouba et al., 2006; Moberg et al., 2020; Nilsen, 2020; Van Reusen et al., 2000), some studies showed teachers' commitment, willingness and positive attitudes to teach and include students with disabilities in their classrooms while seeing inclusion as necessary to create and facilitate an equal environment for all students (Abbott, 2006; Avramidis et al., 2000; Dorji et al., 2019; Savolainen et al., 2012; Sharma et al., 2018; Simsek & Kilcan, 2019). The key point of all the studies in this section is that there are demands for more resources, materials, instructional strategies, differentiation, inclusive practices with students with disabilities and deficiencies. Teachers need to be exposed to positive experiences with students with disabilities and deficiencies early in the careers and they also need collaboration in teaching and planning with students, parents, teachers, policy makers, school heads and other staff members that embody the whole school

(Abbott, 2006; Dorji et al., 2019; Moberg et al., 2020; Nilsen, 2020; Simsek & Kilcan, 2019; Van Reusen et al., 2000). Various research highlighted the necessity of a better training in inclusive practices in both pre- and in-service teacher education in order to teach students with disabilities and deficiencies effectively (Avramidis et al., 2000; Koutrouba et al., 2006; Savolainen et al., 2012; Solis et al., 2019).

Correspondingly, teachers often underscore the need to make systematic changes within the schools for more flexible instruction and curricula to fulfill the needs of every student in need, in other words for schools to fit children (Boyle et al., 2013; Coutsocostax & Alborz; 2010; Sharma et al., 2018). Issues related to inadequate or ineffective inclusive practices, training and exploration of the reasons behind them are the suggested solutions from teachers, which fully shows their awareness of the requirements to maintain and sustain inclusivity of students with disabilities and deficiencies. In the next section, teachers' attitudes and perceptions towards students with ethnic origins will be analyzed based on literature to understand teachers' viewpoint of inclusive education.

Multicultural education: Education for multicultural students

Multicultural education refers to educational approaches that incorporate students' cultural diversity such as; race, ethnicity, language spoken, gender, age, religion, or class differences (APA, 2017). In today's societies it is required for teachers to understand the diverse needs of those group of students, emphasize the plurality and differences and refer to them effectively in classrooms (Wells, 2008). Teachers having positive attitudes towards students with diversities may positively impact their students' attitudes towards their peers, negative attitudes of teachers may result in their students' negative attitudes towards their peers (Kustati et al., 2020).

Therefore, in this chapter while referring to students with different ethnic backgrounds and refugee students, there will be a connection with multicultural education.

Teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards students from ethnic diversities

Based on the research regarding teachers' attitudes and perceptions about students with ethnic diversities, this section is classified under the following titles: 1) teachers' implicit and explicit attitudes, 2) teachers' expectations and referrals regarding ethnic diversities and finally 3) teachers' attitudes and perceptions towards teaching secondary language to ethnic diversities.

Teachers' implicit and explicit attitudes

Due to the needs of diverse students, teachers have the key role in maintaining an inclusive environment in which every student with differences can learn and participate equally. However, their perceptions and attitudes could affect their teaching and communication with multicultural students (Glock & Klapproth, 2017; Kumar, Karabenick & Burgoon, 2015; Soriano & Cala, 2019; Vedder et al., 2006). More importantly, some studies found that teachers' implicit attitudes rather than explicit attitudes play a role in their instructional approaches. In a study conducted to understand teachers' attitudes towards ethnic minority students, the results showed that teachers working in culturally diverse schools held negative implicit attitudes towards ethnic minority students (Glock, Kovacs & Pit-ten Cate, 2019). Implicit attitudes in this aspect referred to teachers' unconscious attitudes towards their students, in which teachers were not aware of being watched. The study made connections with previous studies regarding German teachers' negative implicit

attitudes towards their Turkish students (Hofmann et al., 2008). The highlight in this context was that implicit attitudes had a big impact on teachers' perspectives as well as their attitudes towards students with ethnic minorities (Glock et al., 2019).

A similar study also pointed out the necessity to help teachers understand the link between their implicit and explicit beliefs towards students who are non-white (Kumar et al., 2015). According to the findings, teachers who held positive implicit attitudes towards white students felt less favorable to help maintain mutual respect among students and as a result felt less responsible to engage in practices regarding cultural adaptations. Teachers' explicit negative attitudes about ethnic minorities and poor students were found connected to enhancing performance-focused instructional practices. In this sense, explicit attitudes in contrast to implicit attitudes meant that teachers were aware of their attitudes being observed and therefore they could show favorable attitudes. Besides, teachers in the study showed stereotypical beliefs about non-white students and seemed to lack awareness regarding their negative impact through their comparison of white and non-white students in their classrooms, which were connected to their prejudiced assumption that non-white students disregarded education (Kumar et al., 2015).

Teachers' expectations and referrals for ethnic diversities

Some studies put emphasis on finding out teachers' expectations, referrals, negative and positive attitudes toward minority students to understand whether they differ from their expectations, referrals and attitudes toward the majority students. In a study conducted by Tenenbaum and Ruck (2007), teachers' expectations of their European American (E.A.), Asian American, African American and Latino students

were analyzed in relation to teachers' positive and negative attitudes. The results showed that teachers in general had positive expectations and made positive referrals to describe students with different ethnic origins. However, teachers provided more positive discourse for European American students compared to African American and Latino students and had higher expectations for E.A students compared to African American and Latino students. They also seemed to favor more E.A students compared to the same group. Considering teachers' expectations of Asian American students, teachers had higher expectations for them compared to African American and Latino students. The least favored group of students by teachers and the least negative expectations were found for Latino students. Besides considering gifted programs of schools, teachers were less likely to refer students from different ethnic origins to these programs compared to E.A Students. According to the results of the study, due to the fact that teachers showed different expectations and attitudes towards students with different ethnic backgrounds, their students had the tendency to have bias within themselves regarding their beliefs about their teachers' expectations of learning. It could also prevent students from getting more positive feedback as well as the opportunity to participate in class activities.

Teachers' attitudes and perceptions towards students from diverse ethnicities in teaching language context

Based on research findings, teachers' attitudes and perceptions differed in terms of the skills of students from different ethnic backgrounds in learning English as a second language. For instance, research indicated that teachers overestimated white students' skills in contrast to their Hispanic, Asian and Black students. The English skills of Hispanic students as well as Asian students were underestimated in terms of

learning and speaking English. Teachers were also found to underestimate the literacy skills of Black students compared to white students because of their own lower socio-economic status and lower achievements (Ready & Wright, 2011). Likewise, another study analyzed the impact of English teachers' attitudes on the learning outcomes of multicultural students in Islamic schools (Kustati et al., 2020). Most of the teachers mainly hold positive attitudes towards multicultural classrooms and only about 10% of teachers had negative attitudes. Teachers who fell into the 10% complained about their students' different English accents affected by their mother tongue. According to the findings, teachers were strict in the classroom and therefore their students felt inadequate and exhausted. The authors highlighted that teachers' positive attitudes and engagement with student with ethnic diversities helped students' enthusiasm to learn and improve themselves efficiently in the classrooms. On the other hand, teachers who had negative and unaccepting attitudes towards students with ethnic differences tended to decrease students' English scores and the effectiveness of learning outcomes.

Teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards refugee students

As reported by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the number of asylum seekers have increased over 25 million especially with the impact of the ongoing war in Syria (Soriano & Cala, 2019). Consequently, refugee children have begun to be included in schools to receive the education they deserve. However, studies conducted around the world indicate that including refugee children in schools have been problematic due to various reasons such as, schools' lack of educational strategies to respond to refugee children' needs (Cala et al., 2018). Specifically, attitudes of teachers towards refugee students were the main issue in

schools' development policies concerning multicultural education. According to research perceptions and attitudes towards refugees proved to have a great impact on the management of the migration issue (Tomkinson, 2018).

In this section, teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards refugee students will be investigated under two sub-sections: 1) teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards teaching secondary languages to refugees and mother-tongue as an advantage and an obstacle and 2) the impact of teachers' gender differences on their perceptions and attitudes.

Teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards teaching secondary languages to refugees and mother-tongue as an advantage and an obstacle

Teaching the host language as a secondary language has been difficult for some teachers, especially when they teach refugee students since it requires more strategies, training, planning and time (Haynes, 2017). Besides, refugee students have limited understanding of the host language of the country they are placed in due to their cultural and language differences and that is one of the reasons why teachers have more challenges to teach them the English language (Haynes, 2017). Therefore, understanding how teachers perceive refugee students and their attitudes towards this group of students are significant determinants for their instructions in the classroom. In a study, English Language teachers' perceptions of their own ability to teach refugee students were analyzed and the results showed that more than half of the participants found it challenging to teach English to refugee students compared to other students who were not refugees or immigrants (Haynes, 2017). Many teachers from the study pointed out in addition to their little to none educational backgrounds

as well as their psychological problems, refugee students had a difficult time with learning a new language. The same issue was highly on point especially when they were not literate in their mother tongue.

A similar finding was presented in Miller, Mitchell and Brown (2005) who found that due to lack of schooling, pre-immigration experiences, African refugees had problems with language and literacy development in classrooms. Teachers also stated that adjusting and finding teaching materials appropriate for their cultures and levels were challenging (Haynes, 2017). As a result of these restrictions for both refugee students and English as the secondary language teachers, it was less likely for older and newly registered refugee students to graduate. Although these teachers believed that they were trained sufficiently to teach refugee students, they stated being in the classroom, teaching these students was the best way to learn how to teach them and understand their needs (Haynes, 2017). In other words, the more teachers practiced the more they felt competent to deal with teaching English to refugee students. Also, in the same study teachers found it necessary to be trained more to learn about the cultures of refugee students and to promote using their own mother-tongue to preserve their cultures while learning another language.

Similarly, another study of Walker, Shafer & Iiams (2004) investigated teachers' attitudes towards English Language Learners (ELL), especially their negative or positive attitudes towards language-minority students from different cultural, racial, ethnic backgrounds. Almost half of the teachers 30% (n=124) in the study believed ELL students performed poorly in school and 16% (n=68) held negative attitudes of ELL students who came from countries with inferior educational systems. Quite

more than half of the participants, 70% (n=288) of teachers were not in favor of having ELL students from different countries in their classrooms. 20% of teachers (n= 83) showed completely negative attitudes towards the matter of adapting their instructional strategies for ELL students. Similar attitudes were found towards the subject of receiving training for professional development concerning ELL students. More than half of the teachers were not concerned with developing themselves even though the opportunity was given. A significant association was identified between teachers' inclination to get ELL professional development and the number of years of their teaching experience. Teachers who were new in their profession with 0-4 years of teaching experience tended to be more in favor with professional development to teach language-minority students compared to teachers with more than 10 years of teaching experience.

The mother tongue of refugee children in research was considered to be both an obstacle and something valuable for teachers. According to a study in Turkey, language differences of Syrian refugee students were perceived as something teachers could use as a resource such as using Arabic words, praising Syrian students' using Arabic in the classrooms (Karsli-Calamak & Kilinc, 2019) but also as a problem that prevented teachers from seeing the true potential of these students and understanding their behaviors. The research also found that teachers had difficulties with integrating Syrian students into their classroom activities (Dogutas, 2018). The reason seemed to be teachers' lack of in-service practice concerning multicultural education and awareness of diverse children. The language barrier was the core problem for teachers because they could not teach Syrian students nor could they communicate with their parents about refugee students' process and needs due to

their lack of knowledge of the Turkish language (Dogutas, 2018). None of the teachers knew the Arabic language either. Teachers also highlighted the cultural differences and felt helpless to build a positive environment that would make Syrian students feel comfortable and accepted, because they did not know their students' cultural background, their beliefs and values. The study revealed that Syrian refugees had the burden of putting extra work to adapt to their new schools in a different country that embodies a different culture and language; they were both psychologically and socially damaged due to their experience of war. However, because of the lack of knowledge of how to deal with their traumas as well as additional education to refer to Syrian students, teachers believed it was impossible to help them adapt to the concept of school and the school community (Dogutas, 2018). Additionally, teachers seemed to hold negative perceptions of Syrian students as seeing them aggressive and misfit and Turkish parents found to hold similar impressions towards Syrian students.

Apart from Syrian refugee students, African refugee students' first language was also found out to affect teachers' instructions and attitudes. (Miller et al., 2005). As a result of their lower literacy levels in their first language, teachers perceived them as having troubles learning a second language such as English. They also felt challenged in their professions both cognitively and linguistically due to their lack of appropriate materials for African refugees. Alongside with their first and second language limited literacy levels, African students were also seen as reluctant and aggressive to work with teachers (Miller et al., 2005).

The impact of teachers' gender differences on their perceptions and attitudes

Research also revealed gender differences between teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards refugee students in schools. For instance, two studies analyzed teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards refugee students as well as their levels of inclusivity in the frame of European citizenship (Cala et al., 2018; Soriano & Cala, 2019). Soriano and Cala, (2019) compared teachers' attitudes and perceptions in Spain and France, and the results showed that in both countries female teachers were more sensitive and empathetic towards refugee students by maintaining positive emotional reactions towards them compared to male teachers. The reason appeared to be traditional gender roles, which resulted in female teachers' higher intercultural sensitivity as well as their solidarity. Female teachers showed a great sense and responsibility of protecting and helping these children both emotionally and socially. In a similar study conducted by Cala et al. (2018) pre-service teachers' attitudes and perceptions towards refugees in relation to inclusive citizenship (mainly Syrian refugees) were analyzed. The findings indicated that the less negative cognitive attitudes and emotions teachers had towards refugee students the more they fought for their acceptance and assignment of rights. Specifically, female teachers concerning their inclusive citizenship attitudes were more positive than their male colleagues. Gender differences in teachers' attitudes were also identified Soriano and Cala's (2019) study. They found that females were aware of students' inequalities and were empathetic towards those who experience discrimination and are in need of help. Furthermore, studies conducted in Turkey investigated Turkish teachers' attitudes towards Syrian refugee students in mainstream schools. Since the number of Syrian refugees are higher in Turkey compared to other countries in the world, the matter of education of Syrian refugees is highly on agenda as a vital issue (as cited in

Aydin et al., 2019). The findings of a study conducted in Turkey (Aydin et al., 2019) indicated that female teachers were more likely to have positive attitudes towards Syrian refugees compared to male teachers. According to the results female teachers had a higher possibility to perceive Syrian refugee children as resources to improve themselves and help their students than male teachers due to traditional and cultural stereotypes. Teachers, who were Kurdish or from other ethnic minorities, were found to hold more positive attitudes than those with Turkish origin as well (Aydin et al., 2019).

In contrast to the findings above, gender inequality between teachers were found. In other words, there was a difference between female teachers and male teachers in terms of receiving adequate support from the school administration. A study that compared the attitudes of teachers in six European countries revealed that male teachers were receiving more help from the school management concerning managing diversities compared to female teachers (Fine-Davis & Faas, 2014).

Besides, in all the European countries, female teachers were more likely than male teachers to regard adapting their teaching materials and methods as necessary and significant. Consequently, more than half of the female teachers in the study showed that they adapted their teaching materials and strategies to meet the needs of students with ethnic, racial, national and language differences, while not even the half of the male teacher participants stated they sometimes adapted their materials and methods. In terms of reasons that hindered adapting teaching methods, female teachers stated the lack of time and training more often compared to male teachers (Fine-Davis & Faas, 2014).

Conclusion

Concerning teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards multicultural students (i.e., students from different ethnic origins and refugee students) relevant research has shown that teachers have both positive and negative perceptions and attitudes towards this minority group of students (Glock et al., 2019; Kumar et al., 2015; Kustati et al. 2020; Ready & Wright, 2011). Regarding ethnic minorities, teachers' not only explicit but implicit attitudes found out to have a greater impact on their positive and negative attitudes. Therefore, there is a need to investigate their implicit and explicit attitudes to understand teachers' personal beliefs of inclusivity, equality and diversity (Glock et al., 2019; Kumar et al., 2015). Teachers' expectations and referrals also proved to impact their positive and negative attitudes towards ethnic diversities (Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007). Besides, one of the most important challenges teachers faced was related to teach the host language to ethnic diverse and refugee students. Students' lack of adequate literacy levels both in their mother-tongue and in the host language, teachers' lack of pre- and in-service training, their sense of incompetency, negative teaching experiences and personal beliefs (e.g., seeing refugee students as aggressive and misfit) found out to affect negatively teachers' attitudes and perceptions (Dogutas, 2018; Karsli-Calamak & Kilinc, 2019; Kustati et al, 2020; Miller et al., 2015; Walker et al., 2004). However, there are teachers, who regard their students' mother-tongue differences as something valuable and favorable and create a more inclusive climate in the classroom (Karslı-Calamak & Kilinc, 2019).

The research findings presented in this section reveal the necessity of teacher training in inclusion in both pre and in-service teacher education to understand and act

according to the needs of students with ethnic diversities and refugee students. In order to maintain and preserve effective multicultural classrooms, teachers should have positive attitudes and willingness to cultivate students' differences. Besides, there is a high demand for culturally, linguistically and cognitively appropriate materials in multicultural classrooms (e.g. in terms of adjusting the level of the materials proper for refugee students' level), adequate support from the school management regardless of teachers' gender in terms of managing diverse classrooms, involvement of teachers in curricular decisions to act as agents, training to approach refugee children who are traumatized and psychologically influenced by war, teachers who understand the mother-tongue of language-minority children in the classroom (e.g. Syrian, African teachers), new teaching strategies, fairer educational practices that prevents discriminatory attitudes and perceptions and, finally, encouragement of parents to work collaboratively with teachers and school administrations in the school. In the next section, teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards students with different sexual orientations as one of the minority groups will be investigated to further understand teachers' inclusivity.

Students with different sexual orientations and sexual minorities

According to UNESCO's (2009) statement, inclusive education must ensure to protect, include and treat every child equally in education. Children's diversities such as abilities, ethnicities, races, economic statuses, social classes, languages, religions, gender identities and sexual orientations are encouraged to be appreciated and respected by school management, parents, students, teachers and other staff members that embody the whole school to fight against bias, marginalization, discrimination and other consequences of negative attitudes within the society. The resistance to

learn and talk about sexuality as a subject because of sexuality's and particularly homosexuality's display as a cultural taboo can be one of the reasons why pre- and in-service teachers' attitudes, perceptions and perceived competency are negatively influenced (Robinson & Ferfolja, 2001). According to research (Chesir-Teran, 2003; Kosciw, Diaz & Greytak, 2008; Kosciw & Diaz, 2006) majority of students with different sexual orientations report experiencing bullying and harassment (e.g. name-calling, insults and negative expressions) in schools. Moreover such bullying and harassment were linked to adults in schools, who were more likely to show negative and homophobic remarks towards sexual minority students, teachers and other school members (Kosciw et al., 2018; Kosciw & Diaz, 2006).

Studies also report that sexual minority students deal with bullying, victimization, perpetration, sexual, physical and emotional abuse significantly more than their heterosexual peers (Andersen, Zou & Blosnich, 2015; Donahue et al., 2017; Eisenberg et al., 2017; Goodenow et al., 2016; Henderson, 2016; Hong & Espelage, 2012; Hughes et al., 2010b; Sterzing et al., 2016). Consequently, sexual minority students tend to be targets of homophobic harassment and bullying which are considered as harmful as traditional bullying (Bucchianeri et al., 2016; Eisenberg et al., 2017; Meyer, 2003; Russell et al., 2012). Moreover, they are also at high risk to suffer from depression as well as to be suicidal compared to heterosexual peers (Bouris et al., 2016; Burton et al., 2013; Burton et al., 2014; Donahue et al., 2017; Hughes et al., 2014; Johnson et al., 2011). After all, teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards minority students are the key determinants to maintain an inclusive classroom and a climate for those students (Düşkün, 2016). Therefore, this section will focus on teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards students with different

sexual orientations. Specifically, this section focuses on 1) teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards homophobic bullying and 2) teachers' perceptions of and attitudes towards the inclusion of LGBT students into the classroom as well as their knowledge of sexual-diversities (LGBT). Before investigating teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards homophobic bullying, it is necessary to describe what bullying and specifically homophobic bullying stand for.

The act of homophobic bullying

Schools are often the places where hostile behavior is exhibited if students feel that they cannot fulfill the societal expectations (D'Augelli, 1998). These hostile behaviors, called bullying, often occur in the process of understanding themselves and people around them as well as in the process of adapting to these expectations. It often leads to negative outcomes for adolescents, including depression, anxiety, and frequent school absences (D'Augelli, 1998). Bullying is repeated psychological and physical oppression of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or a group of people (Farrington, 1993). There are various types of bullying, such as verbal aggression (e.g., name-calling), emotional bullying (e.g., social exclusion and isolation), physical bullying (e.g., interference of personal property, harassment and assault) and cyber-bullying (e.g., exploitation of personal life through social media) (Gordon, 2012).

According to the *United Nations World Report on Violence Against Children (2006)* the most common type of bullying across Europe is the sexual and gender-based bullying and it exists within places that lack challenges and among people that have negative reactions towards homosexuality (Pinheiro, 2006; Takacs, 2006). It emerges

with various forms such as creating and spreading rumors, social exclusion, texting, frightening looks due to homophobia (i.e., fear of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender people and those who do not fall into heteronormativity). It is a type of bullying carried out by peers and sometimes by teachers or other staff members in schools (Jennett, 2004).

Teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards homophobic bullying

Research investigated the relationship between teachers' perceptions of sexual minority youth as well as their attitudes towards homophobic bullying in schools. For instance, Meyer (2008) investigated teachers' perceptions and responses to gendered and sexual harassment in Canadian secondary schools through interviews in an attempt to explore more effective solutions to reduce homophobia, bullying and harassment as well as to reduce the negative influences over teachers' perceptions and behaviors in schools. According to the results, teachers' attitudes and perceptions were negatively affected by administrators' inefficiency to address incidents of bullying and harassment as well as their unwillingness to take these issues seriously. Teachers' behavior was also shaped by the social norms and values. The lack of knowledge, discourse and awareness of school administrators regarding sexual and homophobic harassment in the schools found out to prevent teachers from perceiving sexual and homophobic harassment as an issue and therefore as something that does not need to be addressed to. Consequently, teachers stated that they feel isolated because of the school administrators' and their colleagues' lack of support to intervene and address homophobic name-calling. This leads teachers to give up on trying to solve the issue by themselves.

Similar findings regarding the lack of support from school administration and colleagues to make interventions and include students with different sexual orientation and gender in classrooms were also reported in other studies (McCabe & Robinson, 2008; Page, 2017; Taylor et al., 2016). It was also reported that in schools other staff members tend to make, sexist, racist and homophobic comments about both LGBT teachers and students (Meyer, 2008).

The need to address homophobia and bullying in schools is highly prevalent to hinder the idea that hostility is acceptable (Meyer, 2008). A study conducted in Italian high schools had the purpose to understand specific predictors for teachers' responses to homophobic bullying incidents. Nappa et al. (2018) investigated teachers' reactions to hypothetical bullying incidents. The study explored: a) teachers' reaction to homophobic victimized students b) teachers' homophobic attitudes c) teachers' self-efficacy and d) self-efficacy in managing homophobic bullying. The researchers categorized teachers' reactions as "feeling of powerlessness," "feeling of unprepared," "positive activation" and "I will talk to the student." The data analysis showed that lower self-efficacy in managing homophobic attitudes and homophobic bullying was highly associated with "feeling of powerlessness" as well as that teachers' lower perceived self-efficacy was associated with teachers' higher homophobic attitudes. In other words, the results supported that teachers' attitudes towards lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students and self-efficacy played a key role in showing possible reactions to students dealing with homophobic bullying. Besides, homophobic attitudes were negatively related to positive cognitive and behavioral responses as well as to the intention of

communicating with the victimized students in the hypothetical bullying scenarios (Nappa et al., 2018).

Kolbert et al. (2015) found a relationship between teachers' perceptions of school members' supportiveness of sexual-diverse students and teachers' reports of homophobic bullying experienced by sexual-diverse students (Kolbert et al., 2015). More than half of the teachers (51%) in Kolbert et al.'s (2015) study regarded the school staff as having positive perceptions of sexual-minority students. However, the higher teachers rated their school staff in terms of being positive in attitudes towards LGBTQ students, the more they perceived LGBTQ students as targets of homophobic bullying and victimization compared to heterosexual students within the school. Therefore, higher school staff supportiveness in this study was found to be associated with teachers' and other students' frequent use of homophobic language towards sexual-minority students, verbal, physical, cyber and relational bullying and sexual harassment towards sexual-minority students. In other words, teachers who reported their schools and school members as supportive were more likely to report frequent usage of homophobic language towards sexual minority students. More importantly, teachers, who identified themselves as LGBTQ, reported school staff as less supportive compared to heterosexual teachers' reports, due to their own experiences in their adolescence. Similar findings were found in Glikman and Elkayam (2019) and Meyer, Taylor and Peter (2015) concerning LGBTQ teachers' sensitivity and empathy towards negative attitudes towards sexual-minority students. Teachers who were sexual minority themselves reported higher awareness of homophobic bullying and more willingness to intervene in homophobic bullying incidents. Additionally, teachers who were unaware of homophobic bullying and

victimization and teachers who believed their schools lacked anti-bullying policies, reported higher rates of physical bullying of sexual-minority students compared to teachers who claimed to be aware of their schools' anti-bullying policies (Kolbert et al., 2015).

Teachers' lack of knowledge and awareness of homophobic bullying as well as of issues related to sexual-minority students were also reported in McCabe and Robinson's (2008) in which pre-service teachers' behaviors towards LGBT youth were investigated. According to the findings, pre-service teachers could not identify LGBT harassment and bullying as an example of social injustice neither did they identify LGBT students as the oppressed minority. When the matters of race, class, language proficiency, special education status or gender were presented to the participant pre-service teachers, they had a high sense of fighting against inequalities. However, such confidence to fight against inequalities could not be found against students with different sexual orientations. As a result, pre-service teachers in this study did not find it necessary to intervene in homophobic bullying in the classroom. Most of the pre-service teachers pointed at the difficulty of intervening in homophobic bullying or harassment due to the heavy load of work, school environment, lack of resources and lack of administrative support. As other barriers to acting in LGBT-supportive manner, lack of knowledge of LGBT issues, censure or antipathy from colleagues or administration were also apparent which made pre-service teachers felt powerless over how to challenge social injustices, specifically against sexual minority groups. Meyer et al. (2015) revealed the same finding related to teachers' perceptions of human rights of sexual-diverse students. The study pointed out that teachers supported the idea to address issues of diversity, equality

and social justice however they still could not do so due to the discrepancy between their beliefs and behaviors concerning the implementation of LGBT- inclusive education in the classrooms.

Gasinska (2015) investigated in-service teachers' attitudes towards homophobic bullying in Lithuanian schools through a survey. Teachers between the ages 22-65 participated in the survey and majority of them were female. Almost half of the teachers, 47% (n=136) revealed not knowing anyone with different sexual orientations personally. More than half of the teachers (57.4%) stated that homophobic bullying did not occur in the school. Yet, teachers witnessed verbal bullying towards students with different sexual orientations. Seventeen percent of teachers did not want to have homosexual or bisexual students in the classrooms and indicated that they would feel uncomfortable in their presence. Sixty-seven percent of teachers claimed that sexual-minority students did not cause any trouble however it was inappropriate for them to see LGBT students being open about their sexuality. Considering their reactions towards homophobic bullying, the majority of teachers said that they would deal with the bully who was responsible for the bullying. Less than half (32%) of the teachers stated they would talk to the bully's parents while 16% of them would not respond directly but report the student to the school administration. A small percentage of the teacher (5%) would punish the bully and %2 would ignore the bullying completely. More than half of the teachers found it unnecessary to address homophobic bullying since they did not regard homophobic bullying as something harmful. Less than half of the teachers (%41.2) admitted that they lacked necessary knowledge about LGBT issues and expertise to deal with homophobic bullying. Therefore, they believed those issues should be solved by

psychologists or social workers (Gasinska, 2015). Likewise, Glikman and Elkayam (2019) found that experts from outside schools were perceived by the teachers to be the first ones to refer to when the matter was students' different sexual orientations.

Teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards the inclusion of LGBT students into their classrooms and their knowledge of sexual-diversities

In order to understand teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards inclusivity of sexual-minority students in classrooms, it is important to report the relevant research that investigates to what extent teachers maintain and implement inclusive practices in their classrooms to meet the needs of sexual-minority students. According to a study from Canada conducted by Meyer et al. (2015) teachers' personal values and beliefs were found to affect what content teachers use in both the apparent and hidden curriculum. Specifically, teachers who fell into the sexual and racial minority groups and female teachers were found to feel more committed to human rights and social justice and more responsive towards negative behaviors LGBT students were facing in the classrooms due to their own personal experiences with inequalities. The findings indicated that most of Canadian teachers in the study found it important to address and incorporate issues related to sexual-minorities in their classrooms. However, based on the results of the study, further research was needed for the complete implementation of Gender and Sexual Diversity (GSD) inclusive education, to fill the gap between teachers' beliefs and behaviors as well as to act against the structural barriers of teachers.

Page (2017) also analyzed teachers' attitudes and implementation of LGBT inclusive curriculum in English Language Art (ELA) classrooms. Findings showed that ELA

teachers felt comfortable in integrating LGBT themes and characters in their curriculum and classroom exercises. There was a significant relationship between teachers' age, comfort level, awareness of resources and implementation level. Although more than half of the participant teachers (n=577) showed high comfort level in addressing these subjects, quite less than half of the participants reported actually not integrating these subjects. The mostly used method by teachers to include LGBT literature in classroom activities was to provide students the freedom to choose their own topic in reading individually. Only few number of teachers (23%) explicitly covered topics about sexual orientation or gender in the whole class activities. An association between teachers' age and their comfort level was found: teachers felt less comfort in covering these topics while younger teachers felt more comfort to do so. However, the oldest teachers did not fall into this pattern as they felt higher comfort compared to teachers between 20-30 ages. A similar pattern was found between teachers' level of experience and comfort level as experienced teachers were feeling less comfort compared to less experienced teachers who were feeling more comfort. Related to the need of guidance in determining appropriate materials about sexual orientation and gender, younger teachers were feeling more comfort in receiving guidance in identifying the appropriate text selection. Teachers who had 0-15 years of teaching experience felt more comfort when guidance was provided, while teachers with more than 15 years of experience showed a higher level of confidence regardless of the guidance given. However, younger teachers tended to be less aware compared to older teachers about the available resources regarding subjects related to sexual orientation and gender. When teachers reported about the challenges that hinder LGBT inclusive lessons and activities, 31% of teachers had concerns regarding parents' or other community members' negative

reactions. Teachers' other concerns included lack of budget and resources to purchase texts. Only 4% of teachers viewed the value system as a barrier that prevented them from integrating such topics in teaching literature. Female teachers as well as teachers from rural places showed a greater level of concern and an insecurity of "being in trouble" due to their integration of such topics. These concerns were highly connected to the fear of losing their jobs due to parents' and school administrators' negative reactions.

Evripidou and Cavusoglu (2015) explored Greek Cypriot English as Foreign Language teachers' (EFL) attitudes towards incorporating topics related to sexual orientation in their classrooms. Based on the results, EFL teachers had both negative and positive attitudes towards the use of subjects related to sexual orientations. The reasons behind their negative attitudes were their lack of knowledge and inadequacy to deal with such topics and homophobia. However, positive attitudes were found to be greater than the negative attitudes, especially in female teachers. Teachers' belief that their students would find those topics interesting seemed to play a key role in their positive attitudes, especially if such topics were integrated in the course book. In regard to integrating such topics within classrooms, teachers also showed concerns about losing their jobs as well as fear of negative reactions from their colleagues. The reasons behind their concerns were also associated with the general ethos of educational institutions, the idea of ethnical appropriateness and teachers' credibility (Evripidou & Cavusoglu, 2015). The conclusion of the study of Evripidou and Cavusoglu (2015) indicated that the topic of including sexual orientation in EFL classrooms could be barely seen within teachers' agenda and curriculum itself.

In terms of having positive perceptions, Glikman and Elkayam (2019) found that the majority of pre-service teachers in Israel showed a willingness to address the issue of sexual orientation in classrooms by using relevant resources such as books, websites, enhancing collaboration between straight and sexual-minority students by making use of coursework with LGBT themes. Yet, in terms of their knowledge level of subjects related to sexual orientations and appropriate tools convenient for practice, pre-service teachers were found to lack knowledge. Respectively, they felt unprepared and incompetent to facilitate students questioning their own sexual orientation. Likewise, McCabe and Robinson (2008) reported pre-service teachers lacking knowledge of LGBT issues, appropriate materials, resources and referral options. As a result, practicing pre-service teachers' students were also confused with referrals related to sexual orientation. Pre-service teachers in the study also stated that sexual orientation as a subject should not be discussed in schools due to their fear of making sexual activity acceptable in their students' eyes. They also regarded students who identified as LGBT going through a phase or a transitory state. To that end, they lacked positive attitudes towards working on the school environment to make it more inclusive for LGBT youth. For instance, sexual orientation as a topic found out to be never discussed in their coursework. The reason behind avoiding such topics in coursework was the lack of exposure to such topics in the schools they were assigned and their universities due to censorship as well as the lack of support from other trainee teachers and school administrators. Grade level that teachers taught was also associated with teachers' implementation of such topics in the study. Teachers who taught older students were found to gloss over such topics rather than paying attention to them. Despite all, research also reported positive attitudes of teacher educators. Significantly, a study from Brant and Willax (2020)

found that, concerning the implementation of activities related to LGBTQ people or issues in course works, more than half of the teacher educators reported integrating such topics (e.g. LGBTQ figures, homophobia, bullying and harassment) in their teacher training programs. Several teacher educators openly talked about these topics and themes in classrooms to teach pre-service teachers about diversities and increase their awareness towards discrimination against the sexual-minority group.

Conclusion

As research suggests teachers' attitudes and perceptions towards homophobic bullying and harassment and incorporating LGBT themes into their practices can be both positive and negative as a function of their personal experiences, knowledge level, the amount of training they received in teacher education programs, years of teaching experience, their age, their own sexual orientations and heteronormativity within the schools. According to the relevant research, in-service and pre-service teachers are often affected by both outside sources (e.g., restrictions and reactions from school administrators, colleagues, parents and communities) and internal dilemmas (i.e., their beliefs towards sexual-minorities, self-efficacy, the gap between social norms and their motivation) in terms of homophobic bullying interventions and integrating topics related to sexual-minorities in the classroom practices (Brant & Willox, 2020; Evripidou & Cavusoglu, 2015; Glikman & Elkayam, 2019; Meyer, 2008; Meyer et al., 2015; Page, 2017; Swanson & Gettinger, 2016). Therefore, there is a need to further investigate the in-service and pre-service teachers' classroom practices, the curricula they use, the content they include, their implicit beliefs and attitudes, their competency levels as well as teacher education institutions' content

taught, policies and practices (Evripidou & Cavusoglu, 2015; Glikman & Elkayam, 2019; Taylor et al., 2016).

In order to raise awareness in both teachers and students to treat students with different sexual orientations equally and to fight against exclusion of sexual-minority students, LGBT-inclusive education must be incorporated into schools' policies, curricula and practices. Besides necessary tools/materials should be provided to teachers and other staff members that embody schools. Most significantly, the negative impact of homophobic bullying and harassment on both teachers and students should be understood (Meyer et al., 2015; Page, 2017; Swanson & Gettinger, 2016; Szalacka, 2004). Principals, school staff and especially teachers have the key role in preventing and opposing inequalities, homophobic bullying and harassment. However, based on research, they still lack competency, knowledge, awareness of homophobic bullying, skills, appropriate resources to refer to sexual-diverse students. In addition to those barriers, teachers also lack support from staff members, positive attitudes that foster an environment that appreciate, recognize and protect these groups of students, which confirm why students feel insecure and vulnerable in schools (Bocherek & Brown, 2001; Greytak, Kosciw & Boesen, 2013; Kosciw, Greytak & Diaz, 2009; Meyer, 2008; Sawyer et al., 2006; Sears, 1992). Consequently, compared to heterosexual students, sexual-minority students deal more with hostility, bullying, victimization, perpetration, sexual, physical and emotional abuse (Andersen, Zou & Blosnich, 2015; Donahue et al., 2017; Eisenberg et al., 2017; Goodenow et al., 2016; Henderson, 2016; Hong & Espelage, 2012; Hughes et al., 2010b; Sterzing et al., 2016). Since, the relevant research reveal negative attitudes and perceptions and low competency as well as positive attitudes,

perceptions and high competency, there is a need for a systematic review that investigates teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards students with different sexual orientations and their competency level to adapt strategies to include sexual minorities. Besides, there has been no systematic literature review that investigated all these variables (attitudes, perceptions and competency) altogether concerning sexual minority students in literature.



CHAPTER 3: METHOD

Introduction

The purpose of the present study was to systematically investigate the literature to gain insights into high school teachers' perceptions about students with different sexual orientations as well as their attitudes towards them. The study also aimed at examining the literature to learn whether high school teachers feel competent to adapt strategies that support the inclusion of students with different sexual orientations in classrooms.

Research design

In the frame of this research, a systematic literature review was carried out. The systematic literature review is a method that provides an investigation of areas that are uncertain. In other words, its value comes from its ability to identify, review, appraise and synthesize all the relevant studies that answer specific set of questions like the research questions in this study (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). Specifically, systematic literature review is found fit for key questions in research which remain unanswered or found fit when there is a need for further research. Unlike other review types such as traditional reviews and narrative reviews, systematic reviews are literature reviews that are highly connected to certain set of scientific methods that aim to prevent systematic errors (bias), therefore by setting out detailed pre-defined methods they present results that are relevant and trustworthy (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). According to Petticrew and Roberts (2006), many systematic

literature reviews focus on finding out the effectiveness of the studies. Although sometimes that may not be the case, because they also answer questions related to associations between characteristics of populations or relationships between risk factors, predictors and outcomes and the result of this study might therefore address questions related to relations, associations or simply the effectiveness. Furthermore, in the guidance of Petticrew and Roberts (2006) as well as Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines created by the PRISMA Statement (Liberati et al., 2009), the systematic literature review in this study used core eight steps which were adapted according to the steps of PRISMA guidelines as well as Petticrew and Roberts's (2006) guidance for conducting a systematic literature review.

The PRISMA statement

The first step necessary for the review is refining the question, also called framing the review question, by providing the objectives of such review is being done. This step has been clearly described in chapter 1 where the problem, the purpose and the research questions of this study have been stated. For the second step, based on the research questions, the context needs to be determined. In this case, the rationale for the review is provided especially in the context of what is known. The third step includes the statement of the review protocols as the review requires a detailed protocol, which describes the process as well as the methods beforehand to the readers. In the case of this research the protocol was PRISMA protocols maintained by the PRISMA Statement's guidelines. For instance, the detailed explanation of how different types of studies were reached and located is needed in this process. The fourth step, which can also be called scoping reviews requires deciding on the

inclusion and exclusion criteria; the criteria that defines the eligibility of data. This step helps the researcher answers questions like; what types of studies are most appropriate to answer the decided research questions, where these studies were published as database, which outcomes were assessed and how in which populations, what kind of restrictions should be applied in the databases (e.g. language, time, subject area). The criteria of eligibility are required to be specified in order to report the data collection processes beforehand. The fifth step stands for search strategy and data collection, which can also be called study selection in PRISMA guidelines. For this step, based on the decided and clear research questions as well as from the inclusion and exclusion criteria, the researcher needs to decide on what types of studies need to be identified and how in a more detailed way, from which specific databases, by keeping record of the dates as well as by making use of synonyms related to the research questions. The keywords also called controlled terms in the light of this research and are connected to operators like Boolean Operators (e.g. applying “AND”, “OR”, “NOT in the research box of databases). Therefore, significantly the researcher must provide the keywords or synonyms used in company of Boolean operators in the process of research on the convenient databases in order to limit the data to be received related to the research questions. After the process of data collection, the reviewer by creating a bibliography list for each database (e.g., Endnote, Excel and such applications should be referred to for the list mentioned) should show the progress and code the data in an organized manner. That will also help the reviewer to identify the duplicate entries. In the same step, screening as one of the key determinants for data selection, demands checking of the titles and abstracts of each data to meet the reviewer’s inclusion criteria. For screening inclusion of both published and unpublished/ gray literature is advised for

possible bias to be hindered. Besides a second or sometimes a third reviewer enhances the reliability of the screening process since the researcher may have bias in the review process (e.g. in selecting studies).

For the sixth step after deciding on the data that is appropriate for the literature review the reviewer should create a map of the decided articles which includes; the study design, number of participants, the country/region, the main findings of each study and present it with a table. As the seventh step suggests the quality of these studies must be assessed. This step can also be called appraising or risk of bias in individual studies. As one of the most important steps of the systematic literature review, the reviewer has the responsibility to synthesize the evidence for its internal validity in doing so the individual studies must be checked for the possible bias. It determines whether the data is affected by bias and assesses whether each study represents a wider population. Also it helps investigate whether there are any other problems that affect the interpretation of the results. Generally, the methods used to assess the quality and the risk of bias includes scales and checklist or simply the reviewer can provide information about the assessment completed by more than one person independently, and if not about the assessment made individually. Besides hierarchy of evidence can also be used to rank the studies' quality according to the degree they were affected by bias. For instance, the reviewer can weigh the studies when summarizing the results, by determining which ones are high, intermediate and low quality. With this way readers will take their quality rank into account while coming to conclusions about the studies (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). However, it is suggested that if there is no such risk of bias, the reviewer must give a rationale to the lack of assessment regarding the risk of bias (Liberati et al., 2009).

In any case, if the reviewers decide to eliminate some of the individual studies because of the risk of bias, they should state which studies were excluded with a brief explanation. Finally, for the eighth and final step, the reviewer synthesizes the evidence/ the results. A detailed tabulation of each studies are needed to be presented and explained (e.g. the authors, country, study method, participants, findings based on the research questions).

Tables work to clarify which data have been extracted from which studies and their contribution to the whole synthesis and they work to present information retrieved in an organized way. As much as presenting a table is useful in this process, summarizing the results of each studies in a written way is as important as presenting a table. The review in the process of summarizing should follow these two stages: 1) present the range and size of the associations between information, 2) describe the most significant characteristics of each study (e.g., the population, the study methods, details of interventions evaluated, the outcomes of the studies if necessary). In addition to these two stages, the reviewer should provide a commentary on the methodological problems or biases if the studies were affected by them. For the synthesis there are various ways of presenting results, however mainly there are two synthesis types as narrative synthesis and meta-analysis. Depending on the researcher's choice each has different methods of synthesis and presenting results (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006).

Context

According to Petticrew and Roberts (2006) systematic literature reviews can be less valuable if there has been no research for the particular subject to support the

findings, however it is often useful for its power to point out the absence of research regarding the subject which enhances the subject to be covered and to be learnt. In terms of conducting systematic literature reviews, they are convenient when; 1) there is an uncertainty (e.g. about the effectiveness of a policy or service, where previous research was made on the issue), 2) there are a lot of research on a subject but key questions are not answered, 3) there is a gap that needs to be identified and the overall view of evidence regarding an area requires further research and lastly 4) the past methodological research is necessary to improve new methodologies. Taking into account of these justifications for a systematic literature review, there has been no systematic literature reviews that clarify high school teachers' attitudes towards homophobic bullying, perceptions about students with different sexual orientations and competency levels to integrate sexual minority students into their classrooms based on empirical data. There are research investigating attitudes, perceptions and teachers' self-efficacy one by one in separate studies in the context of inclusive education or multicultural education in both elementary and secondary schools, but there is not a systematic review that unifies the existing results in a clear organized manner to help schools, educators and policymakers to understand teachers' and students' experiences in high school and the needed interventions. Therefore, with the guidance of this systematic literature review, these research questions related to high school teachers' attitudes, perceptions and competencies will be investigated together in high school context.

Method of data collection

As *Prisma guideline* and systematic literature reviews require, the researcher decided on the keywords, synonyms to be used in corporation with the *Boolean Operators* on

three databases in sequence which are; Web of Science, Scopus and Eric databases between the dates of 1.10.20 – 6.10.20. As presented in Figure 1, the researcher applied two steps in each database in order to reach relevant data related to the research questions. The first step was maintained in order to find teachers' attitudes and perceptions towards students with different sexual orientations, sexual minority students. The second step was maintained in order to find out teachers' competencies towards the same group of students. Before deciding on the keywords, other keywords such as *high school teachers* and *secondary school teachers* were tested however there were too little data to start with, therefore more generalized keywords were used in order to reach a bigger data, and with the *eligibility criteria* the researcher would eliminate the irrelevant data such as studies related to elementary and middle school teachers in the process of data collection, which will be further explained below in details.

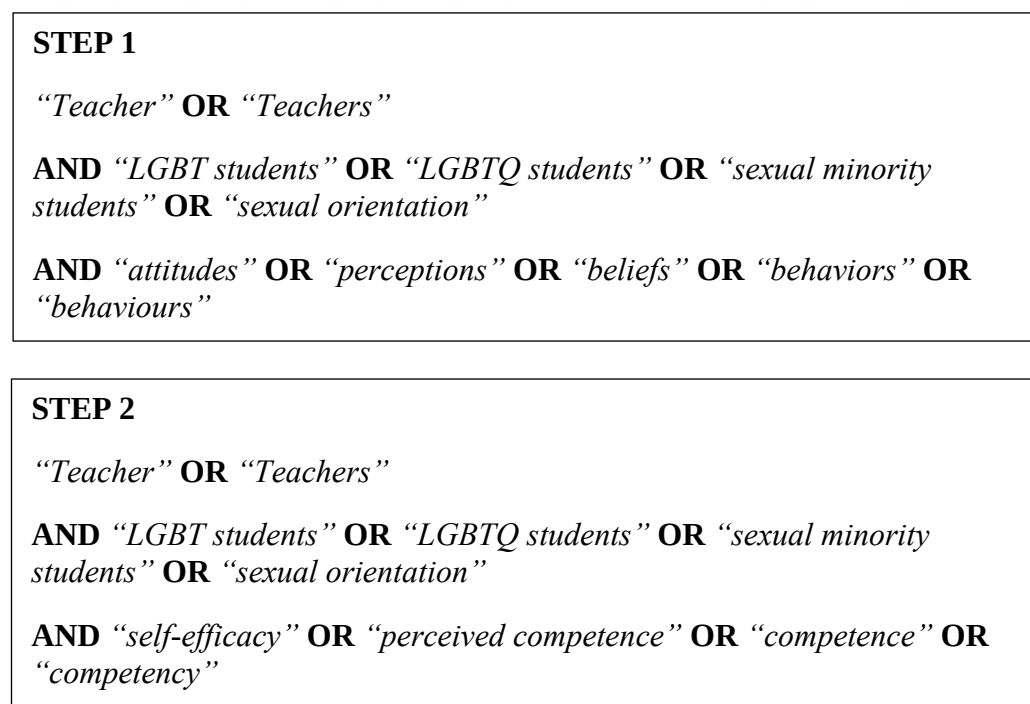


Figure 1. Keywords used with Boolean operators (in web of science, scopus and eric)

Eligibility criteria (inclusion and exclusion criteria)

In order to reach the most appropriate studies related to the research questions, the researcher determined the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria kept the ones that were; *only* journal articles, empirical studies, in English Language, High school teachers and Secondary school teachers. The researcher excluded studies which; *were* theory-based, in another language, feature articles, conference articles and *weren't* related to education as a subject. For each database both exclusion and inclusion criteria was applied.

The researcher first applied the keywords on Web of Science with *Boolean operators*. For the first step the number of data reached was 134. By restricting the data based on “only English Language” and “only journal articles”, the number decreased to 115. The reviewer downloaded all the sources as an excel file from the database and checked each study based on the criteria. For the second step, which works to find out about teachers’ self-efficacy or competencies, the number of data reached was 13, after restricting the results based on “only English Language” and “only journal articles” again, the number decreased to 11. The data left was extracted as an excel file and was added to the previous excel file which was reached through the first step. By comparing the studies reached through both step one and step two, the duplicate ones were eliminated and deleted. The screenshots of the steps followed in Web of Science can be found below in Figure 2, 3 and 4.

Web of Science

Tools ▾ Searches and alerts

We're building the new Web of Science.

Select a database Web of Science Core Collection ▾

Basic Search

Author Search ^{BETA}

Cited Reference Search

Advanced Search

"teacher" OR "teachers" ✕

Topic ▾

And ▾

"LGBT students" OR "LGBTQ students" OR "sexual minority students" ✕

Topic ▾

And ▾

"attitudes" OR "perceptions" OR "beliefs" OR "behaviors" OR "beliefs" ✕

Topic ▾

Search

+ Add row | Reset

Timespan

All years (1975 - 2020) ▾

Figure 2. Demonstration of first step (applied in web of science)

Web of Science

Clarivate Analytics

Search Tools ▾ Searches and alerts ▾ Search History Marked List

Results: 134
(from Web of Science Core Collection)

You searched for: TOPIC: ("teacher" OR "teachers") AND TOPIC: ("LGBT students" OR "LGBTQ students" OR "sexual minority students" OR "sexual orientation") AND TOPIC: ("attitudes" OR "perceptions" OR "beliefs" OR "behaviors" OR "behaviours") ...More

Create an alert

Refine Results

Search within results for... 🔍

Filter results by:

☐ Open Access (21)

Refine

Sort by: Date ▾ Times Cited Usage Count Relevance More ▾

1 of 14

Select Page

Export...

Add to Marked List

1. Beyond Invisibility: Early Childhood Teachers' Inclusion of Rainbow Families

By: Cherrington, Sue; Cooper, Kath; Shuker, Mary Jane

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION JOURNAL

Early Access: OCT 2020

View Abstract ▾

Times Cited: 0
(from Web of Science Core Collection)

Usage Count ▾

2. Italian primary school teachers' comfort and training needs regarding same-sex parenting

By: De Simone, Silvia; Serri, Francesco; Lampis, Jessica; et al.

PSYCHOLOGY & SEXUALITY

Early Access: SEP 2020

View Abstract ▾

Times Cited: 0
(from Web of Science Core Collection)

Usage Count ▾

3. "Can Anybody Help Me?" High School Teachers' Experiences on LGBTphobia Perception, Teaching Intervention and Training on Affective and Sexual Diversity

By: Amurrio, Aracelia; Moliner, Lidón; Francisco, Andrea

Times Cited: 0
(from Web of Science Core Collection)

Figure 3. Demonstration of first step

Web of Science

Clarivate Analytics

Search

Tools ▾ Searches and alerts ▾ Search History Marked List

Results: 115
(from Web of Science Core Collection)

You searched for: TOPIC: ("teacher" OR "teachers") AND TOPIC: ("LGBT students" OR "LGBTQ students" OR "sexual minority students" OR "sexual orientation") AND TOPIC: ("attitudes" OR "perceptions" OR "beliefs" OR "behaviors" OR "behaviours")
...More

Create an alert

Refine Results

Search within results for...

Filter results by:

☐ Open Access (17)

Refine

Sort by: Date ▾ Times Cited Usage Count Relevance More ▾

1 of 12

Select Page Export... Add to Marked List

1. Beyond Invisibility: Early Childhood Teachers' Inclusion of Rainbow Families
By: Cherrington, Sue; Cooper, Kath; Shuker, Mary Jane
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION JOURNAL
Early Access: OCT 2020
View Abstract ▾

2. Italian primary school teachers' comfort and training needs regarding same-sex parenting
By: De Simone, Silvia; Serri, Francesco; Lampis, Jessica; et al.
PSYCHOLOGY & SEXUALITY
Early Access: SEP 2020
View Abstract ▾

3. "Can Anybody Help Me?" High School Teachers' Experiences on LGBTphobia Perception, Teaching Intervention and Training on Affective and Sexual Diversity
By: Soares, Andreia; Malinau, Lidia; Francisco, Andreia

Analyze Results
Create Citation Report

Times Cited: 0
(from Web of Science Core Collection)

Usage Count ▾

Times Cited: 0
(from Web of Science Core Collection)

Usage Count ▾

Times Cited: 0
(from Web of Science Core Collection)

Figure 4. Demonstration of first step

For the *screening* process, the researcher also included gray literature (i.e., unpublished literature) as advised by Petticrew and Roberts (2006). The data was re-checked this time based on their titles and abstracts and when necessary by checking the studies themselves (e.g., participants, methods sections), because some studies were either non-informative, too general or lacked specific information (e.g. some studies that investigated teachers' attitudes and perceptions did not clarify whether teachers were high school teachers). After the *screening*, irrelevant and duplicate findings were eliminated again. For Scopus, the same procedure was followed, distinctively since the researcher identified the irrelevant studies from Web of science before, it was simpler to find the duplicates from Scopus, because most of the studies were found in Scopus and they were already found in Web of Science. Therefore, by keeping record of all those studies from Web of Science through excel, the researcher easily identified the duplicates and irrelevant ones from the excel file received from Scopus. For instance, the studies that were decided to be kept from Web of Science were also found in Scopus and they were also eliminated because

they were already added to the full-articles to be assessed for eligibility list. The same procedures were followed for ERIC, the same steps were applied and again, the studies that were found in Scopus as well as in Web of Science were deleted because they were duplicates.

For the full-articles to be assessed for eligibility, the researcher screened the studies based on the criteria and excluded those which were non-empirical, non-high school teachers, about elementary and primary school, theory-based, only related to curricula and teacher educators. Figure 5 below shows the flow chart created in the guidance of PRISMA Protocol that highlights the process of data collection. For screening process to be reliable and have the minimum amount of bias, the researcher as PRISMA guideline suggests referred to two other reviewers. The two independent reviewers extracted and checked individually the data of 70 studies from the 146 included studies. The first reviewer checked the first 35 articles and the level of agreement between him and the researcher was % 98 due to a disagreement about three articles. The second reviewer checked the other half of 70 articles. The level of agreement between her and the researcher was %100. Disagreements were resolved through discussions between all three reviewers by comparisons of each reviewers' decisions. For instance, after the two viewers blindly checked the studies for rating, studies of Denny et al. (2016) and Mooij (2016) were found appropriate for the study by the second reviewer whereas Brant and Tyson's (2016) study was found inappropriate. However, through discussions of their appropriateness, the reviewers came into the same conclusion with the researcher. Therefore, the level of agreement between all the viewers became %100 at final. Number of studies included for the

systematic literature review became 33 in total. For the studies found eligible, the mapping of the studies can be found in Table 4.

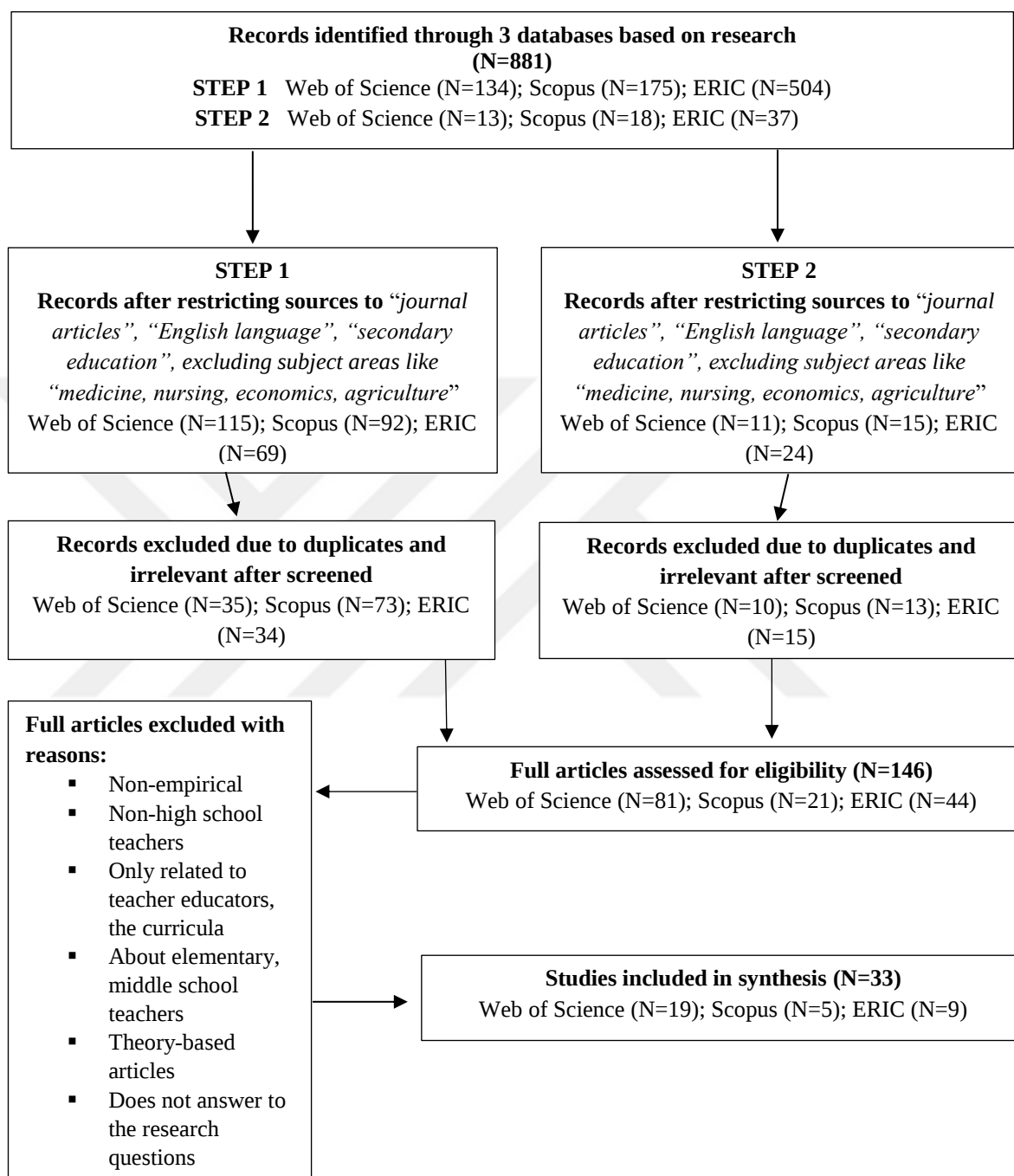


Figure 5. Flow chart for Prisma protocol

Method of data analysis

The studies, which were found eligible for analysis, were synthesized through a detailed tabulation of the studies. The table included details about the studies' authors, study methods, participants, the number of participants and main findings related to the three research questions.

The data analysis for this study followed three steps that Petticrew and Roberts (2006) recommended for a narrative synthesis. These steps are identified and described below.

For the first step, the reviewer organized the description of the studies into logical categories. Considering this study there are four sub-categories which consist of categories based on the following:

- 1) Countries, since the number of studies from the United States are greater than expected in the list of studies found eligible, and the types of countries differ in the list.
- 2) Teachers' attitudes towards sexual minority students,
- 3) Teachers' perceptions of sexual minority students and
- 4) Teachers' competencies to involve sexual minority students in their classroom practices.

For the second step the reviewer analyzed the findings within these categories, which are necessary to present a meaningful description. Such description was needed in order to show how many countries were included in eligible studies, differences and similarities between countries as well as to provide a clear picture of which studies

answered to the research questions that investigated high school teachers' perceptions, attitudes and perceived competency.

The third step requires synthesis of the findings across all included studies in a comprehensive manner, which is often based on the methodological quality of the studies.

For the main analysis of the data, the researcher coded the findings with colors. For each research question, a color was attributed in the process of in-depth reading. The researcher highlighted the findings related to each research question. For the synthesis of the decided studies, the similarities and differences were identified and presented in relevant categories in correlation to the results.

Categorization based on country/region

Among the studies found eligible, the researcher identified where the studies took place and which country/countries they focused on. The researcher found four continents in 33 studies: Asia, Africa, Europe, North America and Australia as Table 1 demonstrates.

Asia and Pacific region

- Turkey (Erturk, 2019), China (Tang, 2014), Vietnam (Tran-Thanh, 2020), Australia (Martino & Cumming-Potvin, 2019).

Africa

- South Africa (Bhana, 2012; Brown & Buthelezi, 2020).

Europe

- United Kingdom (McIntyre, 2009; O'Higgins-Norman, 2008, 2009; Trotter, 2009),
- Spain (Aguirre, Moliner & Francisco, 2020; Sanz, Molt & Puerta, 2015)
- Netherlands (Collier, Bos & Sandfort, 2015) and Italy (Nappa et al., 2018).

North America

- The United States (Block, 2019; Bradshaw et al., 2013; Brant & Tyson, 2016; Crothers et al., 2017; Dragowski, McCabe & Robinson, 2016; Fredman, Schultz & Hoffman, 2015; Garrett & Spano, 2017; Greytak, Kosciw & Boesen, 2013, Greytak & Kosciw, 2014; Hall & Rodgers, 2019; Kolbert et al., 2015; Mayo, 2007; McCabe et al., 2013; Page, 2017; Silveira & Goff, 2016; Smith, 2018)
- Canada (Finnessy, 2016; Swanson & Gettinger, 2016)

Most studies (i.e., 16 studies) investigated teachers' attitudes, perceptions and competencies in the United States, then the United Kingdom (4), Netherlands (1), South Africa (2), Spain (2), China (1), Italy (1), Vietnam (1) and Australia (1). The other studies were comparative studies (4), which compared two or three countries based on this study's research questions. For instance, Cardona Molto et al. (2017) compared Spain to the United States while Erturk (2019) found differences between Turkey and Netherlands in terms of teachers' attitudes and perceptions. Similar comparisons were made in Finnessy (2016) in which the United States and Canada were examined as well as in Swanson & Gettinger (2016), which compared the United States, Australia and Canada altogether. Therefore, while some countries

mentioned above were examined within their own contexts only, some of them were examined within two or sometimes three contexts in terms of countries.

Categorization based on teachers' attitudes towards sexual-minority students

The number of studies that focused on teachers' attitudes was found to be 24. Out of 24 studies, nine of them were qualitative studies while 14 of them were quantitative and one of them was a mixed-method study. It should be noted that the studies did not only focus on each research question but mostly on two or more questions at the same time, which can be seen in Table 1. Therefore, it is more likely for these studies to be seen in further categories related to each research question. Two studies from United Kingdom Trotter (2009) and McIntyre (2009) found teachers' attitudes as well as the only study from Italy (Nappa et al., 2018). Tran-Thanh (2020) which was conducted in Vietnam also searched about teachers' attitudes as well as the study of Collier, Bos and Sandfort (2015) which was conducted to find teachers' attitudes from Netherlands.

All the comparative studies, Cardona Molto et al. (2017), Erturk (2019), Finnesy (2016) and Swanson and Gettinger (2016) focused on investigating teachers' attitudes. The rest of the studies which pointed out teachers' attitudes were studies from the United States; Block (2019), Dragowski, McCabe and Robinson (2016), Fredman, Schultz and Hoffman (2015), Garrett and Spano (2017), Greytak and Kosciw (2014), Hall and Rodges (2019), Kolbert et al. (2015), Mayo (2007), McCabe et al. (2013), Page (2017), Silveira and Goff (2016) and lastly Smith (2018).

Categorization based on teachers' perceptions of sexual-minority students

In the list of studies, 24 of the studies highlighted findings related to teachers' perceptions. 11 of the studies that examined teachers' perceptions were qualitative while 12 of them were quantitative and one of them was a mixed-method study. For example, one of the studies conducted in Spain revealed findings related to teachers' perceptions (Sanz, Malt & Puerta, 2015). Three of the studies from the United Kingdom McIntyre (2009), O'Higgins-Normal (2008, 2009) found teachers' perceptions about sexual minority youth. The single study from Netherlands also found perceptions (Collier, Bos & Sandfort, 2015) as well as studies from China and Vietnam (Tang, 2014; Tran-Thanh, 2020). Three comparative studies of Erturk (2019), Finnessy (2016) and Swanson and Gettinger (2016) found teachers' perceptions as well as their attitudes and competencies. In the studies from the United States, 11 of them found teachers' perceptions; Block (2019), Bradshaw et al. (2013), Crothers et al. (2017), Dragowski, McCabe and Robinson (2016), Fredman, Schultz and Hoffman (2015), Greytak and Kosciw (2014), Greytak, Kosciw and Boesen (2013) Mayo (2007), McCabe et al. (2013), Page (2017) and Smith (2018).

Categorization based on teachers' competency to include sexual-minority students in classrooms

Compared to teachers' attitudes and perceptions, studies that investigated and revealed findings about teachers' competencies and self-efficacy were smaller in size (17 studies). While 12 studies were quantitative, five of them were qualitative. Studies conducted in South Africa, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Italy, the United States and three comparative studies focused on finding teachers' competency and self-efficacy levels such as the studies of Bhana (2012), Block (2019), Bradshaw et

al. (2013), Brant and Tyson (2016), Cardona-Molto et al. (2017), Collier et al. (2015), Dragowski et al. (2016), Finnessy (2016), Fredman et al. (2015), Garrett and Spano (2017), Greytak, Kosciw and Boesen (2013), Greytak and Kosciw (2014), Mayo (2007), Nappa et al. (2018), O'Higgins-Norman (2008), Page (2017) and Swanson and Gettinger (2016) presented findings related to the third research question.



Table 1
Categorization of countries, teachers' attitudes, perceptions and competencies

STUDIES (N=33)	ATTITUDE	PERCEPTION	COMPETENCY	NORTH AMERICA	ASIA	EUROPE	AFRICA	AUSTRALIA	QUAL.	QUAN.
<i>Aquirre, Moliner & Francisco (2020)</i>	✓					Spain				✓
<i>Sanz, Molto & Puerta (2015)</i>		✓				Spain				✓
<i>McIntyre (2009)</i>	✓	✓				UK			✓	
<i>O'Higgins-Norman (2008)</i>		✓	✓			UK				✓
<i>O'Higgins-Norman (2009)</i>		✓				UK			✓	
<i>Trotter (2009)</i>	✓					UK			✓	
<i>Bhana (2012)</i>	✓	✓	✓				South Africa		✓	
<i>Brown & Buthelezi (2020)</i>		✓					South Africa		✓	
<i>Collier, Bos & Sandfort (2015)</i>	✓	✓	✓			Netherlands				✓
<i>Tang (2014)</i>		✓			China				✓	
<i>Tran-Thanh (2020)</i>	✓	✓			Vietnam				✓	
<i>Nappa et al. (2018)</i>	✓		✓			Italy				✓
<i>Martino & Cumming-Porvin (2019)</i>	✓							Australia	✓	
<i>Cardona Molto et al. (2017)</i>	✓		✓	US		Spain				✓
<i>Erturk (2019)</i>	✓	✓			Turkey	Netherlands			✓	✓

Table 1 (cont'd)
Categorization of countries, teachers' attitudes, perceptions and competencies

<i>Finnessy (2016)</i>	✓	✓	✓	US & Canada	✓	Australia	✓
<i>Swanson & Gettinger (2016)</i>	✓	✓	✓	US & Canada			✓
<i>Block (2019)</i>	✓	✓	✓	US	✓		
<i>Bradshaw et al. (2013)</i>		✓	✓	US			✓
<i>Brant & Tyson (2016)</i>		✓	✓	US			✓
<i>Grothers et al. (2017)</i>		✓		US			✓
<i>Dragowski, McCabe & Robinson (2016)</i>	✓	✓	✓	US			✓
<i>Fredman, Schultz & Hoffman (2015)</i>	✓	✓	✓	US	✓		
<i>Garrett & Spano (2017)</i>	✓	✓	✓	US			✓
<i>Greytak, Kosciw & Boesen (2013)</i>		✓	✓	US			✓
<i>Greytak & Kosciw (2014)</i>	✓	✓	✓	US			✓
<i>Hall & Rodgers (2019)</i>	✓			US			✓
<i>Kolbert et al. (2015)</i>	✓			US			✓
<i>Mayo (2007)</i>	✓	✓	✓	US	✓		
<i>McCabe et al. (2013)</i>	✓	✓		US			✓
<i>Page (2017)</i>	✓	✓	✓	US			✓
<i>Silveira & Goff (2016)</i>	✓			US			✓
<i>Smith (2018)</i>	✓	✓	✓	US	✓		

Hierarchy of evidence for the trustworthiness of the studies

As previously stated *Hierarchy of Evidence* is required to show and enhance the appropriateness of the selected studies to understand how much the studies respond to the current study's research questions. In order for studies to be appraised, Petticrew and Roberts (2006) suggests researchers to weigh the studies that are quantitative and qualitative and since this research makes use of both types of methods, the researcher determined each study's appropriateness by ranking the articles in terms of their effectiveness in addressing the research questions.

The main purpose of producing the hierarchy of evidence though is not to present the strength or weakness of methodologies but to determine the most appropriate study that answer to the existing research questions (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006).

Attributing scores to both quantitative and qualitative studies separately through two tables, the researcher identified the usefulness of each study for each of the three research questions of this study. While the qualitative table included 13 studies, the quantitative table included 19 studies. It should be noted that since this research included only one mixed method study, it was added under the quantitative table separately. The researcher by adapting the criteria of Critical Appraisal Skills Program's Checklist (2018) consisting of 10 questions, assessed qualitative and quantitative studies. In the process of attributing levels to each study, the researcher identified the fourth (recruitment strategy) and the eighth (data analysis) measures as benchmarks. The articles, which did not meet these two benchmarks altogether were assigned as low quality and the articles which fit one of the measures only were assigned as moderate quality. Below, the Table 2 and Table 3 show the criteria for the hierarchy of evidence for qualitative, quantitative and mixed method studies.

Table 2

Hierarchy of evidence for the qualitative studies

QUALITATIVE STUDIES (13)	1. Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?	2. Is a qualitative methodology appropriate?	3. Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research? (in terms of research questions)	4. Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research? (in terms of representative sample)	5. Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue? (in terms of research questions)	6. Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?	7. Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?	8. Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous? (in terms of research questions)	9. Is there a clear statement of findings? (in terms of research questions)	10. How valuable is the research? (low, moderate, high)
<i>Bhana (2012)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Can't tell	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Moderate
<i>Block (2019)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Moderate
<i>Brown & Buthelezi</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Moderate
<i>Finnessy (2016)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Moderate
<i>Fredman, Schultz & Hoffman (2015)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	High
<i>Martino & Cumming-Potvin (2019)</i>	Yes	Yes	Can't tell	No	Can't tell	No	Can't tell	Yes	Yes	Moderate
<i>Mayo (2007)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Can't tell	Yes	Yes	Moderate
<i>McIntyre (2009)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Can't tell	No	No	Yes	Low
<i>O'Higgins-Norman (2009)</i>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Can't tell	No	Yes	Moderate
<i>Smith (2018)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Can't tell	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Moderate
<i>Tang (2014)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	High
<i>Tran-Thanh (2020)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Can't tell	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High
<i>Trotter (2009)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Low

Table 3
Hierarchy of evidence for the quantitative and mixed method studies

QUANTITATIVE STUDIES (19)	1. Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?	2. Is a qualitative methodology appropriate?	3. Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research? (in terms of research questions)	4. Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research? (in terms of representative sample)	5. Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue? (in terms of research questions)	6. Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?	7. Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?	8. Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous? (in terms of research questions)	9. Is there a clear statement of findings? (in terms of research questions)	10. How valuable is the research? (low, moderate, high)
<i>Aguirre, Moliner & Francisco (2020)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Moderate
<i>Bradshaw et al. (2013)</i>	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	High
<i>Brant & Tyson (2016)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Moderate
<i>Cardona Molto et al. (2017)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Can't tell	Yes	Yes	Yes	Moderate
<i>Collier, Bos & Sandfort (2015)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Can't tell	Yes	Yes	Yes	High
<i>Crothers et al. (2017)</i>	Yes	Can't tell	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High
<i>Dragowski, McCabe & Robinson (2016)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Can't tell	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Moderate
<i>Garrett & Spano (2017)</i>	Yes	Yes	Can't tell	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Moderate
<i>Greytak & Kosciw (2014)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Moderate
<i>Greytak, Kosciw & Boesen (2013)</i>	Yes	Can't tell	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	High
<i>Hall & Rodgers (2019)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	High

Table 3 (cont'd)
Hierarchy of evidence for the quantitative and mixed method studies

<i>Kolbert et al. (2015)</i>	Yes	Can't tell	Yes	Yes	Can't tell	Yes	Yes	Can't tell	Yes	Moderate
<i>McCabe et al. (2013)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Moderate
<i>Nappa et al. (2018)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High
<i>O'Higgins-Norman (2008)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Can't tell	High
<i>Page (2017)</i>	Yes	Yes	Can't tell	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Can't tell	High
<i>Sanz, Molt & Puerto (2015)</i>	Yes	Can't tell	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	High
<i>Silveria & Goff (2016)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Moderate
<i>Swanson & Gettinger (2016)</i>	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	High
MIXED METHOD STUDIES (1)										
<i>Ertürk (2019)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Can't tell	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Moderate

Table 4

Mapping of studies included in systematic literature review

STUDY (In Alphabetical Order with Reference)	DATA BASE	COUNTRY	PARTICIPANTS	RESEARCH DESIGN	METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION	RQ1: TEACHERS' ATTITUDES	RQ2: TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS	RQ3: TEACHERS' COMPETENCIES
Aguirre, A., Moliner, L., & Francisco, A. (2020). "Can Anybody Help Me?" High School Teachers' Experiences on LGBTphobia Perception, Teaching Intervention and Training on Affective and Sexual Diversity. Journal of Homosexuality, 1-21.	WoS	Spain	119 teachers from 20 high schools	Quantitative research study: Survey Study	Questionnaires on an internet platform	Discovers teachers' attitudes towards intervening in LGBTphobia and towards LGBT students in schools		
Bhana, D. (2012). Understanding and addressing homophobia in schools: A view from teachers. South African Journal of Education, 32(3), 307-318.	ERIC	South Africa	25 teachers located in five schools (10 African teachers, 5 white teachers, 5 Indian teachers, 4 coloured teachers)	Qualitative research study: Interviews	Two-hour focus group semi-structured interviews	Investigates teachers' attitudes towards LGBT students and homosexuality	Demonstrates the dominant teaching views of teachers which contribute to homophobia (teachers' understandings of homophobia)	Finds teachers' competency to teach LGBT students and teaching about sexuality
Block, C. R. (2019). Educator Affect: LGBTQ in Social Studies Curriculum. Critical Questions in Education, 10(1), 1-16.	ERIC	The United States	8 teachers (7 high school teachers in public and private schools, 1 middle school teacher)	Qualitative research study: Phenomenology	Document Analysis, Interviews and Surveys	Explores the attitudes of teachers who include or do not include LGBTQ+ within social studies courses	Explores perceptions of teacher's affect / teachers' fears, hesitations and implementing LGBTQ+ into their social studies curriculum.	Teachers' feeling of discomfort to talk about LGBT issues in classroom is analyzed.

Table 4 (cont'd)
Mapping of studies included in systematic literature review

Bradshaw, C. P., Waasdorp, T. E., O'Breman, L. M., & Gulemetova, M. (2013). Teachers' and education support professionals' perspectives on bullying and prevention: Findings from a National Education Association study. <i>School psychology review</i> , 42(3), 280-297.	WoS	The United States	1,601 teachers & 2,142 education support professionals (National Education Association members) In elementary, middle and high schools	Quantitative research study: Survey Study	Survey through telephone, electronic survey, web-based electronic survey	Teachers' perceptions of bullying and need for additional training on bullying prevention efforts and school-wide policies (bullying towards sexual minorities is included)	Teachers' comfort level in intervening with different forms of bullying and bullying among special populations are investigated.
Brant, C. A., & Tyson, C. A. (2016). LGBTQ self-efficacy in the social studies. <i>The Journal of Social Studies Research</i> , 40(3), 217-227.	Scopus	The United States	46 Pre-service & In-service social studies teachers (16 pre-service teachers, 30 in-service teachers who teach in early-childhood, elementary, middle and high schools)	Quantitative research study: Survey Study	Online survey instrument with a Likert-Scale Made use of a critical theory perspective for data collection	Explores teachers' self-efficacy in working with LGBTQ youth, teaching LGBTQ content, addressing LGBTQ bias in schools.	
Brown, A., & Buthelezi, J. (2020). School-Based Support Team Responses to Sexual Diversity and Homophobic Bullying in a South African School. <i>Interchange</i> , 1-12.	Scopus	South Africa	5 senior phase teachers (Grade 8-9) 4 further educational and training phase teachers (Grade 10-11-12)	Qualitative research study: Case Study	Individual interviews	Teachers' perceptions towards gender and sexual diversity and responding to homophobic bullying and violence in schools are explored.	

Table 4 (cont'd)

Mapping of studies included in systematic literature review

Cardona Moltó, M. C., Rao, S., Chiner, E., & Soffer, R. (2017). Exploring Attitudes and Competence to Teach Diverse Students: A Cross-cultural Study of Teacher Perceptions in Spain and the United States. <i>The International Journal of Diversity in Educatio</i> , 17 (4), 19-38.	Scopus	Spain & The United States	225 Spanish and the US elementary and secondary teachers (115 elementary, 110 secondary teachers)	Quantitative research study: Causal-comparative non-experimental design	Surveys (with Likert-scale)	Teachers' attitudes as a function of socio-cultural context, grade-level taught and the main effects of each independent variable are compared and their relationships are explored.	Teachers' self-competency to teach diverse students in inclusive classrooms is compared.
Collier, K. L., Bos, H. M., & Sandfort, T. G. (2015). Understanding teachers' responses to enactments of sexual and gender stigma at school. <i>Teaching and teacher education</i> , 48, 34-43.	WoS	Netherlands	343 Secondary school teachers	Quantitative research study: Survey Study	Web based Surveys	Teachers' behavioral beliefs were assessed in relation to the bullying of LGBT students	Teachers' self-efficacy was assessed in relation to their intentions to intervene in two hypothetical situations for bullying of LGBT students.
Crothers, L. M., Kolbert, J. B., Barbary, C., Chatlos, S., Lattanzio, L., Tiberi, A., Wells, D.S., Bundick, M.J., Lipinski, J. & Meidl, C. (2017). Teachers', LGBTQ students', and student allies' perceptions of bullying of sexually-diverse youth. <i>Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma</i> , 26(9), 972-988.	WoS	The United States	201 teachers who teach grades 8-12 & 98 LGBTQ students who are enrolled in middle and high schools	Quantitative research study: Survey Study	Online survey	Teachers and students' perceptions of bullying of LGBTQ youth, school climate and awareness of anti-bullying laws and policies within the school system.	

Table 4 (cont'd)

Mapping of studies included in systematic literature review

Dragowski, E. A., McCabe, P. C., & Rubinson, F. (2016). Educators' reports on incidents of harassment and advocacy toward LGBTQ students. <i>Psychology in the Schools</i> , 53(2), 127-142.	The United States	321 elementary, middle, high school teachers 301 school psychologists 354 school counselors	Quantitative research study: Survey Study	Online surveys	Teachers' attitudes, towards intervening in LGBTQ harassment in schools are assessed	Teachers' norms about intervening in LGBTQ harassment and bias are investigated.	Teachers' feeling of preparedness to engage in LGBTQ bias and harassment intervention is assessed as well as their level of knowledge/preparation.
Erturk, N. O. (2019). Teaching to the 'other': Comparative perspectives of Dutch and Turkish teachers' attitudes on gender identity. <i>Educar em Revista</i> , 35(75), 265-282.	Turkey & Netherlands	506 teachers (311 Dutch – 195 Turkish middle and high school teachers)	Quantitative and Qualitative study: Mixed method comparative study	Online survey Focus group semi-structured interviews	Teachers' attitudes about gender identity, sexual orientation and teaching about LGBT and to LGBT students are investigated	Teachers' perceptions of gender identity, sexual orientation and teaching about LGBT students are investigated	
Finnessy, P. (2016). Examining the heteropatriarchy: Canadian and American male teachers' perspectives of sexual minority curriculum. <i>Teaching Education</i> , 27(1), 39-56	The United States & Canada	English teachers and Administrators (4 educators from each country)	Qualitative research Phenomenological method	Phenomenological methods, ethnographic techniques, case studies and biographical life histories: Interviews, Classroom observations, Written reflections, School curriculum materials	Teachers' attitudes to integrating LGBTQ topics into curriculum and classroom is found	Teachers' opinions about identity, attempts to teach a sexual minority curriculum are examined	Teachers' competency to incorporate LGBTQ topics and themes into the classroom is investigated.

Table 4 (cont'd)
Mapping of studies included in systematic literature review

Fredman, A. J., Schultz, N. J., & Hoffman, M. F. (2015). "You're Moving a Frickin' Big Ship" The Challenges of Addressing LGBTQ Topics in Public Schools. <i>Education and Urban Society</i> , 47(1), 56-85.	ERIC	The United States	Middle school health educator, High school health educator, University professor of education, High school English educator, Middle school English educator, High school math educator. Total: 16	Qualitative research study: interview study	Semi-standardized interviews (face-to-face and via telephone) Demographic questionnaire	Teachers' behaviors towards navigating social and academic environments in order to incorporate inclusive pedagogical practices and cultivate safe schools for LGBTQ students	Teachers' perceptions of bullying and harassment towards LGBTQ students as well as their perceptions of safe environment are found.	Teachers' competency to address LGBTQ topics in classrooms is found.
Garrett, M. L., & Spano, F. P. (2017). An examination of LGBTQ-inclusive strategies used by practicing music educators. <i>Research Studies in Music Education</i> , 39(1), 39-56.	WoS	The United States	300 high school music teachers	Quantitative research study: Survey Study	Electronic Questionnaire (with Likert-scale using and open-ended responses)	Teachers' attitudes towards including LGBTQ inclusive strategies in music classes are investigated.	Teachers' personal comfort level to integrate LGBTQ topics and issues in classrooms is found	
Greytak, E. A., & Kosciw, J. G. (2014). Predictors of US teachers' intervention in anti-lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender bullying and harassment. <i>Teaching Education</i> , 25(4), 410-426.	WoS	The United States	726 Secondary school students and elementary, middle and high school teachers (who teach grades 6-12)	Quantitative research study: Survey Study	Online questionnaires	Teachers' attitudes toward school bullying and harassment were examined	Beliefs and awareness of the school staffs obligation to ensure a safe and supportive learning environment were assessed.	Teachers' self-efficacy, level of comfort to intervene in homophobic remarks and bullying were investigated

Table 4 (cont'd)
Mapping of studies included in systematic literature review

Greytak, E. A., Kosciw, J. G., & Boesen, M. J. (2013). Educating the educator: Creating supportive school personnel through professional development. <i>Journal of School Violence</i> , 12(1), 80-97.	Scopus	The United States	Teachers (1602), mental health providers (291), administrators (213) in secondary schools of a large urban school district	Quantitative research study: Survey Study (to assess effectiveness of training for in-service teachers through workshops)	Pre-training questionnaires	Teachers' beliefs in the importance of intervention for anti-LGBT behaviors in schools are assessed to enhance an awareness inclusive of their school climate which is related to their behaviors is measured.
Hall, W. J., & Rodgers, G. K. (2019). Teachers' attitudes toward homosexuality and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer community in the United States. <i>Social Psychology of Education</i> , 22(1), 23-41.	WoS	The United States	305 teachers (pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, primary school, secondary school – high school teachers)	Quantitative research study: Repeated cross-sectional survey	Questionnaires (Data collected from General Social Survey)	Teachers' LGBQ related positive and negative attitudes, their potential changes in attitudes over time, demographic and social variables related to teachers' attitudes are investigated.
Kolbert, J. B., Crothers, L. M., Bundick, M. J., Wells, D. S., Buzgon, J., Barbary, C., ... & Senko, K. (2015). Teachers' perceptions of bullying of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) students in a southwestern Pennsylvania sample. <i>Behavioral Sciences</i> , 5(2), 247-263.	WoS	The United States	201 teachers from middle and high schools	Quantitative research study: Survey Study	Online Questionnaires	Teachers' perceptions of bullying of LGBTQ youth is assessed in relation to their perceptions of the supportiveness of school staff towards LGBTQ students.

Table 4 (cont'd)

Mapping of studies included in systematic literature review

Martino, W., & Cumming-Potvin, W. (2019). 'Effeminate arty boys and butch soccer girls': investigating queer and trans-affirmative pedagogies under conditions of neoliberal governance. <i>Research Papers in Education</i> , 34(7), 121-157.	ERIC	Australia	2 English high school teachers in one specific school	Qualitative research study: Case study	Surveys Follow-up interviews	Teachers' attitudes towards LGBT students and teaching LGBT themed texts are analyzed
Mayo, J. B. (2007). Negotiating sexual orientation and classroom practice (s) at school. <i>Theory & Research in Social Education</i> , 35(3), 447-464.	WoS	The United States	7 male high school teachers from 4 school districts	Qualitative interview study	Semi-structured interviews	Teachers' method of inclusion of gay-centered topics while teaching is examined. Teachers' perceptions of homophobic bullying are investigated
Teachers' comfort level to discuss LGBT topics in class is found						
McCabe, P. C., Robinson, F., Dragowski, E. A., & Elizalde-Utnick, G. (2013). Behavioral intention of teachers, school psychologists, and counselors to intervene and prevent harassment of LGBTQ youth. <i>Psychology in the Schools</i> , 50(7), 672-688.	WoS	The United States	321 elementary, middle, high school teachers 301 school psychologists 354 school counselors	Quantitative research study: Survey	Online questionnaire	Teachers' norms about intervening in LGBT harassment and bias are assessed. Teachers' attitudes towards intervening in LGBTQ harassment in schools are assessed
McIntyre, E. (2009). Teacher discourse on lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils in Scottish schools. <i>Educational Psychology in Practice</i> , 25(4), 301-314.	WoS	United Kingdom	13 secondary head teachers (11 completed questionnaires, 1 responded by telephone, 1 did not respond) 8 secondary school class teachers	Qualitative research study	Surveys Interviews	Teachers' perceptions of the barriers and facilitators to the inclusion of LGB homosexuality students in school as a subject in classrooms are found

Table 4 (cont'd)
Mapping of studies included in systematic literature review

Nappa, M. R., Palladino, B. E., Menesini, E., & Baiocco, R. (2018). Teachers' reaction in homophobic bullying incidents: The role of self-efficacy and homophobic attitudes. <i>Sexuality research and social policy</i> , 15(2), 208-218.	WoS	Italy	232 high school teachers	Quantitative research study: Survey Study	Questionnaires	Teachers' reaction to homophobic victimized students as well as their homophobic attitudes.	Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs to handle educational tasks as well as to managing homophobic bullying incidents.
O'Higgins-Norman, J. (2008). Equality in the provision of social, personal and health education in the Republic of Ireland: the case of homophobic bullying? <i>Pastoral Care in Education</i> , 26(2), 69-81.	WoS	United Kingdom	365 secondary school teachers	Quantitative research study: Survey Study	Questionnaires		Teachers' awareness of LGBT issues and homophobic bullying through SPHE syllabus is assessed.
O'Higgins-Norman, J. (2009). Straight talking: Explorations on homosexuality and homophobia in secondary schools in Ireland. <i>Sex Education</i> , 9(4), 381-393.	Scopus	United Kingdom	20 secondary school students, 20 parents, 20 secondary school teachers, 20 secondary school senior managers (100 participants in total).	Qualitative research study: Interview	Semi-structured interviews Observations	Teachers' understanding of homosexuality and the related issue of homophobic bullying in the schools is examined.	
Page, M. L. (2017). From awareness to action: Teacher attitude and implementation of LGBT-inclusive curriculum in the English language arts classroom. <i>SAGE Open</i> , 7(4), 2158244017739949.	ERIC	The United States	577 English Language Arts middle and high school teachers	Quantitative research study	Online questionnaire s (with open ended items) Follow-up interviews with 30 teachers	Teachers' attitudes in incorporating LGBT literature in their classroom are examined.	Teachers' comfort levels in integrating literature related to LGBT into their curricula and classroom practice are investigated.

Table 4 (cont'd)
Mapping of studies included in systematic literature review

Sanz, E. C., Molt, M. C., & Puerta, J. G. (2015). Teachers' beliefs about diversity: an analysis from a personal and professional perspective. <i>Journal of New Approaches in Educational Research (NAER Journal)</i> , 4(1), 18-23.	WoS	Spain	233 both pre- and in-service teachers. 158 in-service teachers from preschool, elementary and secondary. (29 pre-schools, 64 elementary, 46 secondary, 19 both preschool and elementary school teachers) 75 pre-service teachers	Quantitative research study: Non-experimental quantitative research	Teachers' beliefs about diversity and their level of sensitivity towards topics related to them (cultural, linguistics and social diversity, ability, gender, sexual orientation and religion diversities) are examined
Silveira, J. M., & Goff, S. C. (2016). Music teachers' attitudes toward transgender students and supportive school practices. <i>Journal of Research in Music Education</i> , 64(2), 138-158.	ERIC	The United States	612 elementary, middle and high school music teachers in 28 states (223 elementary, 323 middle, 322 high school.	Quantitative research study: Survey Study	Teachers' attitudes towards transgender people also students and supportive school practices.
Smith, M. J. (2018). "I Accept All Students": Tolerance Discourse and LGBTQ Ally Work in US Public Schools. <i>Equity & Excellence in Education</i> , 51(3-4), 301-315.	ERIC	The United States	9 Public middle and high school teachers	Qualitative research study	Teachers' perceptions of LGBTQ students' social positions and experiences in schools are found. responsibilities of LGBTQ allies are investigated.

Table 4 (cont'd)

Mapping of studies included in systematic literature review

Swanson, K., & Gettinger, M. (2016). Teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and supportive behaviors toward LGBT students: Relationships to Gay-Straight Alliances, antibullying policy, and teacher training. Journal of LGBT youth, 13(4),	WoS	The United States 98 general and special education public school teachers in Grades 6-12 from four states. More than half of the participants are high school teachers	Quantitative research study: Survey Study	Online survey	Teachers' attitudes and knowledge to support LGBT youth are examined.	Teachers' perceptions of the importance of intervening and barriers to intervening on behalf of LGBT students.	Teachers' feeling of discomfort surrounding LGBT issues is found as a way of preventing them to provide support.
Tang, D. (2014). Perspectives on same-sex sexualities and self-harm amongst service providers and teachers in Hong Kong. Sex Education, 14(4), 444-456	ERIC	China	Qualitative research study: Interview Study	Ethnographic approach to collect data: In-depth interviews Participant observation	Teachers' perceptions towards LGBT students in relation to religion, education and self-harm.		
Tran-Thanh, V. (2020). Queer identity inclusion in the EFL classroom: Vietnamese teachers' perspectives. TESOL Journal, 11(3).	WoS	Vietnam	Qualitative research study: Interview Study	Online Semi-structured interviews	Teachers' attitudes toward about LGBTQ incorporating LGBTQ content in the classrooms as well as issues in schools related to LGBTQ students.	Teachers' beliefs about LGBTQ people are also found.	
Trotter, J. (2009). Ambiguities around sexuality: An approach to understanding harassment and bullying of young people in British schools. Journal of LGBT Youth, 6(1), 7-23.	ERIC	United Kingdom	Qualitative research study	Observations, Audio-taped individuals, Semi-structured of sexual interviews, Participant observations	Teachers' responses to and experiences of sexual harassment and bullying in schools.		

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction

This systematic literature review aimed to investigate high school teachers' perceptions of students with different sexual orientations, their attitudes towards them as well as their perceived competence to adapt strategies that support the inclusion of sexual minority youth in classrooms. The selected articles were scrutinized according to the aims of the study and sub-topics of them were identified. Specifically, regarding teachers' attitudes towards sexual minority youth four sub-themes were identified: a) teachers' attitudes towards sexuality and homosexuality, b) teachers' attitudes towards incorporating LGBT issues or topics in classrooms, c) teachers' attitudes towards sexual minority students and finally, d) teachers' attitudes towards intervening in homophobic bullying and harassment.

Regarding teachers' perceptions of sexual minority students, the findings affirmed the same three sub-themes for perceptions however teachers' perceptions of homosexuality and sexual minority students were analyzed in the context of religion and heteronormativity based on the findings.

With reference to teachers' competence, three sub-themes were identified: teachers' competency a) to teach sexual minority students, b) to incorporate LGBT issues/ topics/ themes in classrooms and c) to intervene in homophobic bullying and harassment.

Teachers' attitudes towards sexual minority students

Teachers' attitudes towards sexuality (homosexuality)

Research indicates that teachers' general attitudes towards the subject of sexuality, especially sexualities that do not conform to heteronormativity are unfavorable in schools. Bhana (2012) found that teachers in South Africa often silence sexuality, specifically homosexuality as it considers a taboo against the heteronormativity in schools. Teachers were also found to disapprove homosexuality and talking about it as it was not compatible with Christianity. Putting emphasis on other types of social inequalities in the school was used a way of silencing the subject of students' sexuality. When participants in this study asked about the reasons behind their silence stated lack of knowledge to talk about it with children and that there were much more important social issues that should be paid attention at school such as racism and violence. It was also found that teachers negatively stereotyped people of different sexual orientations and showed negative attitudes towards their students with different sexual orientations and gender expressions (Bhana, 2012).

Similarly, Trotter (2009) found that teachers in British schools ignored and prevented discussions about sexuality with students because of a dominant heteronormativity and lack of awareness of sexual minority students in the schools where every student was assumed to be heterosexual. Dealing with sexuality as a subject was also found to be challenging for a group of Scottish teachers, who hesitated talking about homosexuality (McIntyre, 2009). They considered homosexuality as a sensitive topic that threatens heteronormativity and hegemonic masculinity in their school. Male teachers were oppressive and confrontational with their male students to question their maleness (McIntyre, 2009). Although most of the teachers perceived

themselves as caring for sexual minority students, most teachers in the study showed unfavorable attitudes such as ignoring the existence of sexual minorities, pressuring them to fit into the norms of the school and displaying unwillingness to reflect on problems about sexuality. Only a minority of teachers had positive yet helpless attitudes to talk about sexuality with students.

In contrast to the findings above, Garrett and Spano (2017) surveyed 300 US music teachers most of whom were identified straight (87.3%, n=251). In this study, teachers were found to have mainly positive attitudes towards lesbians and gay people (77.4%, n=195). On the other hand, Hall and Rodgers' (2019) found both positive and negative attitudes in American teachers the majority of who were also identified as straight (96.1%, n=305). With regard to the civil rights of sexual minorities to get married or to have the freedom of speech, teachers' attitudes were found to be more positive as they believed that everyone should have equal rights. Interestingly, teachers' negative attitudes towards homosexuality were found to be a function of age, race or ethnicity, region, political conservatism and religion (Hall & Rodgers, 2019). The older the teachers, the more negative were their attitudes towards sexual orientation. In terms of race, teachers who were colored showed more negative attitudes than white teachers. In terms of region, teachers from the Northeast and Pacific regions of the United States held more positive attitudes than those from the South regions. Teachers' views towards politics were also proved to have an impact on their attitudes. Conservative teachers held more negative attitudes while liberals held more positive attitudes. Specifically, teachers who often attended religious services and teachers with fundamentalist religion beliefs showed more negative attitudes than those with liberal religion beliefs. Overall, the findings from

the study pointed to the shift of teachers' attitudes towards sexual minorities over time even though there were still teachers who held negative attitudes (Hall and Rodgers, 2019).

Teachers' attitudes towards sexual minority students/ advocacy

Teachers' attitudes towards their sexually diverse students were generally found to be positive even though in few cases teachers showed negative attitudes. Such negative attitudes were found in Brown and Buthelezi (2020), in which religious teachers often use homophobic language towards their sexual minority students. In spite of the negative attitudes found in Brown and Buthelezi (2020), most studies showed that teachers possess positive attitudes towards their sexual minority students. In a comparative study of Cardona-Molto et al. (2018), teachers' attitudes in Spain and the United States were examined and the findings indicated that both Spanish and teachers from the US held positive attitudes and high tolerance towards diverse students. The greatest teachers' tolerance was found towards disability, culture and sexual orientation while the lowest was found for students' behavior and religion. Positive attitudes were also found in Silveira and Goff's (2016) study in which music teachers' attitudes towards transgender students were analyzed in the US. Teachers, feeling responsible to create a safe learning environment, held positive attitudes towards transgender students, their gender identity, and school practices supporting those who were sexual minority. Besides, they wanted to protect their students from possible bullying incidents. However, teachers who were male were found to hold slightly more negative attitudes towards transgender students, possibly due to male teachers' fear of seeming less masculine because of the pressure of gender norms and heterosexism (Silveira & Goff, 2016).

Supportive behaviors were also reported by the study of Aguirre, Moliner and Francisco (2020) according to which Spanish teachers generally held positive attitudes towards students who were sexual minorities. In case of students' choice of being addressed differently than the gender they were assigned at birth, teachers in the study stated that they would respect their students' decision and address them the way they want. Less than half of the participant teachers (n=119, 35%) reported they would discuss the subject with their parents, while 25% reported they would refer to the school administration about it.

Likewise, in a study conducted in the US Dragowski, McCabe and Robinson (2016) found that teachers' attitudes towards LGBT advocacy in schools were positive, because teachers strongly put emphasis on using positive words about sexual minority youth in their schools such as, "good, responsible, ethical and important" while they negatively rated bad attitudes such as "harmful, immoral and selfish" towards sexual minority (p.135).

Being open minded and open to sexual minority students were also important for the US public school teachers as described in Smith' (2018) study, in which teachers presented themselves as allies and supporters of sexual minority students. These teachers often referred to the need of acceptance and tolerance of diversity when they were talking about their students. They found themselves responsible to educate every student equally, to connect with marginalized students and to improve their high school experience no matter what their sexual orientations were (Smith, 2018). Similar results were achieved in Martino and Cumming-Potvin's (2019) study. Australian teachers in the study were highly in favor of their sexual minority students

and they supported their students by letting them talk about themselves in terms of feelings and by simply being empathic and aware of the homophobic bullying they often face in schools.

Although not as positive as the findings reported above, Tran-Thanh (2020) found that Vietnamese teachers considered their sexual minority students as normal and they reported treating them the same as others even though the findings from the study showed that teachers lacked knowledge about sexual minorities and treated them according to their stereotypical beliefs about homosexuality.

Swanson and Gettinger (2016) connected Australian, Canadian and American public school teachers' positive attitudes with the existence of Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) in schools. GSA aims to prevent the bullying of sexual minority students in schools and helping schools to adjust their policies and practices to foster a safe learning environment for all that are subjects to marginalization. Teachers who received high level of training and worked in schools related to GSA were found to engage more in positive behaviors and activities to support sexual minority students compared to teachers who received limited professional development particularly about inclusive practices. Similar findings were reported concerning anti-bullying policies. Teachers who worked in schools that included sexual minority students in the list of anti-bullying policies reported more engagement in supportive roles for sexual minority youth compared to teachers working in schools without anti-bullying policies.

However, when asked about whether teachers displayed visual support (e.g. safe space symbol in classrooms) for sexual minority students at minimum, only 31% of teachers indicated they actually did it whereas more than half of the participants

reported its importance and as something they should do. Lack of training was further emphasized in this study. When the question of pursuing training to enhance their understanding of sexual minorities presented to the participants, quite less than half of the participants (29%) indicated they would pursue such a training, while 74% of teachers found it extremely important to do so. Therefore, the study highlighted teachers' awareness of their responsibility to improve themselves in understanding and helping sexual minority students. Teachers were also aware that the greater drawback in supporting sexual minority students was their lack of knowledge, resources and skills to do so (Swanson & Gettinger, 2016).

In discordance with the findings above, Bhana (2012) and Ertürk (2019) showed homophobic attitudes of teachers towards sexual minority students. Bhana (2012) found that sexual minority students were seen as abnormal and participants reported deploying religion to “cure” the sexual minority students because sexual orientations other than being straight was seen as a sin (p. 313-314).

Similar to Bhana (2012), another mixed-method comparative study with Turkish and Dutch teachers also pointed out the negative attitudes of teachers. Ertürk (2019) found that while the Dutch teachers showed more tolerance, empathy and understanding towards their sexual minority students, Turkish teachers held negative attitudes towards homosexuality and were hesitant to communicate with their sexual minority students. They indicated that they did not know what to do if a student came out to them. During an interview a fifty-years-old female Turkish teacher reported that if a student came out to her, the reaction would be to tell the child to get well soon. As a result, similarly to Bhana's (2012) study with teachers from South Africa,

the study of Ertürk (2019) with teachers from Turkey also pointed to teachers' understanding of homosexuality as an illness.

Incorporating LGBT issues and materials related to LGBT in classrooms

Based on the research findings, teachers sometimes reported incorporating issues related to sexual orientation or materials that include sexual minorities such as texts, books and articles into their classrooms while some teachers reported hesitation to incorporate such materials into the curriculum and talking about sexual minority issues in classrooms due their fear of reactions from others as well as due to the restrictions in schools where teachers were left to their own devices. Studies like Block's (2019), Mayo's (2007), Martino and Cumming-Potvin's (2019) and Garrett and Spano's (2017) revealed that teachers did discuss about such issues in their classrooms. Although such topics are not included in the curriculum and teachers felt uncomfortable and unsupported by their school, they exhibited strong willingness to incorporate topics related to sexual minorities in their lesson.

For instance, most US public and private school teachers in Block's (2019) study talked about same-sex marriages and LGBT rights in social studies courses such as the European history, Civics and Current Events. Compared to other studies that investigated attitudes towards incorporating such topics, teachers in this study were more concerned about parents', administrators' and students' reactions and they mostly needed approval from the administrators and parents before including controversial topics. However, they faced their fears to include LGBT topics in their lessons. In Martino and Cumming-Potvin's (2019) case study, greater confidence and positive attitudes were highly prevalent in teachers who identified themselves as a

sexual-minority. They were often more confident in involving LGBTQ themes and texts in the lesson and addressing the representation of sexual diversity within the context of dominant straight culture, the questions of visibility in the aspect of homophobia and hegemonic masculinity and stereotypical beliefs. Teachers' understanding of LGBT inclusive terminology as well as their teaching methods (i.e. questioning the norms) displays their awareness of marginalization of LGBT students and willingness to involve diverse students by fostering a respectful environment that normalizes sexual minorities in their classrooms. However, it should be noted that these results come from a case study and cannot be generalized.

Moreover, teachers in Mayo (2007) also reported discussing about LGBT topics in their classrooms whenever there was a chance. One of the most applied strategies to involve such topics were to refer to recent events related to LGBT topics such as same-sex marriages in the news, making debates on a school-poll about homosexuality and involving students in performances. Teachers greater comfort level to address such issues and to use such materials were found to be associated with the inclusion of sexual minorities in some aspects of the school curriculum (e.g. Psychology, History of the WWII, Greek Culture). Similarly, Cardona-Molto et al. (2018) reported instructional strategies used by teachers for diverse students. Such practices included encouraging equality, using language that do not promote gender stereotypes but also pushes the norms, modifying activities that could trigger negative attitudes, calling on both sexes and making use of songs for both genders (Cardona-Molto et al. 2018). However, teachers in the study assumed there were only two genders and the strategies they applied did not embody all type of students with different sexual orientations. Due to teachers' lack of knowledge and

misconceptions, their strategies were aimed at gender identities of students rather than sexual orientations of students.

On the contrary, some studies found teachers' fear, reluctance or hesitance to incorporate LGBT themes, topics and issues in their classrooms due to various reasons such as restrictions of the administrators and suppression of sexuality in schools (Finnessy, 2016; Garrett & Spano, 2017; Page, 2017). On the other hand, some studies found that teachers excluded such topics in their teaching, although they displayed positive attitudes towards integrating them (Fredman, Schultz & Hoffman, 2015; Garrett & Spano, 2017; Tran-Thanh, 2020). A fear and hesitance were observed in participants in the study of Fredman, Schultz and Hoffman (2015) because of the limited curriculum as well as restrictions from the administrators and parents. For example, many teachers were told by their administrators to silence themselves about topics and issues related to sexual minorities and orientation, because of the heteronormativity in schools. Teachers assumed these topics to be inappropriate to be discussed in classrooms and therefore, they mostly did not incorporate them in their teaching although they reported having positive attitudes towards incorporating such topics and issues in their classrooms. The limitations of their schools prevented teachers to integrate such topics in the curriculum only a few participants reported integrating topics about LGBT issues in a very restricted way in order to avoid potential dilemmas of teachers about the norm.

On the other hand, there were cases in which teachers reported lack of knowledge and resources to integrate LGBT topics in the curriculum even though they had no concerns about administration and parents (Finnessy, 2016). The reason for their

hesitation was rather about giving misinformation, perpetuating stereotypes in the classroom and receiving negative reactions from their students. An interesting finding within the same study was that specifically straight teachers were reluctant to talk about the subject because they reported not being related to sexual minorities and not feeling responsible to talk about it since they identified as straight. The justification for that kind of behavior was also given by their own observation of other straight teachers not addressing such topics in their classrooms.

Similarly, Tran-Thanh (2020) reported English teachers' positive and empathic attitudes to integrate LGBT related issues in their classrooms although they had limited knowledge and interest in the topic. Most teachers reported sharing a minimal classroom time to talk about these issues and advising their students to treat everyone equally while only one teacher in the study reported using LGBT materials in their teaching in a limited way. The same teacher was reported to be the only participant who received training about equality, diversity and inclusion as well as to be the only sexual minority teacher in the school. Overall, teachers in the study, except the example given, had never included any queer related materials and reported a need for training to deal with such topics. Likewise, the study of Page (2017) and Garrett and Spano (2017) also reported only a few teachers' involvement of LGBTQ topics in curriculum and promotion of LGBTQ awareness. In the survey of Garrett and Spano's (2017) teachers rated high the following items: "I am supportive of LGBTQ issues in my classroom", "I am supportive of LGBTQ individuals in my classroom" while rated low the following item: "I include LGBTQ topics and themes in my curriculum" (p. 47-48). As the findings indicate, teachers hold positive attitudes towards LGBTQ issues as well as towards their sexually

diverse students, however they limitedly use such topics in their classroom. In Page's study (2017) only 23.7% of teachers reported actually integrating LGBTQ related literature in the classroom and the most common method of involving such texts were only pleasure or choice reading of materials provided for students, such restrictions were prevalent due teachers' own comfort level. Comfort level was found to determine teachers' attitudes in general, attitudes towards intervening in homophobic bullying as well as their perceived competence to integrate LGBTQ themes materials and texts.

Intervening in homophobic bullying/ harassment

Most of the studies reported teachers' very limited interventions in the harassment and bullying of sexual minority youth in their schools due to reasons like, fear of harming children, lack of empathy (Ertürk, 2019), lack of training, knowledge and awareness (Aguirre et al. 2020; Dragowski et al., 2016; Trotter, 2009) and simply because of their own disinterest to intervene (Aguirre et al. 2020). However, some studies report cases where teachers to some degree intervened in sexual minority based harassment and bullying in schools (i.e., Aguirre et al., 2020; Finnessy, 2016; Garrett & Spano, 2017; Mayo, 2007).

Specifically, Mayo (2007) found high frequency of teachers' interventions in homophobic bullying. Almost all of the participants (n=7) in the study responded to the bullying and harassment of sexual minority students. The only exception for nonintervention was when teachers made sure there was no malicious intent to bully. Significantly all participant teachers who were also sexual minorities were conscious and responsive towards intervening, especially in homophobic language used in the

classroom. However, it should be noted that the number of participants in Mayo (2007) was quite limited for generalization. Addressing homophobic language was also prevalent in Finnessy' (2016) study where Canadian and American teachers agreed that addressing homophobic language was not a part of the curriculum, however they showed willingness trying to make students gain awareness of the effects of homophobic language. For instance, a few teachers reported explicitly discussing about the negative impact of derogatory language used by students (e.g., fag/faggot) and warning them about the language they use. Unlike the limited interventions reported by the public school teachers in Finnessy (2016), the study of Garrett and Spano (2017) showed US teachers' emphasis on intervening in homophobic bullying and harassment. Almost all the public school teachers in the study stated discouraging the use of anti-marginalizing LGBTQ language while visibly disapproved inappropriate remarks and jokes about sexual minority students. Similar findings were found in the interviews of Ertürk (2019). When compared to public school Turkish teachers, public school Dutch teachers found it important to intervene in such incidents once witnessed, due to their feeling of responsibility as well as their intentions to prevent such incidents to be repeated in the future. According to teachers from the Netherlands, ignoring bullying and harassment of LGBTQ students resulted in repetition of such behavior, therefore they talked to the students about such incidents and create classroom discussions about its damage on students. In contrast, Turkish teachers in the same study showed negative attitudes towards intervening in homophobic bullying and harassment. They reported they would not talk to the students and directly send both the victimized student and the bully to the counselor. The reason being for their non-intervention was explained by their fear of harming children's psychology and not knowing how to react to the

incident (Erturk, 2019). In addition, half of the participants (out of 119 public school teachers) in Aguirre et al. (2020) also reported lacking knowledge and training in terms of intervention. Those who reported the reasons behind their non-interventions (37%) they argued that they do not have the proper training to react in such cases or that they do not know how to react. The study highlighted that in situations of homophobia, half of the teachers stated that they intervene constantly, and followed by 25% of teachers who reported that they intervene often and 16% of them who intervene sometimes.

On the other hand, teachers in most studies showed negative attitudes towards intervention such as ignoring bullying and harassment of LGBT students. For instance, Dragowski et al. (2016) found only 31% of teachers intervening in bias and harassment once witness it or hear about it from their students, while 69% of them chose not to intervene to discipline the offending student. In this study, there was also a difference in intervention rates as a function of the school type. The lowest rate of intervention was found in high school teachers and the highest rates of intervention were found in both middle school and elementary school teachers. Although participants reported adequate knowledge of LGBTQ related issues in their schools, they felt untrained for this issue. Likewise, Trotter (2009) reported teachers' blindness and inability to intervene in bullying and harassment. Teachers ignored LGBT related issues because of their belief that the school only had the duty to prevent such incidents not themselves. Moreover, bullying and harassment targeted to LGBT students were perceived as related to sexuality, which was a personal matter that both teachers and the school were not prepared to deal with. The findings also revealed bullied sexual minority students' reluctance to ask for help from their

teachers to intervene in homophobic bullying incidents, because of their feeling of negligence and rejection. In fact, it was reported that teacher had the tendency to normalize the situation and accuse students of lying about it (Trotter, 2009). Such negative behavior, rejection and negligence of teachers could be explained by Nappa et al.'s (2018) study, which connected teachers' non-interventions with their homophobic behavior. Based on the findings, teachers' higher level of homophobic attitudes indicated less positive cognitive and behavioral responses (e.g., the intention to speak with the victimized LGBT student) and as a result they were more likely to feel powerlessness and embarrassment. In other words, the lower the homophobic attitudes teachers had, the higher level teachers wanted to intervene in homophobic bullying reported by students. Another association considering predictors of intervening in homophobic bullying and harassment was reported by Greytak and Kosciw (2014), who found that the school type of teachers determines the frequency of interventions. For example, teachers working in public schools intervened in homophobic bullying more frequently compared to teachers in religious and non-religious private schools. Besides, knowing a sexual minority person other than a student and a colleague was also found to be associated with higher level of intervention.

As the findings indicate high school teachers' attitudes regarding homosexuality, LGBT students, incorporating LGBT topics in classrooms and intervening in homophobic bullying can differ from country to country. The most favorable attitudes were found from the studies in the US, Canada, Australia, Netherlands and Spain (e.g. Aguirre et al., 2020; Cardona-Molto et al., 2018; Dragowski et al., 2016; Garrett & Spano, 2017; Martino & Cumming-Potvin, 2019; Silveria & Goff, 2016;

Smith, 2018; Swanson & Gettinger, 2016) while the least favorable teacher attitudes were identified in South Africa, Turkey and the UK (Bhana, 2012; Ertürk, 2019; Hall & Rogers, 2019; McIntyre, 2009; Trotter, 2009).

Teachers' perceptions of sexual-minority students

Teachers' perceptions of homosexuality and sexual minority students / effect of religion and heteronormativity

Research investigating teachers' perceptions towards sexual minority students and the general concept of homosexuality mostly indicated the negative impact of religion or heteronormativity on teachers' perceptions. Findings from South Africa as well as from China demonstrated greater negative and homophobic perceptions of teachers who highly unflavored homosexuality and their sexual minority students due the fundamentality of Christianity compared to findings from studies investigated European, American, Canadian, Australian teachers' perceptions. South African teachers in Brown and Buthelezi (2020) believed that homosexuality was a choice and a problem that could not be fixed and, in some cases, regarded homosexuality as something trendy and fashionable. Being homosexual and being tolerant towards LGBT were also seen as "cool" from teachers in Finnesy's (2015) study. Considering their students who were likely to be sexual minority, teachers believed that students should go back to the gender they were born into, which showed their lack of knowledge about the difference between sexuality and gender (Brown & Buthelezi, 2020). They also stated seeing their LGBT students through their biological sex only and complained about boys acting like girls and girls acting like boys. Similar lack of knowledge and understanding about sexuality and instinct negative perceptions were prevalent in heterosexual teachers in Tran-Thanh's (2020)

study. Although teachers stated perceiving homosexuality as normal, some of them believed that a failure of love caused people to become homosexual. The same participants believed sexual orientation of students could be guessed based on their gender expressions and held stereotypical beliefs about LGBTQ people by trying to define them with masculine and feminine characteristics.

Heteronormative point of view, lack of knowledge and resistance were also reported by McIntyre (2009). Teachers perceived that talking about homosexuality was a sensitive subject, a taboo and supported heterosexist talks in schools as a way of normalizing masculine behavior in boys. Likewise, similar point of view was observed in Bhana (2012) and Tang (2014) where the appearance and expressions of students who came out as sexual minority were perceived by South African and Chinese teachers as abnormal, uncomfortable, exaggerative and as something that should be adjusted and cured with religious techniques (e.g., praying with and for the child, promoting such students to exclusively follow the religion). Such views were found highly connected to teachers' heteronormative beliefs, because of their expectations of sexual minority students to act and dress "normal" in other words "heterosexual" (Bhana, 2012). However, some teachers regarded the same point of view as troublesome and as a personal barrier that prevents them from helping and treating their students respectfully (Tang, 2014). Similarly, a student being homosexual was also seen as a deviation from the normal sexuality in O'Higgins-Normal (2009), where, unrelated to religion, teachers perceived sexuality as either black or white. Regarding homosexuality as something unnatural was additionally reported by Ertürk (2019) who investigated Turkish and Dutch teachers' perceptions towards homosexuality and sexual minority youth. Although slightly more than half

of Turkish participants disagreed with the survey item “Being gay or lesbian means being ill”, they saw homosexuality as something abnormal and students who come out as problematic for their school.

On the other hand, positive findings were reported by the Dutch teachers in the same study as well as by teachers in Chiner, Cardona-Molto and Puerta (2015) who reported their support and positive perceptions of homosexuality and students who come out as homosexual. Additionally, a significant finding revealed difference in perceptions regarding teaching in religious and non-religious schools. When compared to teachers who work in religious schools, those who worked in non-religious schools were found to have positive perceptions in dealing with homosexuality and sexual minority students (Tang, 2014). However, in the study of Smith (2018) only one female religious teacher showed positive perceptions of homosexuality and sexual minority students. Despite her religious beliefs, she stated valuing her sexual minority students.

Teachers’ perceptions of incorporating LGBT in the classroom

Concerning teachers’ perceptions of including issues, topics and themes related to sexual orientation in classrooms, their perceptions were mainly negative because of the restrictive circumstances that teachers were in (Bhana; 2012; Block; 2019; Fredman et al., 2015; Smith, 2018). For example, when questions asked whether issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity should be addressed and discussed in classrooms, majority of teachers expressed discomfort about teaching such subjects while highly demonstrating limitations like lack of training, the policy of schools, a fear for administrators’, students’ and parents’ reaction and

involvement. Especially, findings from teachers in Fredman et al.'s (2015) and Block's (2019) study put emphasis on the school factor that prevents teachers from thinking they could integrate LGBT materials, topics, issues in their classrooms. Teachers in Fredman et al.'s (2015) and Finnesy's (2015) study also perceived curriculum rules as restrictive when it comes to integrating such issues because of their fear of marginalization from their own communities, their fear of appearing as sexual minority themselves, or their fear their students', colleagues', administrators' and parents' disapproval. However, a few teachers stated that such limitations should not be used as an excuse by other teachers but as an opportunity to adjust their teaching strategies to include such topics in a legitimized manner (Fredman et al. 2015; Smith, 2018). Similar findings were found in Block (2019) where teachers reported concerns about losing their jobs, not being supported by other staff members as well as the lack of school policies for LGBT students who were excluded from the curriculum because of the heteronormative nature of the school. Although such restrictions existed, majority of teachers reported the importance of talking about such issues in classrooms strategically (Block, 2019). Also, if approved by the administration and supported by other teachers, they reported they would have more positive perceptions of integrating such topics.

Teachers' perceptions of homophobic bullying/harassment

Teachers' beliefs and opinions about homophobic bullying and harassment in schools were found to be both positive and negative. While majority of studies reported negative perceptions of intervening in this type of bullying and harassment, some of them highlighted teachers' high intentions to intervene in such incidents. Both positive and negative perceptions were found linked to teachers' awareness of

homophobic bullying and policies, perceptions of different bullying types and perceptions of supportiveness of sexual minority students. It should be noted that teachers' awareness, intentions should not be confused with their actual behaviors but their point of view about intervening in bullying incidents.

In terms of positive perceptions, high intentions to intervene in bullying and harassment and awareness of such incidents, teachers in Mayo (2007) reported strict views of unacceptability of homophobic language in their schools. They found it important to intervene once heard and experienced, and criticized ignoring bullying and harassment of sexual minority students because of the likelihood of such incidents to be imitated and repeated by students. Compared to teachers identified as straight, LGBTQ teachers were more aware of the bullying of LGBTQ students while they were also more empathic and willing to intervene. Likewise, LGBTQ teachers in Kolbert et al. (2015) and O'Higgins-Norman (2009) were more aware of homophobic bullying and sexual minority youth' experiences compared to straight teachers. The reason behind such empathy was explained by possible similar negative experiences in their own adolescence. Greater awareness was also prevalent in O'Higgins-Norman (2008), where majority of the participating teachers (79%) were aware of the homophobic verbal bullying in their schools. Interestingly, male teachers in boys' high schools were more aware of physical homophobic bullying compared to female teachers. The reason could be that male teachers having more access to boys' restroom and communicating more with them as role models. However, most of the participants still felt hesitant to prevent the bullying due to their fear of school staff and parents' reactions and additionally because they found

homophobic bullying more challenging to deal with compared to other types of bullying in schools (O'Higgins-Normal, 2008).

The difficulty of dealing with homophobic bullying was also reported by Bradshaw et al. (2013). Teachers reported perceiving bullying related to sexual orientation and gender identity as more problematic compared to Education Support Professionals (ESP) in the school. Teachers from the same study reported being more aware of homophobic bullying compared to ESPs and reported hesitation and discomfort to intervene in the bullying. Such awareness, intentions however should not be confused with their attitudes, because neither awareness nor intentions indicate their behavior but their perceptions of intervening in bullying. Moreover, in some cases although teachers stated feeling responsible to protect LGBT students and were fully aware of homophobic bullying in their schools (e.g. bullying in restrooms), they were not in favor of stopping the bullying, in other words they did not want to intervene in bullying. Instead, they stated the way to help their sexual minority students would be based on warning them to be "careful" (Brown & Buthelezi, 2020). Therefore, being aware of homophobic bullying does not necessarily provoke and increase the likelihood of teachers to intervene neither does it increase their intentions to intervene in bullying and harassment of sexual minority students. The relationship between intentions, awareness and the likelihood of interventions were also investigated by McCabe et al. (2013). Teachers, who actually believed advocacy to be rewarding and valuable as an experience, reported the strongest intentions to help sexual minority students as a result to intervene in homophobic bullying. Teachers' intention to advocate was found to be connected to their perceptions of the school environment and personal life (e.g., the effect of opinions

of other staff members in school, friends and family). However, higher intentions to intervene did not show teachers' actual behaviors towards sexual minority students, but it did have some effect on their behaviors in terms of intervention (McCabe et al., 2013). Therefore, in cases of non-interventions, although some teachers have high intentions to intervene, they choose to not act on it. On the contrary, Greytak and Kosciw (2014) reported the opposite findings where self-efficacy and higher awareness of homophobic bullying and harassment were connected to teachers' higher level of interventions.

Apart from teachers' awareness of homophobic bullying, lack of awareness of homophobic bullying and harassment and anti-bullying policies were prevalent. The majority of participants in Tran-Thanh (2020) reported witnessing no physical and verbal homophobic bullying in their schools even though they also reported events of students joking about both straight and sexual minority peers by homophobic name calling and stereotyping them. Such incidents were regarded as harmless and not serious by teachers. Overlooking homophobic name calling and bullying were also reported by the teachers in O'Higgins-Norman (2009). Teachers who identified themselves as sexual minorities reported the frequency of name calling and straight teachers' inability to see it as homophobic bullying. A sexual minority teacher, for instance, strictly criticized his colleagues with not challenging such a behavior enough or ignoring it. The more homophobic remarks were ignored, the more acceptable it would become to use homophobic remarks in schools. Besides the majority of teachers in the same study also pointed to the pervasiveness of such bullying due to teachers' resistance to address it. Their resistance was explained by their anxiety of experiencing disapproval from other teachers.

Unawareness of homophobic bullying was often found in schools that lacked support from administrators and an inclusive curriculum. For instance, while only a few teachers pointed at the importance of recognizing harassment and homophobic behavior and importance of forbidding homophobic bullying in schools, teachers in Fredman et al. (2015) were unwilling to protect their LGBT students even though knowing the safety of students should come first. According to teachers, even discussing about LGBT and sexuality was like moving a ship because of the difficulty to navigate it. As a result, although teachers felt responsible to protect students no matter their differences, they were not willing to protect them. An important finding was teachers' perceptions of the frequency of LGBTQ students being bullied. Crothers et al. (2017) found that teachers were less likely than their sexual minority students to perceive sexual minorities to be more frequently bullied compared to straight students. LGBT students were less likely than teachers to report LGBT students received support from school staff when it came to intervention. It was also more likely for them to report hearing homophobic remarks than teachers. At the same time while 35.3% of teachers reported being aware of social and relational bullying of LGBT students, 11.8% of them reported sexual harassment and 29.3% reported cyberbullying of LGBT students. These findings indicate that teachers were not as much aware of LGBT students being bullied as LGBT students themselves and they perceived their colleagues' and schools' as supportive and willing to intervene in homophobic bullying incidents. However, LGBT students did not seem to feel protected. As expected, those who experienced bullying and victimization firsthand would be more aware of the action directed at them. Additionally, in terms of perceptions of supportiveness of LGBT students, teachers' perceptions of higher level of school staff' supportiveness was found connected to

higher rates of students' and teachers' use of derogatory language about LGBT students and LGBT bullying (Kolbert et al., 2015). Teachers' lack of awareness of anti-bullying policies was also associated with their perceptions of school practices to prevent bullying. In other words, teachers who were unaware of anti-bullying policies regarded their schools as inadequate in terms of prevention of homophobic bullying and especially reported more frequency of physical bullying and victimization of LGBT students compared to those who knew about such policies. Compared to straight teachers, LGBT teachers perceived their school and other teachers as less supportive of LGBT students.

According to the findings above teachers' perceptions of homosexuality, LGBT students, incorporating LGBT themes and topics in their classrooms as well as of intervening in homophobic bullying were mainly reported negative. In terms of country differences, the most negative perceptions were found in studies from South Africa, China, Vietnam, Turkey and the UK (e.g. Bhana, 2012; Block, 2019; Bradshaw et al., 2013; Brown & Buthelezi, 2020; Erturk, 2019; Finnessy et al., 2016; Fredman et al., 2015; Smith, 2018; Tang, 2014; Tran-Thanh, 2020), while the most positive perceptions were reported by teachers from the US, Spain and the Netherlands (e.g. Kolbert et al., 2015; Mayo, 2007; O'Higgins-Norman, 2009). It should be reminded that the reason for such positive perceptions from the US might be related to the number of studies included from the US in the review. Also another consideration is needed in terms of the lower number of studies included from Spain and Netherlands before coming into any conclusions.

Teachers' competency in adapting strategies that support the inclusion of sexual minority students

Teachers' competency in teaching and working with sexual minority students

As one of the important determinant of teachers' positive and negative attitudes to include sexual minority students in the classroom, teachers' perceived competence was found to be ambivalent. While majority (94%) of US teachers in Brant and Tyson (2015) reported high self-efficacy in working with LGBTQ students and in teaching gay or lesbian students, and low (85%) self-efficacy related to teaching and working with students who were gender non-conforming, transgender students, near half of teachers in a comparative study of the US (34%) and Spain (44%), reported feeling incompetent to deal with student differences related to culture, language, religion, disability, special ability and sexual orientation (Cardona-Molto et al., 2018). When compared to teachers' competency in the US and Spain; teachers from the US reported feeling less prepared and certain about how to refer and teach students who differed in religion and languages while Spanish teachers reported feeling incompetent to refer and teach disabled, special talented students and those who varied in culture (Cardona-Molto et al., 2018). In terms of teaching sexual minorities, both Spanish and the US teachers had higher self-efficacy compared to other differences stated above. While elementary teachers from Spain felt more competent to work with LGBT students, high school teachers from the US felt more competent to teach LGBT students.

Teachers' competency in intervening in homophobic bullying/ harassment

As mentioned in the above sections, self-efficacy emerged as a significant predictor of teachers' actual interventions in homophobic bullying and harassment incidents.

For instance, findings from Collier et al. (2015) revealed that teachers with higher confidence to intervene successfully as well as higher belief that such intervention would result in positive outcomes showed stronger intentions to intervene. Teachers' intentions to intervene in verbal and physical bullying were highly associated with their self-efficacy and perceptions of the necessity of intervention (Collier et al., 2015). Teachers' higher self-efficacy was also associated with teachers' lower negative attitudes. Therefore, teachers who showed more tolerant and positive attitudes towards sexual minority students were more comfortable and confident to support LGBT students experiencing bullying and victimization. Similar findings were reported by Greytak and Kosciw (2014): comfort level was found to be related to intervening in homophobic remarks and to higher frequency of intervention. The more comfortable teachers felt to intervene, the more they reported actually intervening. Therefore, helping teachers increase their confidence and self-efficacy to intervene was found as a crucial step to stop homophobic bullying and harassments in schools.

Similarly, low level of self-efficacy in managing homophobic bullying and attitudes were found to be associated with the feeling of powerlessness (Nappa et al., 2018). In other words, teachers' low level of homophobic attitudes and high level of self-efficacy were related to positive activation as well as their urge to help LGBT students experiencing bullying and victimization. It must be noted that such positive activation of reaction to a hypothetical homophobic bullying incident did not necessarily lead teachers to react to the bullying; it was rather about teachers' behavioral intentions which was found as a predictor of their present and future attitudes. In addition, self-efficacy in educational tasks were found to predict

teachers' confidence to empathize with LGBT students' negative experiences and teachers' intention to respond to the bullying and victimization. The results emphasized the necessity of the experiences teachers should have in order to increase their level of confidence and intervention. On the other hand, although teachers in Dragowski et al. (2016) reported favorable self-efficacy to intervene in LGBT bullying, it was found that only 30% of teachers intervened in such incidents. Therefore, higher self-efficacy does not necessarily determine teachers' interventions.

Considering the variables that determine teachers' self-efficacy, some studies showed the impact of external factors influencing teachers' confidence to intervene in such incidents in schools. For instance, teachers who were afraid, anxious and unwilling to intervene in homophobic bullying and harassment often attributed their lack of intervention to schools' policies, administrators', colleagues', parents' and sometimes students' reactions and mobbing (Bradshaw et al., 2013; O'Higgins-Norman, 2008; Swanson & Gettinger, 2016). Teachers reported feeling more comfortable intervening in homophobic bullying when the school policy provided a clear guideline and included sexual minority students in their regulations. Likewise, in Swanson and Gettinger (2016) 63% of teachers also indicated personal values and discomfort, while 83% stated lack of knowledge of the needs of sexual minorities as barriers that prevented them from intervening in bullying and harassment of LGBT students. Personal values as barrier to intervene was also prevalent in O'Higgins-Norman (2008) as well where teachers reported their concerns that their manhood and sexuality would be questioned by the school community which would think that homosexuality was promoted by them. This was the reason that they were mostly

unwilling to intervene. Mobbing against teachers was suggested as another reason for why teachers felt the most discomfort to intervene in bullying related to sexual orientation and gender identity in Bradshaw et al. (2013). While majority of teachers reported feeling confident to intervene in physical, verbal and relational bullying, some of them reported feeling less confident to intervene in cyberbullying and sexting. In terms of differences in students, teachers stated highest comfort to intervene in bullying of disabled students and the least comfort to intervene in bullying of sexual minority students. In other words, it was likely for teachers to witness bullying but yet failed to intervene because of the heteronormativity of schools, restrictions and mobbing from their administrators. Teachers' accountability to consult administrators to incorporate sexuality and LGBT in their classrooms could be connected to that mobbing.

Although most studies that investigated self-efficacy found lower perceived competency of teachers to intervene in homophobic bullying and harassment, two studies found teachers' moderate and higher competency to intervene in such incidents. Teachers in Greytak et al. (2013) reported the advantages of teachers receiving in-service training to feel empathy towards sexual minority youth, to be aware of homophobic bullying and to increase their confidence to intervene in homophobic bullying and harassment. Results indicated that teachers' self-efficacy and comfort level to intervene in homophobic remarks, addressing anti-bullying and promoting an inclusive environment for LGBT youth increased after participation in professional development. In addition, half of the teachers (45%) in Brant and Tyson (2015) reported having a high sense of self-efficacy when it came to stopping the bullying of gay, lesbian, gender non-conforming and transgender students in their

schools. However, as a school faculty, they showed higher sense of self-efficacy and determination to stop it (58%) while intensifying the invincibility of homophobic bullying and victimization in big schools. The results indicated that teachers although had greater sense of self-efficacy (>94%) in teaching to LGBT students, they felt less confident to intervene in homophobic bullying.

Teachers ‘competency in incorporating sexuality and LGBTQ in the classrooms

Teachers’ perceived competency in teaching about sexuality, using materials and themes related to sexual minorities in their classrooms were found to be moderate. While most of the studies found high competency in teachers in integrating topics and materials related to LGBTQ in the curriculum and in class discussions (Brant & Tyson, 2016; Garrett & Spano, 2017; Mayo, 2007; Page, 2017) some studies found low competency in teachers to incorporate sexuality and LGTBQ issues in the classroom.

Considering teachers’ lower self-efficacy, teachers stated questioning their own competence and expressed discomfort, unprepared to teach about and address LGBT issues in their lessons. Mostly the main reason that hindered such subjects to be covered in schools were concerns about the reactions from administrators, students, parents and colleagues sometimes due to the religious convention, if they included such controversial topics (Bhana, 2012; Block, 2019; Fredman et al., 2015). Parallel to the findings about LGBT teachers’ greater involvement of LGBT subjects in classrooms, a participant LGBT teacher from Block (2019) expressed his concerns about talking about sexuality and homosexuality in classrooms. However, his concerns were to do with other teachers’ lack of involvement in such issues. In other

words, teachers', especially, LGBT teachers had concerns about standing alone in integrating and teaching about it without enough support from other staff members. In Brant and Tyson (2015) the majority of teachers (87%) reported a high sense of self-efficacy in teaching about homosexual historical figures, historical events that consist of homosexual people and integrating instructional activities that prevent prejudice about sexual minorities. Concerning teachers' identification of bias in commercial materials in their school, half of the teachers expressed a high sense of self-efficacy and 40% of them demonstrated a medium sense of self-efficacy. However, self-efficacy in identifying bias in materials against transgender and gender non-conforming individuals was found to be lower. Similar findings were reported by Garrett and Spano (2017), more than half of the teachers expressed feeling somewhat or very comfortable with using instructional strategies specific to sexual minority youth in their classrooms although male teachers compared to female teachers reported more concerns about disapproval from administrators, school board members, colleagues and about losing their jobs. In contradistinction to such differences between male and female teachers' concerns, Page (2017) reported the opposite finding as female rural teachers felt more insecure and less supported by the school staff.

Teachers' comfort level was also affected by the school type, school region, teachers' own sexual orientation, the amount of in-service training, the amount of experience and age. Compared to teachers who worked in public and religious schools, teachers who worked in private and non-religious schools felt more comfortable to incorporate LGBT topics and themes in their curriculum as well as promoting awareness (Garrett & Spano, 2017; Page, 2017). Similar pattern was valid

for urban school teachers who feel more comfortable to incorporate LGBT issues compared to rural school teachers. Rural school teachers were found to be more fearful and insecure about the challenges, reactions from administrators, parents and other community members in the school. Other reasons of those fears were related to their lack of awareness about LGBT materials, lack of resources to attain such materials, and their values which work as a personal barrier (Garrett & Spano, 2017; Page, 2017). Similar pattern was also seen in teachers who held strong religious beliefs (e.g. Evangelicals) and worked in rural schools who were also found to have lower comfort level compared to those who did not have strict religious beliefs (e.g. Atheists, Catholics) and worked in urban schools. Besides, sexual minority teachers reported feeling more comfortable to handle issues and topics related to LGBT in classrooms and implement them in curriculum than their straight colleagues (Garrett & Spano, 2017). Significantly, teachers who reported being a part of in-service training on LGBT topics reported feeling more comfortable discussing such issues with their students. The higher level of in-service training also determined teachers' comfort level; teachers who attended such training felt less worried about the lack of support from other staff members in school. Considering support from other staff members in schools, more experienced teachers such as those who taught more than 30 years reported feeling more confident to receive support from school staff to incorporate such issues and topics and feeling more secure in keeping their jobs. Additionally, to this finding about teachers' level of experience and comfort level, Page (2017) also reported a significant finding about the relationship between teachers' level of experience and their need of support in text selection for the inclusivity of LGBT literature. Those with 0-15 years of experience compared to those with 16-30 years of experience, reported higher comfort level once received

guidance in text selection. Therefore, they indicated only if they received guidance in text selection, their comfort level would increase. In other words, more experienced teachers showed higher comfort level in incorporating LGBTQ materials and texts, while teachers with 0-15 years of experience needed guidance to feel comfortable in selecting LGBTQ text to use in their classrooms.

Teachers' comfort level was also found to be associated with their ages (Page, 2017). The older were the teachers, the less their comfort level was; however, not fitting in this pattern, the oldest teachers (over 60) showed higher comfort level to integrate LGBT literature, characters and story lines in the curriculum. Also, more experienced teachers reported feeling less comfortable in promoting this literature and less experienced ones feeling more comfortable. That could be explained by younger teachers' generation being more open to sexual orientations outside of heteronormativity. As previously mentioned, the link of schools with GSA had a positive impact on teachers' attitudes towards LGBT students and helped teachers to have positive perceptions of them. Similarly, teachers in schools that had GSA showed higher competence to integrate LGBT literature and discussed about sexuality and homosexuality in classroom as well as promoted such literature as a choice for reading.

Considering the outcomes of the analysis, high school teachers reported feeling mostly incompetent or having low perceived self-efficacy to teach LGBT students, incorporate inclusive materials and specially to intervene in homophobic bullying and harassment. Conforming to these findings, the lower level of competency was found in studies from South Africa and the UK. (e.g. Bhana, 2012; O'Higgins-

Norman, 2008). Interestingly in the studies from the US, both high and low levels of perceived competence was reported by the high school teachers (e.g. Block, 2019; Bradshaw et al., 2013; Brant & Tyson, 2016; Dragowski et al., 2016; Fredman et al., 2015; Garrett & Spano, 2017; Greytak et al., 2013; Mayo, 2007; Page, 2017; Swanson & Gettinger, 2016).

Conclusion

As the results of the analysis revealed and all sub themes considered, teachers' general attitudes and perceptions towards sexual minority students were slightly negative. Teachers' negative attitudes and perceptions regarding sexuality and homosexuality were explained by the heteronormative nature of schools, hegemonic masculinity, social norms, religion, although not necessarily in every case but their ages, ethnicity, school type, level of experience and political side too (Bhana, 2012; Brown & Buthelezi, 2020; Erturk, 2019; Hall & Rodgers, 2019; McIntyre, 2009; O'Higgins-Norman, 2009; Tang, 2014; Tran-Thanh, 2020; Trotter, 2009). The majority of teachers' attitudes towards their LGBT students in schools however were interestingly positive (Aguirre et al., 2020; Cardona-Molto et al., 2018; Dragowski et al., 2016; Martino & Cumming-Potvin, 2019; Silveria & Goff, 2016; Smith, 2018; Swanson & Gettinger, 2016; Tran-Thanh, 2020). In terms of incorporating LGBT issues, materials in classrooms majority of teachers incorporated them to some degree limitedly (Block, 2019; Cardona-Molto et al., 2018; Finnessy, 2016; Fredman et al., 2015; Garrett & Spano, 2017; Martino & Cumming-Potvin, 2019; Mayo, 2007; Page, 2017) due to the restrictions of curricula, lack of training and knowledge, fear from administrators, parents, their own personal barriers and by simply their own choice. Besides, perceptions to incorporate LGBT in their classrooms were also

slightly negative for the same reasons given (Bhana, 2012; Block, 2019; Fredman et al., 2015; Smith, 2018). The least positive attitudes and perceptions were found in intervening in homophobic bullying incidents. Majority of teachers provided similar reasons behind limited interventions and for having negative perceptions to intervene in homophobic bullying (Aguirre et al., 2020; Crothers et al., 2017; Dragowski et al., 2016; Erturk, 2019; Fredman et al., 2015; Garrett & Spano, 2017; Kolbert et al., 2015; Mayo, 2007; O'Higgins-Norman, 2009; Trotter, 2009). Teachers' perceived competency to teach, work with sexual minority students and to intervene in homophobic bullying, although there were some cases where teachers felt very confident (Brant & Tyson, 2016), were generally low level (Bradshaw et al., 2013; Cardona-Molto et al., 2018; O'Higgins-Norman, 2008; Swanson & Gettinger, 2016). Such low perceived competency was explained by teachers' fear from administrators', parents' and other teachers' reactions, lack of resources, lack of helpful curriculum guideline and enough in-service and pre-service training (Block, 2019; Finnessy, 2016; Fredman et al., 2015; Garrett & Spano, 2017; O'Higgins-Norman, 2008; Swanson & Gettinger, 2016; Page, 2017).

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Introduction

Inclusive education as an ideology has recently become more widespread through its efforts to create a thriving environment for all students irrespectively of race, ethnicity, learning abilities, socioeconomic status, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. Although this ideology started from the necessity to fulfill the needs of students with learning barriers (e.g., special educational needs status), over the past decade, it has embraced students with different sexual orientation or sexual identity and linked with the demand for social justice. In order to contribute to a better understanding of the recent developments in inclusive education, this systematic review specifically focused on organizing and summarizing the body of research that investigated the inclusion of students who differ in sexual orientation and sexual identity, labeled sexual minority students in this thesis. The purpose of the study was to understand teachers' attitudes towards LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) students, their perceptions of LGBT students as well as to identify how competent they feel to adapt strategies to include LGBT students in their classrooms. The need for such an investigation was due to research findings that indicate sexual minority students are a matter of concern for teachers and administrators. If inclusion is the goal of modern education, teachers, schools, administrators and policy makers need to know what the current situation is at schools.

Overview of the study

Three research questions were addressed in this systematic literature review: 1) What are high school teachers' attitudes towards students with different sexual orientations, 2) what are high school teachers' perceptions of students with different sexual orientations and 3) to what extent do high school teachers feel competent to adapt strategies that support the inclusion of students with different sexual orientations. The methodology for the systematic literature review for this study included eight steps, which were adapted according to the guidelines of Petticrew and Roberts (2006) as well as the PRISMA Statement of Liberati et al. (2009). By determining the Boolean operators and the keywords to be used in three databases (e.g., Web of Science, Scopus and ERIC) and with pre-determined inclusion/exclusion criteria, the researcher identified the appropriate studies while she was keeping detailed record of each step. The identified studies were screened by a second rater to prevent potential bias. The final number of articles to be analyzed and synthesized for the systematic literature review was 33 in total.

Interestingly, the articles included findings from a wide range of regions in the world such as North America, Australia, Asia, Africa and Europe. By identifying similarities and differences emerged from the data obtained, the researcher identified categories (i.e., categorization based on country/ region, teachers' attitudes, perceptions and perceived competence) accordingly and mapped the articles for the systematic literature review.

Major findings

Teachers' attitudes towards sexual minority students

Teachers' attitudes towards LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) students were often affected by their general attitudes towards sexuality and homosexuality which were found to be unfavorable in some cases due to their own personal beliefs, heteronormativity in schools, lack of knowledge about how to treat and respond to subjects related to them, their stereotypical beliefs, lack of awareness of LGBT and other types of sexualities (Bhana, 2012; Trotter, 2009; McIntyre, 2009). Such external and internal factors influencing teachers were also found by other researchers (Meyer, 2008; Robinson & Ferfolja, 2001; Taylor et al., 2016). While the results from teachers' attitudes towards homosexuality showed negative attitudes towards homosexuality and sexuality (Bhana, 2012, McIntyre, 2009; Trotter, 2009), the section that investigated teachers' attitudes towards LGBT students found considerably better and positive attitudes due to their feeling of responsibility to treat everyone equally by often acknowledging that every child deserves to be educated regardless of their differences (Aguirre et al. 2020; Cardona-Molto et al., 2018; Dragowski et al., 2016; Silveira & Goff, 2016; Smith, 2018; Swanson & Gettinger, 2016; Martino & Cumming-Potvin, 2019; Tran-Thanh, 2020).

Considering integration of LGBT issues and materials related to LGBT students in classrooms, teachers showed both positive and negative attitudes. The willingness of teachers to incorporate LGBT into their classrooms, through either class discussions, integration of topics, themes or materials were often found to be parallel to teachers' adequate knowledge, training obtained, willingness and confidence to teach about equality, respect and normalization of different sexualities (Block, 2019; Garrett &

Spano, 2017, Martino & Cumming-Potvin, 2019; Mayo, 2007). Their willingness to incorporate issues and materials related to LGBT students was also connected to the amount of support they received from their colleagues, administrators and their determination to adapt inclusive practices to their curriculum through differentiation. Specifically, the research findings highlighted that compared to straight teachers, LGBT teachers felt more willing and sensitive towards incorporating issues in classrooms due to their own personal experiences with marginalization and discrimination (Block, 2019; Garrett & Spano, 2017, Glikman & Elkayam, 2019; Martino & Cumming-Potvin, 2019; Mayo, 2007; Meyer et al. 2015). However, teachers' lack of inclusivity of LGBT topics, themes and avoidance to talk about homosexuality and other types of sexualities in classrooms were explained as a result of heteronormativity, personal values, fear of losing their jobs, lack of support from administrators, parents and other staff members, fear of disapproval from them, and lack of in-service and pre-service training and knowledge (Finnessy, 2016; Fredman et al., 2015; Garrett & Spano, 2017; Page, 2017; Tran-Thanh, 2020). Furthermore, extensive experience and advanced professional development were also found to affect teachers' attitudes and practices positively towards students with disabilities and deficiencies (Dorji et al., 2019; Rakap & Kaczmarek, 2010). Similarly, the lack of training, experience and motivation were reported as the reasons for teachers' struggles to apply practices that include students with disabilities and deficiencies (Avramidis et al., 2000; Coutsocostax & Alborz, 2010; Nilsen, 2020; Rakap & Kaczmarek, 2010).

The most prevalent negative attitudes were about intervening in homophobic bullying and harassment. The findings indicated that teachers rarely intervene in

homophobic bullying and harassment (Aguirre et al., 2020; Finnessy, 2016; Garrett & Spano, 2017; Mayo, 2007) or not at all (Aguirre et al., 2020; Ertürk, 2019; Dragoswki et al., 2016; Trotter, 2009). However, these findings should be interpreted with caution because of the small sample size of some of these studies (e.g., in Finnessy, 2016, in Mayo, 2007).

Teachers' perceptions of sexual minority students

Teachers' perceptions of homosexuality and LGBT students were more negative compared to teachers' attitudes. The reported reasons behind teachers' negative perceptions included their religion, the dominant heteronormativity, personal values, fear of reactions from the school community, and lack of knowledge and training (Bhana, 2012; Brown & Buthelezi, 2020, Ertürk, 2019; McIntyre, 2009; O'Higgins-Norman, 2009; Silveira & Goff, 2016; Tang, 2014; Tran-Thanh, 2020). However, teachers' perceptions of the necessity to incorporate LGBT topics in the classroom were mostly negative because of the omission of sexuality as a subject in schools, inclination towards heteronormativity, negative and inaccurate perceptions of gender and sexuality, lack of knowledge about such topics, lack of training, unwillingness to push through their personal barriers, and pressures from parents, colleagues, students and specifically administrators (Bhana, 2012, Block, 2019, Fredman et al., 2015; Smith, 2018).

Similarly, teachers' perceptions of intervening in bullying and harassment were also mainly reported to be negative (Crothers et al., 2017; Fredman et al., 2015; Kolbert et al., 2015; O'Higgins-Norman, 2009; Tran-Thanh, 2020). Notably, teachers showed higher intentions to intervene in inequalities and bullying that targeted

students who differed in race, class, language, special education status whereas they showed unwillingness to intervene in homophobic bullying and harassment targeted to sexual minority students as reported in research (McCabe & Rubinson, 2008, Page, 2017; Taylor et al., 2016). There were only a few studies that found positive perceptions in which teachers wanted to overcome their fears, ignore the restrictions from the school and personal barriers to be able to help students who were already victimized (Kolbert et al., 2015; Mayo, 2007; O'Higgins-Norman, 2008).

Teachers' perceived competence to adapt strategies that support the inclusion of sexual minority students

The results of the systematic literature review indicated that a small number of teachers feel completely competent and confident to teach students about sexuality by incorporating LGBT topics, themes, materials in classrooms while the majority of teachers, point to their lack of perceived self-efficacy to work with sexual minority students in classrooms and schools. Self-efficacy was found to determine teachers' practices, willingness to teach LGBT students, to empathize and protect them in cases of bullying, harassment and victimization (Collier et al., 2015; Greytak & Kosciw, 2014; Nappa et al., 2018). Similar to the reasons behind teachers' negative perceptions and attitudes, teachers' low self-efficacy was perceived as the result of negative reactions from administrators, students, parents and colleagues, lack of awareness, lack of resources, personal values as barriers (e.g. fundamentalist religion, conservative beliefs, homophobia) and limitations of the curriculum (Block, 2019; Bradshaw et al., 2013; Finnessy, 2016; Fredman et al., 2015; O'Higgins-Norman, 2008; Swanson & Gettinger, 2016). Additionally, in some studies the lower level of teachers' experience, the little amount of training attained in pre-service

teacher education, their age (e.g. younger teachers) and the school type (e.g. working in rural schools) were found to determine teachers' low self-efficacy (Bhana, 2012; Garrett & Spano, 2017; Mayo, 2007; Page, 2017).

Implications for practice

The findings of this research indicate five implications for practice. First, teachers are in need of both in-service and pre-service preparation in order to feel comfortable with talking about LGBT issues at school and confident to apply inclusive strategies for sexual minority students in classrooms. Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to learn and practice differentiation techniques and have access to LGBT materials so as to incorporate LGBT topics in lessons and foster an inclusive learning environment for LGBT students in schools.

Secondly, administrators, parents and teachers should be able to work together for LGBT students to feel comfortable and secure in the most fundamental place where they learn about everything, especially about themselves. Research often highlighted lack of collaboration between staff members and parents for an inclusive environment due to personal barriers such as religion, beliefs, upbringing and so forth. These barriers that promote negativity, pressure, restrictions from staff members/ parents and silence sexuality/ sexual orientation directly damage students' psychology (e.g., suffering from depression, insecurity), perceptions of themselves and perpetuates homophobic bullying in schools. However, regardless of their students' sexual orientations and their own personal barriers, all students' safety should come first and must be assured by every adult in schools. Such passive hostility sequentially from administrators, parents then teachers have a large impact

on students' behavior towards each other because children tend to imitate attitudes they observe in adults in schools. It also determines, as the findings indicate, how other staff members handle LGBT issues and especially bullying in schools. As teachers we should not only teach about the world, but help children become the best version of themselves as individuals. That only becomes achievable once we openly talk about, acknowledge such issues in schools and react to homophobic bullying.

Thirdly, it is essential for policy makers to reconsider their policies and regulations in schools because, the findings still highlight the ongoing marginalization of LGBT students, homophobia and transphobia caused by both students and teachers largely due to the lack of policies involving the prevention of bullying, harassment and victimization targeted to sexual minority students.

Fourthly, prohibition of discrimination, marginalization and isolation of LGBT students must be guaranteed by curriculum makers through a differentiation of materials. For students to be recognized and respected regardless of their differences, curricula should be more flexible and inclusive since the findings about teachers' attitudes, perceptions and competency highly reported challenges of teachers in implementing LGBT in the curriculum due to their schools' enforcement to follow certain guidelines and materials.

Finally, school counselors should collaborate more with teachers in order to assist them for the necessary adjustments in the classroom. As the review indicated, teachers felt incompetent and inadequate to communicate in an appropriate way with LGBT students as well as to develop and apply strategies to intervene in homophobic

bullying and harassment. Preserving the mental safety of children does not only depend on school counselors but also every adult in schools, especially teachers since they are in touch with their students at firsthand compared to others. They may not know how to deal with a taboo, especially concerning sexuality, but it is never too late to understand the significance of their part in maintaining inclusivity and be willing enough to work with counselors, to learn about guidance and practice inclusivity through teacher training programs.

Implications for further research

The articles reviewed in this study mostly investigated teachers' explicit attitudes were investigated rather than their implicit attitudes and beliefs. However implicit attitudes are the key point to understand teachers' actual beliefs and their morality that contribute to their behavior. Therefore, researchers should investigate and analyze not only explicit but also implicit attitudes of teachers. The impact of organizations like GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network) and GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance) in schools in terms of shaping teachers' attitudes, perceptions and perceived competence should also be investigated further. Such research could be helpful for schools to identify the differences between schools with or without policies specific to sexual minority students.

Finally, one of the most important implications of this study is mainly related to Turkey and Turkish high school teachers. As literature suggests, there is considerably limited research investigating specifically Turkish teachers' attitudes towards sexual minority students and their perceptions of them. Most contemporary studies in the literature examined Turkish teachers' inclusive attitudes and

perceptions only in the framework of multicultural education and still lacked the fundamental duty of inclusivity due to their focus on other minority students (e.g., investigating attitudes and perceptions towards special educational needs students and refugees) and their misconception of sexual orientation (e.g. calling sexual orientation a sexual preference) (Başbay & Bektas, 2009; Karacabey, Ozdere & Bozkus, 2019; Tonbuloglu, Aslan & Aydın, 2016). Therefore, research needs to focus more on Turkish teachers' attitudes, perceptions and perceived competence regarding sexual minority students in the framework of inclusive education, to foster a safer learning environment for students who are still subjected to marginalization and exclusion in Turkish schools.

Limitations

When interpreting the findings of this study, a number of limitations should be considered. Although teachers from each school type (e.g., pre-school, elementary and middle schools) could be investigated, the researcher only limited her scope with high school teachers in the systematic literature review. In terms of the databases, only three databases were used for the data collection and analysis (i.e., Web of Science, Scopus, ERIC). The researcher worked alone in reviewing for the synthesis and analysis of the data. There was not a second reviewer involved in the process of analyzing the selected articles. Lastly, although the reviewed findings were coming from a variety of countries, not all countries were represented in the selected studies. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to the population of all high school teachers.

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