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Sexual minority youth in the research literature : what kind of coverage is the field of school psychology providing?

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SEXUAL MINORITY YOUTH IN THE RESEARCH LITERATURE: WHAT KIND
OF COVERAGE IS THE FIELD OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY PROVIDING?

An abstract of a Thesis

Submitted

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Education Specialist in School Psychology

Jill Hayes White

University of Northern Iowa

May 2007

ABSTRACT

The amount of coverage sexual minority youth have received in the research literature over the past 15 years was examined. A content analysis of all research articles published in *Psychology in the Schools* and *The Journal of School Psychology* from 1990 to 2005 was conducted. Comparisons were made between the topic areas receiving the most coverage in 1990 versus 2005. Results revealed that issues related to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth were discussed in only 0.4% of the articles. Topic areas receiving the most coverage included assessment, intervention, ethical and professional issues as well as race and diversity issues, gender, family and learning disabilities. The number of articles dedicated to assessment and learning disabilities dropped dramatically from 1990 to 2005 while the number of articles discussing interventions, cultural diversity and socioeconomic status sharply increased.

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This Study by Jill Hayes White

entitled SEXUAL MINORITY YOUTH IN THE RESEARCH LITERATURE: WHAT KIND OF COVERAGE IS THE FIELD OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY PROVIDING?

has been approved as meeting the thesis requirement for the Degree of Education Specialist in School Psychology.

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INTRODUCTION

As society continues to grow in population and diversity, so do the number of young people who identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Studies show that approximately 5% to 6% of our nation's youth fit into one of these categories (Human Rights Watch, 2001). While acceptance of sexual minority individuals appears to be on the rise, there is still a great need for tolerance and awareness in American schools. The majority of these youth come to school each day forced to face an environment of physical, verbal, and emotional abuse (Human Rights Watch, 2001). Historically as well as currently there is very little research being published in this area. School psychologists can benefit this cause by carrying out more research dedicated to sexual minority youth.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a growing concern for the well being of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) youth in contemporary American schools. This group of students is at risk of high drop-out rates, more frequent drug and alcohol abuse, higher rates of teen suicide, and academic failure (Blumenfield, 1994; GLSEN, 2001; Human Rights Watch, 2001; Lee, 2002; Rostosky, Owens, Zimmerman & Riggle, 2003; Weiler, 2003). Yet, this population is often forgotten by educators and researchers alike. Sexual minority students may often be intimidated, harassed and mistreated physically and emotionally by their peers on school grounds (Human Rights Watch, 2001). Anti-gay comments and harassment from students frequently go unchecked by peers, teachers and school personnel every day (GLSEN, 2003). There is an overall lack of support for these young people and their education may be deteriorating as a result.

Definitions

The term sexual minority includes individuals who identify with one of the following sexuality labels; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning. The term questioning refers to individuals who are unsure of their sexual orientation or gender identity (GLSEN, 2003). Questioning students are often under the same stresses as openly or decidedly gay students are. While the terms lesbian, gay, and bisexual may be more common, the term transgender often produces some confusion. Transgender is an umbrella term that includes individuals who do not characterize cultural norms for their biological sex, those who dress, identify or present themselves as a member of the opposite sex and those who do not identify as either male or female (GLSEN, 2003).

School climate is the general atmosphere or feeling of a school. A school's climate is made up of the shared beliefs, values and attitudes held by its students, families, teachers and administrators (Sweeney, 1988). School climate can influence student behaviors in many ways. It has been correlated with academic performance, school attendance, student accountability and school safety (Lehr & Christenson, 2003; McLoughlin, Kubick & Lewis, 2002; McNamara, 2002; Szalacha, 2003). In this respect, school climate and student outcomes appear to be directly related.

School belonging is an important facet of school climate. The term school belonging is commonly used interchangeably with school connectedness and school membership. A student's sense of school belonging is the extent to which he or she feels personally accepted, respected, included and supported at school (Goodenow & Grady, 1994). Research suggests that feeling as though one belongs is an essential psychological need (Galliher, Rostosky & Hughes, 2004). Like climate, school belonging has also been correlated with several school outcomes, most noted is academic performance and motivation (Galliher et al., 2004; Ma, 2003; Rostosky et al., 2003). Because LGBT youth are often ostracized by their peers, they tend to have lower perceptions of school belonging (Frankfurt, 2000; Rostosky et al., 2003). Without some feeling of connectedness to their school community, LGBT students may have little motivation to excel at school or even to attend daily.

While educators are legally required to provide a safe learning environment for all young people in their school, many are failing to protect the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth (Heinrichs, 2003). A 2001 climate survey done by the

Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) found that 83% of LGBT youth endured verbal, physical or sexual persecution in school (GLSEN, 2001). In 1987, the U.S. Justice Department reported that homosexuals, in comparison to all other minority groups, “are the most frequent victims of hate crimes” (Lee, 2002, p.21). A study conducted by students in a Des Moines, Iowa high school found that on average, high school students heard anti-gay comments every seven minutes (Carter, 1997). To obtain these findings, students stood in hallways and lunchrooms and tallied the number of anti-gay comments they heard. The number of comments they counted amounted to approximately twenty-five discriminatory comments each school day (Frankfurt, 2000). Even more concerning, out of these twenty-five comments, teachers only intervened about 3% of the time (Carter, 1997).

Why are educators and professionals so reluctant to acknowledge and attend to the needs of LGBT students? Along with this reported lack of intervention on the part of teachers and faculty, there is an alarming lack of published research on sexual minority youth. One reason may be misconceptions and misinformation about gay and lesbian youth. The director of advocacy for GLSEN found that several school administrators she contacted were afraid to address the issues that LGBT youth face because they believed that if students did not talk about homosexuality, they were less likely to become homosexual themselves (Frankfurt, 2000). This researcher encountered a similar response while requesting permission to collect data about sexual minority youth in Midwestern high schools. Of seven school districts contacted and invited to participate in the study and its results, all seven declined.

Another reason for the lack of initiative taken by schools to address LGBT issues may be a fear of controversy and upheaval in the school community (Weiler, 2003). Many school officials do not want to risk upsetting parents or community supporters. There is also enormous pressure on teachers to be well-liked by students and parents. This is disconcerting because, “the majority of antigay violence is perpetrated by young people who mistakenly assume all homosexual people have certain traits” (Frankfurt, 2000, p. 30). School professionals have the ability to deter a great deal of harassment and miscommunication simply by educating students about diversity and acceptance.

Fortunately, by educating their peers, students have been much more proactive than adults in their efforts to end harassment. Gay/straight alliances (GSAs) are groups that are created and run by students to provide support for sexual minority youth as well as education for all students about LGBT issues. All students, gay or straight, are welcome to join. The groups act as a safe place where LGBT students are welcome to be themselves (Frankfurt, 2000). For many students, the support that GSAs provide is life changing (Lee, 2002). GSAs are a sanctuary for students who deal with hostility and harassment each day at school. GSAs can also act as a catalyst for change and greater acceptance of LGBT students. Because many GSAs are dedicated to educating their peers, myths and stereotypes about LGBT individuals can be demolished by their efforts to create change.

GSAs can also have a powerful impact on other factors in the school environment. The following section will explore the possible impact that GSAs can have on aspects of school climate and student perceptions of school belonging. While there is a strong need

for more research on the school-wide influence of GSAs, a study by Griffin, Lee, Waugh and Beyer (2004) concluded that GSAs typically perform four roles in schools: (a) counseling and support; (b) creating a safe space; (c) raising awareness, providing education, and increasing visibility of LGBT issues; and (d) becoming part of larger school efforts for raising awareness and providing education to make school safe for LGBT students in school.

GSA's Influence on LGBT Youth

Szalacha (2003) calls GSAs, “the most potent forces for institutional change” (p. 3). GSAs can provide a number of supports and benefits for LGBT youth. Such supports and benefits range from enhanced self-esteem to new friendships to improved academic achievement. A 2003 climate survey by the Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Education Network (GLSEN) surveyed students from over 35 youth groups across the country dedicated to serving LGBT populations. The study found that when supportive LGBT resources were available in schools, not only did students do better academically; they were also much more likely to plan on attending college. This finding was supported by a qualitative study conducted by Lee (2002) who interviewed 12 LGBT youth involved in their school's GSA. Lee reported that several of the LGBT youth involved in her study had no plans of attending college before they joined their school's GSA, but soon after found themselves with the confidence and desire to do just that (2002). Lee further reported that attendance improved for most students involved in the GSA and that all of the participants reported a greater “sense of hope” for their educational future (p. 16).

Another benefit of GSAs is the amount of support that members receive from their peers. Many sexual minority youth report that peer support makes the most valuable difference in their lives (Frankfurt, 2000). Most LGBT youth feel completely alone and often incorrectly assume that they are the only gay student in their entire school (Lee, 2002). GSAs provide students with opportunities to practice age-appropriate social skills and meet other young people who are either just like themselves or accepting of them for who they are (Human Rights Watch, 2001). Lee (2002) describes many personal stories of young people whose lives have been changed for the better by GSAs. One student had this to say about her GSA experience:

This year, early on, I decided that I was going to come to school and not talk to anyone; not to see anyone; just go to school. It had been awful before when I didn't do that. And then, someone said there was going to be a meeting in Camille's room for organizing a GSA and I went to it. I came out feeling like 'I can do this!' I was really happy! (p. 18)

Nearly all of Lee's participants reported the joy they felt in making friends for the first time in their high school career. Not only did these students make friends with other members of their GSA, they also developed the confidence to make friends with other students in their classes. Several students reported new feelings of pride, identity, and self-acceptance just from being part of their school's GSA.

Perhaps one of the most significant benefits of GSAs is members' reported feelings of safety (Lee, 2002). "LGBT students in schools with GSAs were more likely to feel safe in school than students whose schools [did] not have a GSA" (GLSEN, 2003,

p. 5). Students reported building a “network of power” through their GSA that greatly reduced their feelings of fear (Lee, 2002). Students in Lee’s study reported hearing fewer homophobic remarks and experiencing no physical harassment. The students attributed this to the support they felt from their GSA. This finding is supported by Szalacha (2003) who affirms that many schools with GSAs report fewer anti-gay slurs.

SUMMARY

While it appears that GSAs are likely to promote positive climate and higher levels of school belonging, more research is needed to support this hypothesis. There is a palpable absence of literature pertaining to LGBT students and their needs at school in the literature. Szalacha (2003) suggests that heterosexual students in schools with GSAs are more comfortable with their sexual minority peers and more open to diversity in general. Lee (2002) found that schools with GSAs had fewer incidences of anti-gay slurs and homophobic remarks. Lee also found LGBT students to be more self-confident and comfortable at school when they were involved in their school's GSA. Weiler (2003) suggests that implementing a GSA is an effective intervention to improve a school's climate. While the data that has been collected thus far regarding sexual minority youth is small in size, it is tremendously vast in possibility for more momentous research to be collected. More research on this topic would not only lend support to past research efforts, it would bring much needed attention to the needs of sexual minority youth in today's school. Through pursuing this important topic in research, school psychologists and other professionals have the opportunity to create meaningful change in all school environments.

METHODS

Originally, this research sought to answer two questions. First, how does school climate differ between schools with and without gay/straight alliances (GSAs)? Second, how do lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students' perceptions of school belonging differ between schools with and without GSAs? IRB approval was obtained, survey materials were created, and applications to conduct research were completed and submitted for seven Midwestern school districts meeting search criteria (each district had to contain at least one high school with a GSA and one high school without). School districts were located throughout Iowa, in southern Minnesota and in Wisconsin. All seven districts contacted by this researcher declined to participate.

Explanations for refusal included, "We are currently in the process of re-analyzing our district policy regarding the inclusion of sexual orientation as a part of this policy." and "District administrators reviewed your proposal in the context of the District's mission and strategic goals. On that basis, your request has been denied." as well as, "The [15-minute, anonymous] survey would take too much time away from instruction." Other districts chose not to respond at all, despite follow-up calls from the researcher.

Due to this lack of participation, the research question had to change. The unwillingness of administrators to participate caused this researcher to question how other researchers have overcome this barrier of district reluctance. Or rather, have other researchers succeeded in obtaining consent to conduct research at all? Could it be that there is a lack of research pertaining to LGBT youth because it is so difficult to obtain

access to students? How much coverage are LGBT issues receiving in the school psychology research literature? All of these questions led to one more specific research question; how much research pertaining to sexual minority youth has been published over the last 15 years in journals of school psychology?

Materials

The researcher obtained a copy of every abstract from every research article published in two of the leading School Psychology research journals; *Journal of School Psychology* and *Psychology in the Schools* between the years of 1990-2005. Commentaries, product reviews and book reviews were not included in the study. A content analysis was conducted to identify the amount of coverage LGBT issues received in these two journals as well as which topic areas received the most exposure. This time frame, 1990-2005, was chosen because the first official high school GSA originated in Massachusetts in 1989 (Lipkin, 2004). This marked an important new beginning for acknowledging the presence of sexual minority youth in schools. Before this time period, LGBT youth were not recognized as a population in the schools. Therefore, there would likely be a lack of research on these students prior to 1990.

Procedure

Each abstract was coded for subject matter using a set of codes created by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). This original list of codes was created by NASP as a Topic Index Key that allowed members and other contributors to indicate what category their submitted articles and presentations fell into. While the original list consisted of 107 codes, the list used for this research was condensed down to

62. While the NASP index included separate assessment codes for academic, behavioral, cognitive, early childhood, environment and math, the researcher condensed these separate terms down to one universal code of assessment. A similar process was used to condense categories of intervention, progress monitoring and professional development.

While the majority of codes were condensed by combining similar descriptors into one generic code, certain descriptive categories were discarded due to lack of incidence or relevance. Topics that were removed from the list include; Creativity, Developmental Psychology, Emotion Regulation, Executive Functions and Positive Psychology. These were topics that either did not appear frequently in abstracts or seemed to be covered by other codes that were more pertinent. An example of categories that were combined into more general headings included the codes of Professional Issues, Supervision, Training of School Psychologists, Ethical and Legal Issues and Credentialing. All of these codes were combined into one larger category titled, Ethical, Legal and Professional Issues (ELP). Also, a number of codes were added to the NASP index. The code of At Risk Populations (ARP) was added because a large number of abstracts made reference to at-risk populations without defining the type of individuals, making it difficult to accurately code the population. The code of Behavior/Emotional Disorders (BED) was created to account for the large number of articles pertaining to children with behavior and conduct disorders. Finally, the category of Speech and Language (SPL) was created to account for the growing number of articles addressing the specific speech and language needs of children. A complete listing of codes and definitions used is provided in Appendix A.

Abstracts could receive any number of codes, as long as the code pertained to a major theme of the article. For example, a code of “assessment” would not be given if an abstract merely mentioned using an assessment tool within the article. However, if an abstract discussed an investigation into the merits of a specific assessment tool and how that tool assessed ADHD, the article would be coded for assessment and ADHD. Any abstract that discussed findings or research questions pertaining to a specific race, gender, or at-risk population was coded as such. For example, if the title of an article was “Assessment tools for adolescent boys with ADHD,” the article would be coded as assessment, gender, and ADHD.

Descriptors were only used in reference to youth and school psychologists. For example, articles pertaining to teacher stress or teacher anxiety would not be given a code of anxiety. Rather, it would be considered a professional concern and given a code of ELP for ethical, legal or professional issues. Likewise, articles pertaining to parent anxiety or mental illness would not be given a code of anxiety or mental illness, but would be coded as family, because the main focus of the research is the child. One goal of this research was to keep the central focus on youth in schools. Because the work of school psychologists is focused on meeting the best interest of the child, the researcher was interested in identifying which topics pertaining to youth were being researched, not topics pertaining to parents and teachers.

Data Analysis

A database containing each of the 62 codes was created. As each abstract was coded, each article and accompanying code(s) was entered into the database. Once every article

was coded and entered into the database, a frequency count was conducted to identify which topic areas received the most and least coverage over the time span. The amount of coverage that each topic received was compared with the amount of coverage that sexual minority youth received. Graphs depicting the amount of coverage each code received are provided in Tables 1 and 2.

RESULTS

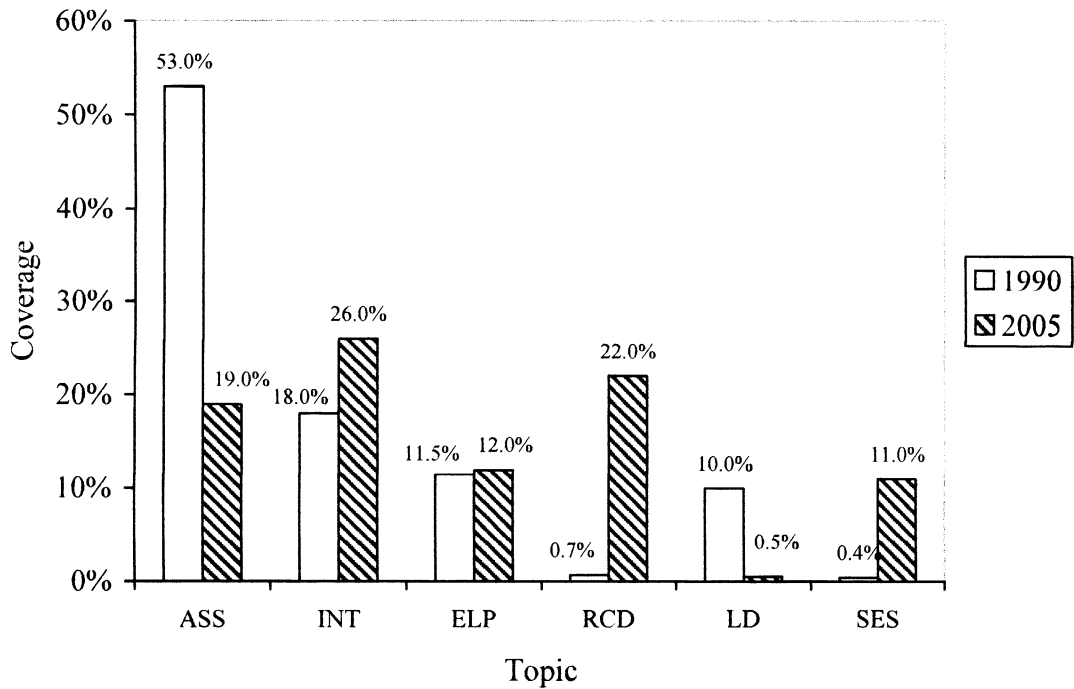
In total 1,126 research articles were coded. The topic areas receiving the greatest amount of coverage were Assessment (coded in 31% of articles) and Intervention (coded in 23% of all articles). Sexual Minority Youth was covered in only 0.4% of the articles. The topics of Adoption, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Self Injurious Behavior received no coverage. Only seven other topics received less coverage than Sexual Minority Youth including; Eating Disorders (0.3%), Homelessness (0.3%), Job Satisfaction (0.3%), Positive Behavior Support (0.3%), Progress Monitoring (0.3%), Suicide (0.1%) and Traumatic Brain Injury (0.3%). A visual representation of the distribution appears in Tables 1 through 3.

Table 1

Topic Areas Receiving the Most Coverage from 1990-2005

Topic Area	# of articles covered	% of articles covered
Assessment	349	31%
Intervention	256	23%
Ethical, Legal & Professional	148	13%
Race & Cultural Diversity	143	12%
Gender	101	9%
Family	95	8.5%
Learning Disability	90	8%
Behavior/Emotional Disorders	85	7.5%
Social Competence	83	7.5%
Special Education Procedures & Issues	70	6%
Socioeconomic Status	69	6%

Table 2

Topics Receiving the Most Coverage in 1990 vs. 2005

Note. ASS = Assessment, INT = Intervention, ELP = Ethical, Legal and Professional Issues, RCD = Race and Cultural Diversity, LD = Learning disability, SES = Socioeconomic Status.

Table 3

Numbers and Proportions of Topic Coverage Between 1990-2005

Topic	# of Articles Covered	% of Articles Covered
Abuse	10	0.9%
ADHD	49	4.4%
Adoption	0	0%
Alternative Schools	5	0.4%
Anxiety	12	1.1%
Assessment	349	31%
At Risk Populations	44	3.9%
Autism Spectrum	10	0.9%
Behavior/Emotional Disorders	85	7.5%
Bullying	6	0.5%
Community	6	0.5%
Consultation	39	3.5%
Counseling	11	1%
Crisis Intervention	7	0.6%
Curriculum-Based Assessment	21	1.9%
Depression	14	1.2%
Dropout	19	1.7%

(table continues)

Early Childhood	59	5.2%
Eating Disorders	3	0.3%
English Language Learners	17	1.5%
Ethical, Legal & Professional	148	13.1%
Families	95	8.4%
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome	0	0%
Gender	101	9%
Gifted & Talented	21	1.9%
Homelessness	3	0.3%
Inclusion	9	0.8%
Interventions	256	22.7%
Intervention Teams	4	0.4%
Job Satisfaction	3	0.3%
Learning Disabilities	90	8%
Mental Health Issues	50	4.4%
Memory	9	0.8%
Mental Retardation	23	2%
Motivation	15	1.3%
Physical Health	34	3%
Positive Behavior Supports	3	0.3%
Prevention	55	4.9%

(table continues)

Progress Monitoring	3	0.3%
Psychopharmacology	11	1%
Race & Cultural Diversity	143	12.7%
Research Methods	8	0.7%
Retention	27	2.4%
School Adjustment	42	3.7%
Social Competence	83	7.4%
School Discipline	9	0.8%
Self Concept	51	4.5%
Self-Injurious Behavior	0	0%
Service Delivery Models	6	0.5%
Sexual Minority Youth	4	0.4%
Social Support	25	2.2%
Socioeconomic Status	69	6.1%
Special Education Procedures	70	6.2%
& Issues		
Speech and Language	16	1.4%
Student Teacher Relationships	28	2.5%
Substance Use & Abuse	7	0.6%
Suicide	1	0.1%
Systems Issues & Variables	18	1.6%

(table continues)

Technology	5	0.4%
Traumatic Brain Injury	3	0.3%
Violence	42	3.7%
Vision & Hearing Impairment	5	0.4%

DISCUSSION

These results reflect the responsibilities and priorities of authors and publishers in the field of school psychology. It is not surprising that assessment and interventions are the most common themes in school psychology research literature because these tasks make up the majority of school psychologist's daily responsibilities. It is interesting to observe the discrepancy between coverage of these areas in 1990 versus 2005. Assessment coverage declined from 53% to 19% while intervention increased in coverage from 18% to 28%. These differences parallel the field of school psychology. The emphasis on assessment tools has decreased over the years while the use of interventions to address the needs of students with disabilities has increased. Other interesting discrepancies included a sharp decrease in coverage of learning disabilities and a visible increase in coverage of socioeconomic status.

Of the 1,126 articles that were coded, only 4 included coverage of sexual minority youth. All four of these articles were in the journal *Psychology in the Schools*. The *Journal of School Psychology* contained no coverage of LGBT issues. All four of the articles covering LGBT issues were published between 2002 and 2005. Of these four articles, only one included the use of actual student data. The other three articles were based on surveys of adults regarding their knowledge and attitudes about gay students. The fact that there has only been one article in fifteen years that has included student perception data may support the contention that it is very difficult to obtain entry into schools.

Perhaps there needs to be more dialogue between researchers about why this difficulty exists and what can be done to overcome it. Why is this research so important in the field of school psychology? What kind of insights can be provided by investigating a newly visible minority group trying to succeed in today's schools? While the theme of marginal populations trying to gain acceptance and equality in a school system is not new, the variables are. The school environment is so much more complex today than it ever was in the past. Students are facing more serious emotional issues, family discord and peer pressure. Advances in technology have changed the way that young people interact and schools operate. If researchers could explore this new culture and how marginalized groups flourish or flounder in it, a major difference could be made in the lives of all young people.

School psychologists should not be afraid of breaking down the barriers that deter such important research from taking place. Further, because it is the responsibility of school psychologists to protect the rights and welfare of all young people served, it is imperative that students of all backgrounds be included in the research literature. It is not about singling out individual groups of young people as much as it is about uniting efforts to meet the needs of all students. By understanding what works to meet the needs of different groups, researchers and educators can better serve students as a whole. If everyone works together, barriers can be broken down and bridges towards more open and supportive school communities can be built. School psychologists can and should lead the way.

Future Research Needs

An important question that should be addressed in future research is; Why is it so difficult to gain access to student perception data in schools? Could it be that the very laws that protect students' rights are the ones that are keeping students' voices from being heard? Federal regulations governing the protection of children and adolescents in the conduct of research mandate the informed consent of parents or legal guardians prior to participation in a study. Is this amount of "red tape" intimidating to school board members who grant access to researchers? How many hoops must school districts jump through before they can allow researchers access to their schools? With the ever-changing federal and state regulations and mandates, schools may be nervous about allowing any non-government funded research to take place in their schools.

Or is it not a matter of legality at all? Could the level of difficulty in gaining access to students be due to the sensitive subject matter of sexual minority youth? If a study of similar design and survey-length, but a different research question were presented to the same seven school districts, would access to students be as difficult to obtain? Perhaps the public opinion of parents and community supporters is the biggest deterrent of all. Schools may be more afraid of parent reactions and complaints than the "time away from instruction."

A final hypothesis is that school districts are afraid of the results they may find. After all, one school administrator felt that if gay and lesbian issues were not discussed, students would not be persuaded to become gay or lesbian in the first place (Frankfurt, 2000). Their perception may be that issues are less costly and bothersome if they are

never recognized. If schools found out that students fare better academically when support groups and clubs are made available to them, schools would have to find a way to pay for and provide this service. If school administrators are not told the number of students in their schools who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning, they can go on believing that there are no students dealing with such issues at their schools. If a problem does not exist, then a solution does not have to either.

CONCLUSION

In the end, one conclusion that can be drawn from this research is that there is an overall need for education about sexual minority youth. As psychologists, researchers and educators, it is our job to provide that education. What better source of knowledge is there than students themselves? By conducting and publishing research we can start a domino affect of knowledge sharing. Ignorance is intolerance's best ally and only by sharing facts and dispelling myths and stereotypes can one overcome ignorance.

Historically, schools have been influential leaders in the acceptance and appreciation of diversity in schools (Szalacha, 2003). However, there is a general lack of information regarding homosexuality in schools, a disturbing fact when education may be the key to establishing a more accepting and fostering learning environment for today's youth. "The majority of antigay violence is perpetrated by young people who mistakenly assume all homosexual people have certain traits" (Frankfurt, 2000, p. 30). If these myths are not being distilled at home, it is up to teachers and administrators to foster more educated decision-making at school.

Researchers should continue to move forward to address the needs of LGBT youth. There is a need to investigate the complexities of conducting research in schools. What policies and procedures are in place to allow students to participate in educational research? How can schools and researchers work together rather than against one another to improve the learning environments for all students? Turning our backs on this population of young people is not an option. An example of awareness and dedication towards a common good needs to be set for other researchers and educators to follow. At

a time when American politics insist that we *leave no child behind*, let us recognize how important it is to leave no child's needs unmet or identity unacknowledged.

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APPENDIX A

Index of Codes Used

Code	Topic	Definition
ABS	Abuse	Any type of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse.
ADD	ADHD	Any combination of Attention Deficit/Hyperactive Disorder.
ADP	Adoption	Any articles pertaining to children who are adopted.
AS	Alternative Schools	Residential treatment facilities, schools for gifted and talented youth, hospital or shelter schools.
ANX	Anxiety	Any type of anxiety disorder, including school anxiety.
ASS	Assessment	Any form of assessment, including academic, behavioral, physical, cognitive and environmental.
ARP	At Risk Populations	Any population designated within an article as “at risk.”
AUT	Autism Spectrum	Any disorder within the autism spectrum, such as Asperger’s.
BED	Behavior/Emotional Disorders	Behavior & emotional disorders such as conduct, oppositional defiant, antisocial and borderline personality disorders.
BLY	Bullying	Behaviors labeled as “bullying” such as chronic teasing and fight-picking.
COM	Community	Issues related to child-community interactions or community resources.
CON	Consultation	Includes consultation with parents, teachers or other colleagues.
CNS	Counseling	Includes group as well as one-on-one counseling with students.

(table continues)

CI	Crisis Intervention	Any form of crisis counseling, training, action, or debriefing.
CBA	Curriculum-Based Assessment	Includes curriculum based assessment, measurement (CBM) and evaluation (CBE).
DEP	Depression	Any form of clinical depression such as dysthymia, major depression or bipolar disorder.
DO	Dropout	High school dropout.
EC	Early Childhood	Issues pertaining to infancy through pre-Kindergarten.
ED	Eating Disorder	Bulimia, anorexia, binge disorder, laxative abuse.
ELL	English Language Learners	Students who come from homes in which English is not the primary language spoken.
ELP	Ethical, Legal & Professional	Training, laws, ethics and professional development pertaining to school psychologists.
FAM	Families	Family-related issues affecting youth such as parent involvement, sibling/parent health, divorce etc.
FAS	Fetal Alcohol Syndrome	Children born with FAS or FAS spectrum disorders.
GEN	Gender	Articles pertaining to gender-specific issues, results or studies.
GT	Gifted & Talented	Children who are labeled as gifted & talented, as well as GT programming.
HOM	Homelessness	Issues related to children who are living on the streets or in shelters.
INC	Inclusion	Issues, research and debate regarding inclusion or mainstreaming.
INT	Interventions	Includes behavioral, academic, cognitive & social interventions for students.

(table continues)

IT	Intervention Teams	Teams of professionals that work together to create, implement, and progress-monitor interventions.
JS	Job Satisfaction	School Psychologist's job satisfaction.
LD	Learning Disabilities	Disorders that affect a child's ability to acquire, decode, organize and/or understand new information.
MHI	Mental Health Issues	Broad category including rare or low-incident mental illnesses that do not fit into the other categories.
MEM	Memory	Issues related to children's long or short-term memory.
MR	Mental Retardation	Issues related to students with mental retardation or Down's Syndrome.
MOV	Motivation	Students' motivation to excel or engage in school.
PH	Physical Health	Health promotion in schools as well as student's physical illnesses such as Cancer and AIDS.
PBS	Positive Behavior Support	Positive discipline programs carried out by schools.
PRE	Prevention	Actions and interventions designed to prevent negative behaviors, learning patterns, or health issues.
PM	Progress Monitoring	Monitoring and follow-up conducted to assess success of interventions.
RX	Psychopharmacology	Medications used to help control symptoms of emotional and behavior disorders as well as mental illness in youth.
RCD	Race & Cultural Diversity	Research findings and issues related to specific racial and/or cultural groups.
RM	Research Methods	Methods school psychologists use to conduct and report research.
RT	Retention	Issues and research regarding grade retention as an intervention.

(table continues)

SA	School Adjustment	Issues related to transitioning into school and between grades or school buildings.
SC	Social Competence	Social skills or relationship building between students.
SD	School Discipline	Discipline programs used by schools or individual classrooms.
SEL	Self Concept	Issues related to students' self-esteem, self-control or self-image.
SIB	Self-Injurious Behavior	Any form of bodily harm a student takes upon themselves.
SDM	Service Delivery Models	Models for providing special education services to students, such as RTI, Problem Solving or GEI.
SMY	Sexual Minority Youth	Issues or research pertaining to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth.
SSP	Social Support	Support students receive from community, friends & family.
SES	Socioeconomic Status	A student's social and economic standing in the community.
SPI	Special Education Procedures & Issues	Paperwork, legalities, and issues related to special education such as individualized education plans, least restrictive environments, and providing a continuum of services.
SPL	Speech & Language	Issues directly related to speech and language services.
STR	Student Teacher Relationships	Relationships and interactions between students and teachers.
SUB	Substance Use & Abuse	Drug and alcohol abuse as well as cigarette smoking among youth.
SUC	Suicide	Suicide, prevention, and professional procedures.
SYS	Systems Issues & Variables	Systems-level or school-level issues that affect students and school programs.

(table continues)

TEC	Technology	Technology use within interventions and special education services.
TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury	Students living with the various effects of traumatic brain injuries.
VLC	Violence	Violence at school, within the home or in the media and its affect on youth.
VHI	Vision & Hearing Impairment	Students who are vision-impaired, blind, deaf, or hearing impaired.
