INCLUSIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE AS A PROTECTIVE FACTOR FOR LGBTQ YOUTH

by

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As members of the Dissertation Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by Colleen Corcoran, titled Inclusive School Climate as a Protective Factor for LGBTQ Youth and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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ABSTRACT

Bullying continues to be a significant public health issue disproportionally impacting LGBTQ youth. Bullying is one of many factors contributing to this population's increased risk for several adverse physical, social, psychological, and academic outcomes. LGBTQ inclusive school practices have been identified as a potential point of prevention and intervention, leading to decreased victimization and increased reporting behaviors. While extant literature has illustrated the impact of individual school policies and practices, more work is needed to understand the cumulative effect of an LGBTQ inclusive school climate. The current study explored the impact of an LGBTQ inclusive school climate, as defined as the presence of an LGBTQ student organization and inclusive dress code, anti-discrimination policy, and anti-bullying policy, on student victimization experiences, reporting behaviors, and adjustment. The study investigated the climates of nine individual schools with a total of 2,571 participants. Results indicated that LGBTQ youth continue to report high levels of victimization and that victimization experiences are associated with poorer adjustment. An LGBTQ inclusive school climate, however, was not found to moderate the relationship between LGBTQ youth victimization and negative adjustment. Total school climate score was found, however, to predict homo/transprejudice attitudes, with more inclusive school climates associated with less prejudice attitudes. This study provided invaluable insights into the experiences of LGBTQ youth and the role of school climate. Future directions for further clarification of the elements of an inclusive school climate to support LGBTQ youth were also provided.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Adolescent members of the LGBTQ community are at increased risk for several adverse physical, social, psychological, and academic outcomes (Connolly et al., 2016; Human Rights Campaign, 2018; Kann et al., 2018). While the exact prevalence is unknown, extant literature suggests that 10-15% of adolescents identify at LGBTQ (Kann et al., 2018; Sadler et al., 2018). This population engages in increased risk-taking behaviors (Kann et al., 2018) and reports higher rates of substance use (Birkett et al., 2009; Donahue et al., 2017), depression (Human Rights Campaign, 2018), self-harm, and suicidality (Guz et al., 2020; McKay et al., 2019). Furthermore, LGBTQ youth report higher truancy and dropout rates and lower academic achievement than their peers (Birkett et al., 2014; Fenaughty et al., 2019). It has been postulated that the adverse outcomes associated with adolescents' LGBTQ group membership are in part due to school-based adversity such as bullying, discriminatory policies and practices, and lack of adult support (Black et al., 2012; Dessel et al., 2017; Kosciw et al., 2018). Bullying in schools continues to disproportionately affect LGBTQ youth compared to their heterosexual and cisgender peers (Berger et al., 2019; Donahue et al., 2017), and when victimized on their school campus, LGBTQ youth are also less likely than their non-LGBTQ peers to report the incident to an adult (Bauman et al., 2016; Crothers et al., 2017). Prior research suggests that discriminatory school climates are associated with increased bullying and decreased reporting behaviors (Berger et al., 2019; Kosciw et al., 2018). The purpose of this study is to investigate school characteristics associated with LGBTQ youths' victimization experiences.

While there have been several social advancements for LGBTQ individuals in the last five years, schools continue to be largely discriminatory spaces for LGBTQ youth, with LGBTQ

topics often omitted from the curriculum (Elia & Eliason, 2010), access to gender-affirming bathrooms limited (Bradlow et al., 2017), and gender binary ascribing dress codes enforced (Human Rights Campaign, 2018). Furthermore, most students report that their schools' antibullying and anti-discrimination policies do not specify LGBTQ individuals as a protected class (Kosciw et al., 2018). When schools have positive, supportive, and LGBTQ affirming practices, LGBTQ youth report more positive school climates (Saewyc et al., 2014), a greater sense of safety on campus (Kull et al., 2016), and better mental health outcomes (Chesir-Teran & Hughes, 2009; Hall, 2017; Hatzenbuehler & Keyes, 2013). LGBTQ inclusive school practices have also been associated with decreased victimization and increased reporting behaviors (Berger et al., 2019; Kosciw et al., 2018). While extant literature has illustrated the impact of individual school policies and practices, more work is needed to understand such factors' cumulative effect on school climate as a whole. Moreover, despite an improving climate for sexual and gender minority individuals, LGBTQ youth continue to be at increased risk for several negative outcomes, necessitating continued research to identify protective factors (Kosciw et al., 2018).

Theoretical Framework

In this study, LGBTQ students' adjustment is viewed through the lens of the Bio-ecological Model of Human Development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), which highlights the importance of viewing individual experiences in context. Within this framework, an individual is considered in nested and interacting contexts. Those systems in the child's immediate environment with which they interact directly, such as their family and school, make up the microsystem. The interactions between these systems comprise the mesosystem, those factors exerting an indirect impact of the child fall in the exosystem, and social and cultural

norms make up the macrosystem. Furthermore, the chronosystem includes changes over time (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). For LGBTQ youth, discrimination can be found in any number of these systems. Students' macrosystem includes a heteronormative and gender binary ascribing culture and many LGBTQ students' home microsystems lack support (Human Rights Campaign, 2018; Grossman et al., 2019; Montano et al., 2018). Furthermore, as illustrated by the interaction-based mesosystem, norms and ideas in the macrosystem and the beliefs of individual families in the community impact school practices.

Central to the bio-ecological theory is the focus on an individual's perception of their environment (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). According to the Systems View of School Climate (SVSC) framework (Rudasill et al.,2018), school climate is one element impacting the school microsystem. Because school climate is based on individual student perceptions, it is also necessary to consider the needs of specific populations. Specific subgroups have unique experiences of the elements of and interactions between their various systems, described as ecological niches (Bronfenbrenner, 1992). Due to the unique ecological niche experienced by LGBTQ youth, additional considerations must be made when discussing school climate for this population. Extant literature has suggested that an authoritative school climate, one that is high in structure and support, best supports student adjustment (Gregory et al., 2010). Due to the specific needs of LGBTQ youth, school climates must go beyond the general authoritative approach and address the unique needs of this ecological niche (Day et al., 2020; Kosciw et al., 2018). Drawing from these theoretical frameworks, this study proposes that LGBTQ youth require a positive school environment and an inclusive school climate with LGBTQ specific structure and support for their school adjustment. In the current study, an inclusive school climate is defined as one with LGBTQ specific anti-bullying and discrimination policies, a dress code that allows for

variance in gender expression, and an LGBTQ youth organization. This study will investigate these school level characteristics and their relations to youths' victimization experiences, reporting behaviors, and adjustment.

LGBTQ Youth Adjustment

LGBTQ youth are at increased risk for a broad range of adverse social, psychological, physical, and academic outcomes (Connolly et al., 2016; Gattamorta et al., 2019; Huang et al., 2018; Human Rights Campaign, 2018; Kann et al., 2018, Marshal et al., 2011). They are more likely than their peers to use tobacco products, alcohol, and drugs (Birkett et al., 2009; Donahue et al., 2017; Kann et al., 2018), and engage in sexual risk-taking behaviors (Dermody et al., 2020; Kann et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2017). LGBTQ youth also report higher rates of mental health diagnoses, particularly those including depressive symptoms (Guz et al., 2020; Donahue et al., 2017; Human Rights Campaign, 2018; Kann et al.,2018; McKay et al., 2019; Sadler et al., 2018; Wei & Liu, 2019). Alarmingly, the discrepancy in suicidality between LGBTQ and heterosexual and cisgender adolescents is particularly pronounced, with LGBTQ youth more than twice as likely as their peers to have contemplated or attempted suicide (Chakraborty et al., 2011; Kann et al., 2018; McKay et al., 2019; Stone et al., 2014). Rates of suicidality are most significant among gender variant youth (Guz et al., 2020; Li et al., 2016), with suicide attempt rates as high as 40% reported (Irwin et al., 2014). Furthermore, LGBTQ youth experience diminished academic outcomes, reporting poorer grade point averages, higher truancy rates, and lower academic intentions (Aragon et al., 2014; Birkett et al., 2014; Day et al., 2018; Fenaughty et al., 2019; Human Rights Campaign, 2018; Kosciw et al., 2018; Robinson & Espelage, 2011). These adverse outcomes are even more marked in individuals reporting multiple minority identities (Gattamorta et al., 2019).

Despite rhetoric indicating things have gotten better, data on the state of health and social outcomes for LGBTQ youth continue to vary. Moreover, longitudinal trends are difficult to analyze due to the scarcity of data on LGBTQ adolescents before 2010. Concerning substance use, the literature suggests that use has decreased for all adolescents; however, the disparity in use between sexual and gender minority and sexual and gender majority youth has grown (Fish & Baams, 2018; Watson et al., 2018). One study indicated that since 2010, suicidal ideation in LGBTQ youth has increased, while the rate of suicide attempts has remained consistent (Phillips et al., 2020). Per a large-scale Canadian study, feelings of sadness reported by sexual minority youth increased from 1998 to 2013 (Watson et al., 2018). During this period, the disparity in feelings of sadness between LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ youth also widened. However, other research indicates that self-harm decreased in sexual minority youth from 2008 to 2013 (Watson et al., 2018). While extant literature presents mixed findings, prevalence rate and disparities illuminate that LGBTQ youth continue to be at-risk for a number of negative outcomes. Thus, more work is needed to identify the variables contributing to poor outcomes as well as the variables that protect LGBTQ youth from those poor outcomes

Bullying and LGBTQ Youth

Bullying has been identified as a factor contributing to poor adjustment in LGBTQ youth. LGBTQ adolescents experience significantly higher rates of victimization than their peers, as evidenced by peer-report, teacher-report (Crothers et al., 2017), and self-report (Berger et al., 2019; California et al., 2018; Donahue et al., 2017; Human Rights Campaign, 2018; Kosciw et al., 2018; Toomey & Russell, 2016). A majority of LGBTQ have experienced victimization in the prior year, with verbal aggression rates as high as 80% reported. Furthermore, per the

National School Climate Survey, one in six LGBTQ students has been physically assaulted on their school campus in the previous year (Kosciw et al., 2018).

Heightened victimization is one of the many factors negatively impacting LGBTQ youth adjustment. Bullying has been associated with many negative physical, social, academic, and psychological outcomes for all adolescents (Baly et al., 2014; Collier et al., 2013; Poteat et al., 2011). However, the relationship between victimization experiences and adverse health and social outcomes is particularly pronounced among LGBTQ youth (Aragon et al., 2014; Collier et al., 2013). For LGBTQ adolescents, prior victimization experiences have been associated with higher rates of alcohol and marijuana use (Birkett et al., 2009) and depression and suicidality (Birkett et al., 2009; Button et al., 2012; Kosciw et al., 2018). Furthermore, LGBTQ students who have been bullied report lower attendance, grade point averages, school belonging, and academic intention (Aragon et al., 2014; Bouris et al., 2016; Kosciw et al., 2018; Robinson & Espelage, 2011). Extant literature has indicated that childhood victimization experiences mediate the relationship between sexual minority status and poorer health and educational outcomes (Andersen et al., 2015; Brain et al., 2016; Kosciw et al., 2018; Robinson & Espelage, 2011).

Due to the well documented negative outcomes associated, efforts have been made to decrease bullying in schools. An authoritative school climate, with high levels of structure and support (Gregory et al., 2010), has been identified as a largely effective schoolwide intervention (Cornell & Huang, 2016; Cornell et al., 2015; Gregory et al., 2010; Thornberg et al., 2017). Unfortunately, the differential experiences of LGBTQ youth are not always considered in large scale studies aimed at decreasing bullying behaviors. Therefore, these efforts may not have the intended impact on LGBTQ based victimization, possibly due to the differential perception of school climate reported by LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ students. LGBTQ youth generally report

less supportive school environments than their non-LGBTQ peers (Black et al., 2012; Chesir-Teran & Hughes, 2009; Day et al., 2020; Kosciw et al., 2018). Given LGBTQ youths' unique ecological niche, general school climate interventions are likely not enough to curb the elevated rates of victimization experienced by sexual and gender minority youth, necessitating the need for an inclusive school climate.

Data concerning the effectiveness of antibullying interventions to date are variable. Some studies found a decrease in LGBTQ specific victimization (Kosciw et al., 2018), and others suggested modest improvements (Goodenow et al., 2016), whereas some studies found an increase in LGBTQ specific victimization (Murchison et al., 2019). Per Kosciw et al. (2018), results of the National School Climate Survey indicate total LGBTQ victimization has been decreasing over the last 20 years. In the area of verbal bullying, compared to student reports in 2007, students in 2017 reported verbal harassment based on sexual orientation and gender expression at nearly half the rate (Kosciw et al., 2018). According to a study using data from Massachusetts, LGBTQ victimization rates are greater now than they were in the 1990s (Murchison et al., 2019). Alternatively, Goodenow et al. (2016) found a modest improvement, with LGBTQ bullying rates decreasing from 42% in 2019 to 34% in 2015 and missing school due to safety concerns reducing from 25% in 1995 to 13% in 2015. While findings are mixed, it is clear that interventions to date have not adequately addressed the specific needs of LGBTQ youth. Additional work is needed to identify effective antibullying interventions to protect this at-risk group. The scarcity of research in this area may be in part due to a widespread misunderstanding of the prevalence rate of LGBTQ victimization. One factor contributing to underestimated prevalence is the under-reporting of LGBTQ bullying.

LGBTQ Adolescents' Reporting Behaviors

Bullying behaviors are most likely to occur in under supervised areas (Fite et al., 2013), making student reporting a critical component of adult prevention and intervention efforts (Berger et al., 2019). However, most instances of bullying are not reported to adults (deLara, 2012; Frisen et al., 2008; Petrosino et al., 2010; Ybarra et al., 2006), with reporting even less likely if the victim is a sexual or gender minority (Bauman et al., 2016; Berger et al., 2017; Crothers et al., 2017; Kosciw et al., 2018). Commonly cited reasons for lack of reporting behaviors in LGBTQ youth include discomfort with school staff, uncertainty regarding how it will be addressed, fear of being outed, and lack of confidence that the notified adult will take action (Kosciw et al., 2018).

An inclusive school climate, with LGBTQ specific teacher support and clearly enforced policies, has been associated with increased reporting behavior among sexual and gender minority students. Berger et al. (2019) found that LGBTQ youth are more likely to report victimization experiences to an adult if they have observed them correcting prior homophobic behavior. Unfortunately, approximately half of both students and school psychologists report that they have heard a school staff member make a homophobic comment (Kosciw et al., 2018; McCabe et al., 2013), likely impacting students' comfort reporting victimization experiences (Berger et al., 2017). Additionally, LGBTQ youth are more likely to report victimization if an inclusive antibullying policy is in place (Berger et al., 2017; Berger et al., 2019; Kosciw et al., 2018). However, only 13% of students indicate that their campuses have a comprehensive policy that explicitly protects individuals from bullying and harassment based on their sexual orientation or gender identity (Kosciw et al., 2018).

Students report that adults' responses are rarely effective, even when LGBTQ bullying is reported. Over half of LGBTQ students indicated that teachers did not take action when they reported instances of victimization. Moreover, one in five were encouraged to modify their own behavior to prevent future bullying (Kosciw et al., 2018). Despite intervention efforts and improving societal acceptance, frequency of reporting and effectiveness of adult responses have not shown significant improvement. The rate of LGBTQ bullying reporting has been approximately 20% since 2003. Similarly, the effectiveness of reporting has shown little improvement since 2007, with only approximately one-third of LGBTQ youth indicating that staff responses were effective (Kosciw et al., 2018). Considering that LGBTQ youth are at significantly increased risk for victimization and are less likely than their peers to report said victimization, it is critical to identify the variables impacting their reporting behaviors. Thorough investigations of school level characteristics and their impact on reporting behavior among LGBTQ youth are currently lacking in the literature.

School Climate for LGBTQ Youth

Due to the complex and widespread nature of bullying on school campuses, school climate has been identified as a natural point of intervention. Extant literature suggests that an authoritative school climate may be useful in mitigating this issue. An authoritative school climate is one that is both highly structured, with consistently enforced rules, and highly supportive, with caring, trustworthy, and respectful teachers (Gregory et al., 2010). The positive effects of such an environment on general peer victimization have been well documented (Cornell & Huang, 2016; Cornell et al., 2015; Gage, Prykanowski & Larson, 2014; Gregory et al., 2010; Thornberg et al., 2017). When bullying occurs in an authoritative school climate, students are more likely to seek teacher support (Yablon, 2010) and engage in defending

behaviors such as reporting (Thornberg et al., 2018). Moreover, some research has indicated that an authoritative school climate mitigates the relationship between victimization experiences and adverse outcomes (Davidson & Demaray, 2007; Yeung & Leadbearer, 2010).

Perceptions of school climate are subjective, however, impacted by student characteristics and experiences. Given the distinct experiences of LGBTQ students and their ecological niche, the relations among an authoritative school climate, bullying, and student outcomes for this population require further consideration. LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ youth differ in their school climate perceptions, with more negative and unsupportive climates reported by LGBTQ youth (Black et al., 2012; Chesir-Teran & Hughes, 2009; Day et al., 2020; Kosciw et al., 2018). However, not all studies have found this discrepancy (Birkett et al., 2009). School climate has been identified as a possible factor moderating the relationship between LGBTQ group membership and adverse outcomes (Birkett et al., 2009; Hatzenbuehler et al., 2014; Wei & Liu, 2019). Due to their unique needs, LGBTQ youth require an inclusive school climate with LGBTQ specific support and structure within a broader positive school climate such as an authoritative school climate.

Social Support Through LGBTQ Youth Organizations

A supportive environment is a hallmark of an authoritative school climate. Social support has been identified as a mitigating factor, buffering students from the adverse outcomes associated with victimization (Bonanno & Hymel, 2010; Boulton et al., 2013). For LGBTQ youth, sexuality and gender specific social support, such as that found in an inclusive school climate, is required to adequately meet their needs. Furthermore, due to the often-diminished support received at home (Human Rights Campaign, 2018; Grossman et al., 2019; Montano et al., 2018; Wilson, Zeng & Blackburn, 2011), school-based social support may be particularly

impactful for LGBTQ youth (Johnson & Gastic, 2015; Koswic et al., 2018). School-based adult

support has been associated with several positive outcomes. When LGBTQ youth can identify

adult allies on their school campus they report, greater school engagement (Seelman et al., 2015),

higher self-esteem (Dessel et al., 2017), better GPAs (Kosciw et al., 2018), less victimization,

and decreased suicidality (Goodenow et al., 2006). Demonstrating the importance of a climate of

adult support (Yoon et al., 2020), findings were more pronounced when students reported more

and varied sources of school-based adult support (Kosciw et al., 2018; Seelman et al., 2015).

Moreover, the impact of LGBTQ adult allyship and lack of homophobic language has been

associated with improved self-esteem for LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ students (Dessel et al.,

2017), further illustrating the impact of adult LGBTQ support on total school climate. Despite

the documented benefits of a climate of adult support, most LGBTQ students cannot identify ten

or more adult allies on their school campus, and approximately a third of students can only

identify five or fewer (Kosciw et al., 2018).

While ally-identified adults play a crucial role, LGBTQ youth report that peer support is

more valuable (Doty et al., 2010; Watson et al., 2015). Encouragingly, peer acceptance of

LGBTQ students has been steadily increasing from 2009 to 2015; however, reported acceptance

decreased slightly from 2015 to 2017 (Koswic et al., 2018). Although general peer support is

helpful, sexuality, specific encouragement, and acceptance have been identified as the most

valuable support received (Doty et al., 2010). This fact underscores the importance of sexuality

specific youth organizations, such as Gender Sexuality Alliances (GSA). Such clubs provide a

space for LGBTQ youth and their allies to learn, share, connect, engage in advocacy, and support

one another (Griffin et al., 2004). GSAs are a space in which students can receive sexuality

specific adult and peer support. GSAs have been steadily increasing in prevalence on school

campuses. In 2001, only approximately 10% of campuses were reported to have GSAs; in 2017, nearly 60% of campuses provide access to a GSA (Kosciw et al., 2018). GSA organizations profoundly impact LGBTQ students' school experiences. The presence of a GSA is associated with less victimization, homophobic language, drug use, and suicidality, and increased peer support, feelings of safety and belonging on campus, and involvement in social justice activities (Day et al., 2020; Goodenow et al., 2006; Heck et al., 2014; Kosciw et al., 2018; Toomey & Russell, 2013; Walls et al., 2010). Furthermore, some of these effects have been demonstrated when investigating the presence of a GSA, regardless of student participation (Heck et al., 2014), suggesting a relationship between the existence of a GSA and a more global positive school climate for LGBTQ youth (Chesir-Teran & Hughes, 2009). However, not all studies have supported the relationships between a GSA's presence and decreased victimization and student mental health needs (Colvin et al., 2019; Poteat et al., 2013). It has been suggested that the size, structure, visibility, and activity of a GSA may impact these relationships (Poteat et al., 2016; Seelman et al., 2015). More work is needed to clarify the protective impact of sexuality specific school organizations. Furthermore, despite GSAs' proliferation, negative outcomes for LGBTQ youth persist, suggesting that sexuality specific organizations may not be enough to buffer against these adverse outcomes.

Policies

Consistently enforced rules are another critical component of an inclusive climate. For rules to be consistently enforced, they must first be clarified in school policies. Antibullying policies are a commonly used strategy to reduce victimization rates on school campuses; however, their efficacy is unclear (Gower et al., 2017; Hall, 2017). Furthermore, while schools are now required to have an antibullying policy, the said policy's content is not consistent. This

results in a wide range of policies, varying in their comprehensiveness and inclusion, posited to be a factor impacting their utility (Stickl Haugen et al., 2020). This is particularly relevant when considering LGBTQ youth. While LGBTQ youth experience heightened victimization, they are often omitted as a protected class in antibullying policies. When surveyed, only approximately one in eight students indicated their school has a comprehensive antibullying policy that specifies LGBTQ students as a protected class (Kosciw et al., 2018). Moreover, the percentage of students indicating a comprehensive and inclusive policy is present on their school campus has shown little improvement in the last twelve years (Kosciw et al., 2018).

When a comprehensive antibullying policy is in place, LGBTQ youth report lower rates of victimization (Berger et al., 2019; Chesir-Teran & Hughes, 2009; Hall, 2017; Kosciw et al., 2018; Kull et al., 2016; Saewyc et al., 2014) and homophobic language use (Berger et al., 2019; Kosciw et al., 2018) and a greater sense of safety on campus (Kull et al., 2016). LGBTQ inclusive policies also positively impact reporting (Berger et al., 2019; Kosciw et al., 2018) and intervening behaviors (Chesir-Teran & Hughes, 2009; Hall, 2017; Saewyc et al., 2014). Similarly, comprehensive antibullying policies impact adult behavior, with adult intervention in instances of homophobic bullying more likely if such a policy is in place (Berger et al., 2019; Kosciw et al., 2018; Meyer, 2008). Furthermore, better mental health outcomes such as fewer depressive symptoms (Chesir-Teran & Hughes, 2009; Hall, 2017; Hatzenbuehler & Keyes, 2013; Saewyc et al., 2014) and less suicidality (Hatzenbuehler & Keyes, 2013) have also been associated with LGBTQ inclusive antibullying policies. More generalized effects have also been documented, with the presence of comprehensive policies predicting LGBTQ students' assessment of the general school climate (Kosciw et al., 2018; Saewyc et al., 2014). However, these encouraging results have not been found when a less comprehensive antibullying policies

in place without specifically addressing LGBTQ related bullying (Berger et al., 2019; Kull et al, 2016). Moreover, while several studies have found relationships between inclusive antibullying policies and LGBTQ youth adjustment, not all have supported these findings. It has been suggested that policies alone may not adequately address LGBTQ victimization (Russell et al. 2016). It has been proposed that effectiveness may be impacted by clarity, enforcement (Sandfort et al., 2010), and the number of policies in place (Russell et al. 2016; Day et al., 2019). Furthermore, research in this area has been primarily completed using student self-report of policies, potentially impacting outcomes due to a possible lack of awareness of policies in place. Further investigation is needed to clarify the role of inclusive antibullying policies on student experiences and outcomes.

Another school-based policy impacting LGBTQ youth, particularly gender variant, are dress codes. Self-expression through the attire is one of the many vehicles through which individuals assert their identity (Brower, 2013). Under the guise of limiting gang activity, sexual harassment, and distraction, schools have long policed this form of expression (Edwards & Marshall, 2020). Dress codes disproportionately target some groups, such as black (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein 2012), female (Edwards & Marshall, 2020), and LGBTQ students (Ullman, 2014). It has been argued that dress codes often enforce heteronormativity and gender stereotypes through male and female-specific rules (Edwards & Marshall, 2020; Ullman, 2014) and legitimize the "incorrectness" of some gender performances (Kosciw et al., 2018; Levi, 2007). This lays the foundation for disciplining students based on gender expression. Illustrating this point, LGBTQ youth are more likely than their peers to be disciplined for dress code violations (Koswic et al., 2018). Conversely, it has been suggested that when inclusive, non-sex specific dress codes are in place, students are encouraged to express themselves and are better

protected from homo- and transphobic disciplinary action (Glickman, 2016). While extant literature has highlighted the issues inherent in dress codes, little work has been done. More investigation is needed to understand better the impact of gender-specific dress codes, as part of a larger inclusive school climate, on LGBTQ youth adjustment.

In summary, several school-level factors have been identified as supporting LGBTQ youth adjustment, including inclusive anti-bullying and anti-discrimination policies, inclusive dress codes, and LGBTQ specific organizations such as GSAs. Despite the identification of these factors, school campuses continue to be hostile environments for LGBTQ youth, and they remain at risk for several adverse outcomes. In the extant research, there has been a lack of analysis of between-school differences and an over-reliance on student self-report. Furthermore, when investigating school-based supports, typically only one or two school-level factors are examined, limiting consideration of the larger school climate. More work is needed to understand the protective potential of an inclusive school climate, comprised of several school-level variables, on LGBTQ youth adjustment.

Current Study

Improved interventions stem from increased understanding. This study aimed to examine an inclusive school climate on promoting positive adjustment and buffering against adverse outcomes for LGBTQ youth. While several individual supportive school factors have been identified, their cumulative impact as part of an inclusive school climate are lacking in extant research. Thus, the current study examined an inclusive school climate, as measured by LGBTQ specific social supports and school policies, and LGBTQ youths' experiences (1) victimization experiences, 2) reporting behaviors, and 3) satisfaction with reporting outcomes). Additionally, the current study conceptualized an inclusive school climate as a potential mitigating factor,

moderating the relationship between LGBTQ youths' experiences with victimization and adverse outcomes.

The current study contributes to the existing literature by examining school level factors as one dimension of inclusive climate for LGBTQ youth and investigating the moderating role of inclusive climate. Additionally, most research to date has focused on student and teacher perceptions of policies, rather than the actual policies in place. The current study conducted a review of school polices based on available documents as well as utilizing student reports.

Research Questions

The current study examines the following research questions:

1. What school level factors predict LGBTQ youths' victimization experiences?

Hypothesis 1.1: The presence of an inclusive school climate, as evidenced by a comprehensive antibullying and discrimination policies, an inclusive dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization, will predict LGBTQ youths' victimization experiences, with a higher number of inclusive characteristics associated with fewer victimization experiences.

2. What school level factors predict student reporting behaviors following instances of victimization?

Hypothesis 2.1: The presence of an inclusive school climate, as evidenced by a comprehensive antibullying and discrimination policies, an inclusive dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization, will predict LGBTQ youths' reporting behaviors, with a higher number of inclusive characteristics associated with more reporting.

3. What school level factors predict students' satisfaction with the outcome of reporting bullying?

Hypothesis 3.1: Students attending schools with an inclusive school climate, as evidenced by a comprehensive antibullying and discrimination policies, an inclusive dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization, will report higher satisfaction with the outcome of reporting.

4. What is the role of an LGBTQ inclusive school climate in the relationship between experiences with victimization and sexual/gender minority student adjustment?

Hypothesis 4.1: The presence of an inclusive school climate, as evidenced by a comprehensive antibullying and discrimination policies, an inclusive dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization, will moderate the relationship between victimization experiences and poor student adjustment for LGBTQ youth.

5. What school level factors predict students' homoprejudice and transprejudice attitudes?

Hypothesis 5.1: Students attending schools with an inclusive school climate, as evidenced by a comprehensive antibullying and discrimination policies, an inclusive dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization will hold less homoprejudice and transprejudice attitudes.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

LGBTQ Youth Prevalence

Individuals are identifying as members of the LGBTQ community at higher rates and younger ages than previously reported. The acronym LGBTQ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning. This broad term also represents all individuals falling beyond heterosexual and cisgender identities, including those that identify as nonbinary, asexual, intersex, and Two-Spirit (Human Rights Campaign, 2018). While the exact prevalence is unknown, estimates suggest that 10-15% of adolescents now identify as members of the LGBTQ community. According to the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey, a national survey of individuals in grades 9-12, 85% of students identify as heterosexual, 2% as gay or lesbian, 8% as bisexual, and 4% as unsure (Kann et al., 2018). Similarly, 15% of seventh and eighth graders responded to a survey indicating they identify as LGBTQ or questioning (Birkett et al., 2014). However, other large-scale studies conducted in England have indicated that approximately 10% of adolescents identify as LGBTQ (Sadler et al., 2018).

Negative Outcomes Associated

Being a member of the LGBTQ community is associated with several adverse physical, social, psychological, and academic outcomes (Connolly et al., 2016; Gattamorta, Salerno et al., 2019; Huang et al., 2018; Human Rights Campaign, 2018; Kann et al., 2018, Marshal et al., 2011). Members of the LGBTQ community report more considerable sleep difficulties than straight, cisgender people (Dai & Hao, 2019). In one nationwide study of adolescents, nearly all LGBTQ participants reported difficulty falling asleep at night (Human Rights Campaign, 2018). Results of differences in dietary behaviors, physical activity, and weight vary in the literature.

Some research has failed to find differences between LGB and heterosexual students regarding dietary or physical activity behaviors (Kann et al., 2018), while other studies indicate discrepancies in health behaviors among sexual minority adolescents (Luk et al., 2018).

Existent literature is clear, however, on sexual and gender minority adolescents' engagement in risk-taking behaviors. As compared to their heterosexual peers, sexual minority youth engage in most health-risk behaviors at a higher rate (Kann et al., 2018). LGBTQ students are more likely than their peers to use tobacco products, alcohol, and drugs (Birkett et al., 2009; Donahue et al., 2017; Kann et al., 2018). LGBTQ adolescents also report engaging in more risky sexual behaviors than heterosexual and cisgender adolescents (Dermody et al., 2020; Kann et al., 2018). LGBTQ students' participation in risk-taking behavior varies based on gender, sexual identity, and culture. For example, in a study of 3,776 12-18-year-old students in Hong Kong, health disparities in LGBTQ youth were reported (Zhang et al., 2017). Compared to their heterosexual peers, gay and bisexual male participants engaged in more risk-taking behaviors than other groups. These participants reported higher rates of tobacco use, sexual risk-taking, and sexual victimization. Lesbian identified students reported high rates of tobacco and alcohol use than heterosexual students. Bisexual female students reported higher rates of sexual victimization as compared to heterosexual female students. Authors noted that gender differences in risk-taking behaviors might be partially due to differential societal expectations from males and females (Zhang et al., 2017). Additionally, those individuals reporting multiple minority identities concerning sexual and ethnic/racial minority status report particularly pronounced heath and risk-taking disparities (Gattamorta et al., 2019).

Similarly apparent are the mental health discrepancies between LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ youth, with members of the LGBTQ community reporting significantly higher rates of mental

health diagnoses, self-harm, and suicidality (Guz et al., 2020; Donahue et al., 2017; Kann et al.,2018; McKay et al., 2019; Wei & Liu, 2019). As many as three-fourths of LGBTQ youth report depressive symptoms (Human Rights Campaign, 2018). Furthermore, in a nationwide study in England, individuals who identified themselves at LGB have higher rates of mental disorder diagnoses (35%) as compared to their heterosexual peers (13%) (Sadler et al., 2018). Similarly, LGB students report that they experience suicide-related health behaviors twice the rate of their heterosexual peers (Kann et al., 2018). This discrepancy in suicidality is well documented in the literature (Chakraborty et al., 2011; McKay et al., 2019; Stone et al., 2014). Disparities are particularly pronounced among gender minority youth, with gender variant adolescents reporting higher rates of depression and suicidality than their cisgender, heterosexual, and sexual minority peers (Guz et al., 2020; Irwin et al., 2014; Li et al., 2016). Transgender individuals report suicide attempt rates as high as 40% (Irwin et al., 2014).

Regarding academic functioning, being a member of the LGBTQ community is associated with higher truancy and dropout rates and lower aspiration for academic attainment (Birkett et al., 2014; Fenaughty et al., 2019; Human Rights Campaign, 2018; Kosciw et al., 2018). Research indicates that adolescent members of the LGBTQ community generally report lower grade point averages than their peers (Birkett et al., 2014; Kann et al., 2018; Wernick et al., 2017). LGBTQ youth also report higher truancy (Birkett et al., 2014; Day et al., 2018; Robinson & Espelage, 2011) and lower academic intentions (Fenaughty et al., 2019). For example, in a large-scale study of high school students, Aragon et al. (2014) found that as compared to non-LGBTQ students, LGBTQ students report higher truancy rates. LGBTQ students also had lower self-reported grades and lower academic intentions. LGBTQ youth are less likely than their non-LGBTQ peers to report that they planned to finish high school and

attend college. Students' status as a racial/ethnic minority further exacerbates the achievement discrepancy among LGBTQ youth and their peers (Fenaughty et al., 2019).

Concerning students questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity, research is varied on their outcomes as compared to their LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ peers. One nationwide study found that students indicating they were not yet sure of their sexual orientation reported health behaviors more similar to those of LGB students rather than heterosexual students (Kann et al., 2018). Conversely, another study identified students questioning their sexual orientation as a particularly vulnerable group concerning adverse health and social outcomes. In their investigation of 7th and 8th-grade students, those students questioning the sexual orientation reported higher levels of depression, suicidal ideation, alcohol and marijuana use, and truancy as compared to LGBT and heterosexual students (Birkett et al., 2009). In summary, extant literature is clear that LGBTQ youth are at increased risk for adverse social and health outcomes. Such outcomes reflect the heightened adversity and challenges that are present in daily lives of LGBTQ youth.

LGBTQ Adversity at Home

Being a member of the LGBTQ community is associated with increased adversity at home and school. LGBTQ youth report a lack of parental support (Montano et al., 2018; Wilson et al., 2011) and higher rates of homelessness than their peers (Morton et al., 2018). According to the Human Rights Campaign's survey (2018), the majority of LGBTQ adolescents reported that they are not out to their parents. Of the students who are out, nearly half report negative reactions from family members. Furthermore, only a fourth of the participants reported feeling comfortable outwardly expressing their LGBTQ identity at home. Lack of parental support is even more pronounced among gender variant youth. In a study conducted by Grossman et al.

(2019), 129 transgender and gender-nonconforming youth completed a survey regarding various aspects of their relationship with their parents. Less than half of transgender and gender-nonconforming adolescents report that their parents have a favorable current response to their gender identity, with fathers less likely to display a positive response than mothers. This parental rejection and lack of support are some of the many factors leading to LGBTQ youths' elevated rates of homelessness (Morton et al., 2018).

Using data from the Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Corliss et al. (2011) considered the differential experiences of homelessness among LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ students. Results indicate that in comparison to their heterosexual peers, LGBTQ youth were significantly more likely to be homeless. While 3% of heterosexual high school students reported that they were homeless, approximately one-fourth of LGB students reported that they were homeless. Durso and Gates (2012) also examined the disproportionality of LGBTQ youth seeking homelessness services from the agency perspective and highlighted the disparities in homelessness by sexual orientation and gender identity in their survey of 354 agencies supporting homeless youth. Results indicated that while only 10-15% of youth identify as LGBTQ, 43% of youth utilizing drop-in centers identify as LGBTQ. Additionally, respondents report that they work with more LGBTQ homeless youth now than they did ten years ago, with a particularly significant increase in the number of transgender youths served.

LGBTQ Adversity at School

On school campuses, LGBTQ students face further adversity in the form of anti-LGBTQ policies and attitudes. Many students report that they are not taught about LGBTQ topics at school (Bradlow et al., 2017), and few report they were taught positive messages about LGBTQ individuals (Human Rights Campaign, 2018). Anti-LGBTQ education policies primarily guide

this absence of LGBTQ inclusion in the curriculum. An example of such policies in the United States is "No Promo Homo" laws. These laws restrict certain types of instruction and actions considered to be encouraging or promoting homosexuality (Barrett & Bound, 2015). While they were previously more widespread, seven states currently have existing laws prohibiting the promotion of homosexuality. These laws require the omission of LGBTQ specific sex education. They also leave teachers concerned about disciplinary action should they speak positively about LGBTQ topics (Dawson, 2019). Others have argued that while not explicit, laws limiting curricular inclusion of LGBTQ topics continue to be widespread in the United States (Rosky, 2017). Similar legislation was present in the UK under Section 28, which prohibited local authorities from promoting positive ideas about the LGBTQ community (Lee, 2019). While many of these laws have since been repealed, they may continue to impact the educational environment. Lee (2019) investigated the continuing influence of such laws in his survey of 105 LGBTQ identified teachers. Some teachers surveyed were teachers during Section 28, and some became teachers after its repeal in 2003. Only one-fifth of LGBTQ teachers who taught during Section 28 is out about their sexual orientation at school, as compared to 88% of teachers who began teaching after the repeal of section 28.

In part due to the legislation prohibiting their inclusion, sex education curriculums underrepresent LGBTQ topics (Bradlow et al., 2017; Elia & Eliason, 2010; Kosciw et al., 2018). Many state sexual education policies stigmatize homosexuality or exclude sexual and gender minority topics, with few state policies being explicitly inclusive of LGBTQ specific sex education (Hall et al., 2019; Santelli et al., 2017). In a national survey, only approximately one in ten LGBTQ students reported that they had received LGBTQ relevant safe sex education at school (Human Rights Campaign, 2018). In a survey of 386 young adults (ages 18-25), Charest,

Kleinplatz, and Lund (2016) investigated sources of information on sexual health. As compared to their heterosexual and cisgender peers, LGBTQ participants were significantly less likely to have obtained sexual health information from their school. Because information is not readily available in sex education courses, LGBTQ youth often seek sexual health information elsewhere. LGBTQ adolescents reported acquiring knowledge of sexual health practices via the internet at higher rates than their peers.

LGBTQ youth also have differential school experiences compared to their peers concerning campus access. Bathrooms are a commonly cited exclusionary space, with 33-58% of students reporting that their school prohibits trans students from using the restroom that corresponds with their gender identity (Bradlow et al., 2017; Human Rights Campaign, 2018; Kosciw et al., 2018). When they have access to campus, LGBTQ students are often made to feel unwelcome through various discriminatory practices. Gender-specific dress codes are an example of discriminatory practices. Most students' schools do not have gender-variant inclusive dress code policies (Kosciw et al., 2018; Reddy-Best & Choi, 2020), and approximately one-fourth of students are prohibited from wearing school uniforms congruent with their gender identity (Bradlow et al., 2017). Such restrictive dress codes serve to marginalize gender variant youth (Reddy-Best & Choi, 2020).

Another discriminatory practice is the differential enforcement of school policies regarding public displays of affection for LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ students. One-third of LGBTQ youth report that students are differentially disciplined for displays of public affection for LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ students (Kosciw et al., 2018). Snapp et al. (2015) conducted focus groups to better understand LGBTQ youths' experiences with school policies regarding public displays of affection (PDA) and dress codes. Students reported having received disciplinary

action for PDA and dress code violations that they felt were due to their sexual orientation or gender expression. This study highlighted the perceived discipline disparities for such minor offenses among LGBTQ youth. Discriminatory pronoun and name policies further impact transgender and gender-nonconforming youth. About twenty five percent of students report that they are not permitted to use their chosen name and pronouns at school (Bradlow et al., 2017; Kosciw et al., 2018) and only approximately 20% report that their preferred pronouns are always honored at school (Human Rights Campaign, 2018).

Discriminatory language also impacts LGBTQ students' school experiences. Extant literature suggests that the use of homophobic language continues to be pervasive in schools (Bradlow et al., 2017; Fulcher, 2017; Kosciw et al., 2018). Examples of homophobic language include the use of LGBTQ identities as pejoratives such as "that's so gay," and assertion of heterosexual identity with phrases like "no homo." Homophobic and transphobic language also includes the use of slurs such as "fag," "dyke," and "tranny," as well as general putdowns based on an individual's sexual orientation or gender expression. A majority of LGBTQ youth report that they have heard other students use homophobic language, with most students citing the occurrence of homophobic comments as often or frequent (Bradlow et al., 2017; Kosciw et al., 2018). Staff also report often hearing such language from students (McCabe et al., 2013). However, students report that staff and peer bystanders rarely intervene following student use of homophobic language and that school staff rarely address the comments about a student's inadequate masculine or feminine gender performance heard on school campuses (Kosciw et al., 2018). Even more alarming is LGBTQ youths' report that adults in school use homophobic language. Over half of the students surveyed in the School Climate Survey reported that they had heard a teacher or other school staff member make a homophobic comment (Kosciw et al.,

2018). Of school psychologists surveyed, 45% indicated that they have heard staff use homophobic language in the prior year (McCabe, Dragowski & Rubinson, 2013).

Discriminatory policies and homo- and transphobic behaviors result in unwelcoming climates for LGBTQ youth and may result in a diminished sense of safety. Six in ten LGB students report feeling unsafe at school (Kosciw et al., 2018), and only one-fourth of students surveyed responded that they always feel safe at school (Human Rights Campaign, 2018). Due to concerns for their safety, LGBTQ youth report avoiding specific campus locations. Bathrooms, locker rooms, and physical education classes were the most commonly cited areas students avoid. Additionally, approximately three-fourths of LGBTQ youth report that they chose not to attend some school functions or extracurricular activities because they do not feel safe or comfortable (Kosciw et al., 2018). Lack of sense of safety is particularly pronounced for gender variant youth (Wernick et al., 2017). Over half of transgender students expressed safety concerns regarding restroom, and nearly two-thirds reported that they avoid using the bathroom at school (Human Rights Campaign, 2018). In their investigation of factors impacting students' sense of safety at school, Atteberry-Ash et al. (2020) found that transgender and gender-nonconforming youth are particularly at risk for feeling unsafe on campus. As compared to their LGB and cisgender peers, heterosexual and LGB transgender and gender variant participants were much more likely to report feeling unsafe at school. Additionally, transgender participants were ten times more likely to report skipping school due to safety concerns compared to cisgender participants.

Allen et al. (2020) considered the possible differential experiences of binary-identified versus nonbinary gender variant youth in their study of 287 adolescents. The analysis found no significant difference in feelings of connectedness and safety at school between transgender and

nonbinary students. These statistics are in stark comparison to those reported by all students age 12-18. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2019), 6% of students surveyed in 2017 reported that they avoided school or school-related activities due to their safety concerns. Additionally, only 5% of students surveyed reported avoiding specific areas in the school due to safety concerns.

Sense of safety in gender-specific spaces such as bathrooms and locker rooms also predicts engagement in sports. To better understand LGBTQ students' experiences playing sports, Kulick et al. (2019) utilized survey data collected from high school students in Michigan. Results indicated that LGBTQ youth play sports at a lower rate than their heterosexual and cisgender peers. When LGBTQ students do engage in school athletics, they report lower feelings of safety doing so as compared to their peers. This lack of safety is particularly pronounced among transgender students. Greenspan et al. (2019) explored the athletic experiences of LGBTQ in a sample of adolescents (ages 13-18) utilizing both surveys and focus groups. Approximately one-third of participants reported avoiding school locker rooms and physical education classes due to their safety concerns. In focus groups, students shared about experiences of homophobic comments and feelings of discomfort in these spaces.

Likely due in part to unwelcoming school climates and concerns regarding their safety, many students are not out at school about their sexual orientation or gender identity on campus (Kosciw et al., 2018; Wei & Liu, 2019). About 43% of LGB students report that they are not out to any teachers, and only 5% report they are out to all their teachers. Similarly, 45% of gender variant students report they are not out to any teachers, and only 10% are out to all teachers. (Human Rights Campaign, 2018). Allen et al. (2020) investigated the differential school

experiences between various gender identities and found that nonbinary students were less likely to be out to teachers than binary-identified transgender students.

Prior research indicates that being out at school in adolescence impacts students' experiences with victimization, academic achievement, and later adjustment. Using data from the Preventing School Harassment Survey in California, Watson, Wheldon, and Russell (2015) considered the impact of "outness" on the academic achievement and experiences of harassment in a sample of 1,031 middle and high school students. It is indicated that absoluteness, meaning being open about one's sexuality or gender expression with everyone or no one, rather than outness is correlated with achievement and experiences of harassment. Students who were out to no one or everyone had the lowest reported harassment and highest reported achievement. Being out to family only, however, was associated with the highest incidence of harassment and lowest achievement. Another study found that students who are open about their sexual orientation in high school experience heightened bullying compared to LGBTQ youth who do not share their sexual orientation with others. While being open about one's sexual orientation in high school correlates with increased victimization, it is associated with more positive adjustment in early adulthood. Individuals who did not feel they were able to be honest about their identity during adolescence are at higher risk for depression in early adulthood (Russell et al., 2014).

Bullying

Bullying is a form of aggression prevalent among school-age children (Boulton et al., 2013). According to Olweus' definition (1993), "a person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself" (p. 9). Bullying is a complex social interaction, and the exact definition has long been contested (Goldsmid & Howie, 2014; Ttofi et al., 2012;

Volk 2014). Some have posited that bullying should be defined as aggressive goal-directed behavior through which an individual seeks to acquire a social or tangible product (Volk, 2014). Others question the amount of repetition needed for an action to qualify as bullying (Marsh et al., 2004).

While some definitional ambiguity remains, bullying is generally defined as repeated, intentional harm, in the context of a power imbalance (Cornell & Limber, 2015; Goldsmid & Howie, 2014). The harm inherent in bullying can occur through direct and indirect means (Maunder et al., 2010), further broken down into verbal, physical, relational, and cyber aggression (Rosen et al., 2017). The inclusion of cyberbullying complicates the definitional elements of bullying, as aggressive actions carried out using technology can be "repeated" through the extended period during which it is visible to others (Grigg, 2010). Moreover, while definitional inconsistency continues among academic perspectives, it is even more pronounced when academic definitions of bullying are compared to student definitions. In a survey of students' perceptions of bullying, results indicate that adolescents often reference a negative behavior (92%), but less than 2% mention intentionality, only 6% mention repetition, and only approximately one-fourth included power imbalance (Vaillancourt et al., 2008). Due to inconsistency in the definition used, bullying prevalence rates vary significantly (Modecki et al., 2014; Nansel et al., 2001).

Bullying Prevalence

Approximately one-third of students report some engagement in instances of bullying (Nansel et al., 2001). Based on the 2017 School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey, the National Center for Education Statistics (2019) found that roughly one in five students aged 12 -18 reported having been bullied in the prior year. Female students

(24%) reported a higher incidence of bullying than male students (17%). Female students reported higher rates of all forms of bullying except for physical harm and the threat of physical harm. Male students' increased engagement in physical aggression compared to their female peers has been echoed in the literature (Williford et al., 2018). Conversely, general gender-based bullying statistics are mixed with some studies indicating greater engagement in bullying among male participants (Popp & Peguero, 2011). Similarly, the longstanding belief that female students are both victims and perpetrators of relational aggression at higher rates than their male peers has recently been called into question. It is now thought that the incidence of relational aggression may be similar across genders (Williford et al., 2018).

Involvement in bullying may also vary based on student age. According to a Canadian study investigating the 3rd-12th graders' experiences with bullying, the prevalence of bullying behaviors appears to be age-dependent, with older students reporting fewer bullying instances than younger students (Gage et al., 2014). Results regarding differential experiences with bullying by race have also been inconclusive, with some research indicating Black American students experience higher rates of victimization (Goldweber et al., 2013) and others failing to find significant differences by race (Xu et al., 2020). In a systematic review of 135 studies examining the differential experiences of bullying among members of different racial and ethnic groups, racial differences were generally inconclusive. Some studies have, however, noted increased experiences with bullying among immigrant students. Authors suggested considering both community-level factors and the role of a strong ethnic identity in differential bullying experiences by race (Xu et al., 2020). Extant literature is clear, however, regarding the differential experiences with bullying among LGBTQ youth.

Bullying Prevalence LGBTQ Youth

LGBTQ youth experience bullying at significantly higher rates than their peers, with a majority reporting victimization experiences (Berger et al., 2019; Donahue et al., 2017; Human Rights Campaign, 2018; Kosciw et al., 2018). In a sample of 7,376 7th and 8th graders in the Midwest, Birkett et al. (2009) found that LGTBQ youth experience heightened homophobic teasing, and victimization. According to their analysis, those students questioning their sexual orientation were particularly vulnerable, reporting the higher incidence of homophobic teasing and peer victimization than LGB and heterosexual students (Birkett et al., 2009). In Toomey and Russell's (2016) meta-analysis of 18 independent studies and 56,752 participants in total, LGBTQ youth in middle and high schools experienced heightened victimization as compared to their sexual and gender majority peers. Additionally, it was found that in comparison to the 1990s, the difference in victimization experiences among heterosexual and LGBTQ youth has become more pronounced. This indicates that LGBTQ based victimization is a persistent issue in our schools.

Student are coming out and self-identifying as LGBTQ at younger ages today as compared to the 1990s. This increased visibility may make them more vulnerable to homophobic and transphobic bullying, possibly in part explaining continued high rates of victimization. Furthermore, it was found that gender moderated the relationship between sexual orientation and victimization experiences, with sexual minority male participants reporting elevated victimization. Differential victimization experiences are particularly pronounced among gender variant youth. The literature indicates that transgender students were more likely to experience verbal harassment, physical assault, sexual assault, and discrimination on school campuses when compared to their LGB peers. (Kosciw et al., 2018; Murchison et al., 2019). For example, using

a sample of 398 middle and high school students in California, Day et al. (2018) found that as compared to their cisgender peers, transgender students experience significantly higher rates of victimization, specifically gender and sexuality-based victimization.

While the elevated bullying experienced is consistent in the literature, the precise rates of various bullying types that LGBTQ youth experiences are not known, with studies reporting a wide range of prevalence. Concerning verbal aggression, rates range between approximately 34-80% of youth reporting verbal bullying (Crothers et al.,2017; Hatzenbuehler et al., 2015; Kosciw et al., 2018). LGBTQ students' reports of physical harassment fall between 13 and 37% (Crothers et al.,2017; Kosciw et al., 2018), with the National School Climate Survey indicating 16% of LGBTQ youth report that in the last year they were physically assaulted because of their identity as a member of the LGBTQ community (Kosciw et al., 2018). Additionally, as many as one in four gender variant youth report being victims of sexual assault in the prior year (Muchison et al., 2019). Anywhere from 38% to 90% of LGBTQ students report being victims of relational aggression in the prior year (Crothers et al.,2017; Hatzenbuehler et al., 2015; Kosciw et al., 2018). Kann et al. (2018) found that LGB students were twice as likely as their heterosexual peers to have experienced cyberbullying, and other studies report cyber victimization rates between 30-49% (Crothers et al.,2017; Kosciw et al., 2018).

While much of the extant literature on students' experiences with bullying relies on student self-reports, LGBTQ students' heightened risk for victimization has also been supported reports from teachers and allies. In their study of bullying as reported by LGBTQ students, allies, and teachers, Crothers et al. (2017) found that LGBTQ individuals were perceived to experience higher verbal, physical, relational, and cyberbullying rates compared to their peers. Teachers do, however, report perceptions of LGBTQ bullying disparate from those held by students. In a

survey of approximately 200 middle and high school teachers and 100 students, LGBTQ youth and student allies report higher incidences of LGBTQ based bullying on their school campus than teachers (Crothers et al., 2017). This discrepancy may be in part due to students' failure to report victimization experiences to school personnel.

Outcomes Associated with Bullying

Victims of bullying are at greater risk for negative health, academic, and social outcomes. Victims report higher rates of mental health diagnoses, physical health needs, suicidality, and risk-taking behaviors, as well as lower self-esteem, achievement, and sense of school belonging (Baly et al., 2014; Collier et al., 2013; Poteat et al., 2011). Victimization experiences have been found to have both short-term and long-term consequences. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2019) National Crime Victimization Survey, students who reported having been bullied in the prior year, approximately one fifth reported it had impacted their schoolwork, and over a fourth reported it had affected the way they felt about themselves. Similarly, Poteat et al. (2011) had 15,923 middle and high school students complete a questionnaire regarding their victimization experiences and various social and educational factors. Experiences with victimization were associated with lower levels of school belonging and academic achievement, and higher rates of suicidality. To explore the long-term impacts, Baly, Cornell, and Lovegrove (2014) conducted a longitudinal investigation of the outcomes of bullying. Students were followed in grades six through eight using peer and self-report measures. Students with self- and peer- reported victimization during middle school reported higher rates of disciplinary involvement and risk-taking behaviors and lower GPAs. This study also highlighted the cumulative impact of bullying on students' social and academic development.

Outcomes Associated with LGBTQ Specific Bullying

While the connection between bullying of any kind and negative health outcomes has been well established, existent literature suggests that bias-based bullying may be particularly damaging (Gini & Pozzoli, 2009). Poteat et al. (2011) found that homophobic victimization was particularly damaging compared to more general forms of bullying. Having experienced homophobic bullying was associated with elevated truancy and decreased grades and educational intentions compared to more general forms of bullying. Consistent with Poteat et al. (2011), Russell et al. (2012) investigated this relationship using data from the California Healthy Kids Survey and the Dane County Youth assessment. It was determined that individuals who experienced discriminatory harassment were at risk for worse health and mental health outcomes than those who experienced harassment that was not bias-based. Similar themes emerged in Price et al.'s (2019) investigation of the impact of identity-based victimization. Nine hundred forty-six high school students were surveyed regarding their identities and victimization experiences. Results indicate that LGBTQ youth and heterosexual youth of color experience the highest rates of identity-based victimization. Additionally, these two groups reported lower academic achievement and higher levels of depression than White heterosexual students. Identity-based victimization experiences were found to mediate or partially mediate the relationship between group identity and adverse outcomes.

LGBTQ youth are particularly vulnerable to the negative outcomes associated with prior victimization experiences. Collier et al. (2013) investigated the outcomes associated with LBGTQ specific peer victimization in a systematic review of 39 studies from 12 different countries. Their analysis identified that sexual orientation impacts the relationship between experiences of victimization and negative health and social outcomes. LGBTQ students who had

experienced victimization demonstrated more depressive symptoms than heterosexual/cisgender students who experienced similar victimization . LGBTQ youth who have experienced victimization report higher rates of alcohol and marijuana use (Birkett et al., 2009).

Numerous studies have found that LGBTQ identity is related to depression and suicidality (Birkett et al., 2009; Button et al., 2012; Kosciw et al., 2018) as well as lower levels of life satisfaction (Henderson, 2016). Due to LGBTQ youths' previously reported propensity for mental health needs, the directionality of the relationship between these factors must be further explored. Both Bouris et al. (2016) and Burton et al. (2013) found that the relationship between LGBTQ identity and suicidality and depression is mediated by experiences of victimization. This relationship is particularly pronounced among individuals with multiple minority identities. Using 965 students survey responses from the 2006 Boston Youth Survey, Garnett et al. (2014) considered the impact of intersectionality in biased-based bullying experiences. In this study, students were divided into classes based on their discrimination experiences, and outcomes were considered. Personal characteristics considered included sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, and weight. It was determined that students in the intersectional group, which includes students who have experienced bias-based bullying regarding two or most person characteristics, engaged in higher rates of self-harm and suicidality as compared to other classes. Similar to the findings in Baly et al. (2014) regarding general victimization, both Andersen et al. (2015) and Brain et al. (2016) found that that repeated childhood victimization experiences mediated the relationship between sexual minority status and poorer health outcomes in LGBTQ adults.

Experiences with victimization also impact LGBTQ youths' achievement and sense of belonging on campus. Kosciw et al. (2018) and Bouris et al. (2016) found that LGBTQ students who had experienced higher rates of victimization and discrimination were significantly more

likely to have missed one day of school in the prior month than students with lower rates of victimization and discrimination. Similarly, in their study of 11,447 high school students, Aragon et al. (2014) found the differential impacts of victimization being LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ students. LGBTQ students were found to report higher rates of truancy, lower academic intention to complete school or attend college, and lower grades than their non-LGBTQ peers. Victimization experiences were found to partially mediate the relationship between sexual orientation and educational outcomes.

LGBTQ students who have been bullied also report lower senses of school belonging (Kosciw et al., 2018; Robinson & Espelage, 2011). In their cross-sectional study of 934 LGBTQ high school students, Hatchel et al. (2019) found that LGBTQ students who have been bullied reported lower levels of school belonging. Additionally, LGBTQ students who reported low levels of bellowing reported higher rates of suicidality. While a relationship between victimization and school belonging was indicated for LGBTQ youth, it was particularly pronounced for gender-variant students. Transgender students report the lowest sense of safety on school campuses, more often avoid certain areas of the school, and are more likely to miss school due to concerns for their safety (Kosciw et al., 2018).

Reporting Behaviors

Bullying often occurs in locations and social situations not easily observed by adults (Fite et al., 2013), and adult awareness of bullying is often dependent on student reporting (Berger et al., 2019). Despite the high prevalence of bullying in schools, most instances are not reported to adults (deLara, 2012; Frisen et al., 2008; Petrosino et al., 2010; Ybarra et al., 2006). De Lara (2012) conducted focus groups with 97 students and examined why students often fail to report instances of bullying. Themes included the high prevalence of bullying, definitional differences,

desire to handle it independently, fear regarding adult reactions, and shame. Bauman et al. (2016) investigated student reporting of victimization and found that age, status as a special education student, and type of bullying experienced predicted reporting behaviors. Specifically, younger students, students in special education, and students who were physically harmed or threatened were more likely to report the incident to an adult. The trend regarding younger students' increased reporting of victimization has been echoed in other studies (deLara, 2012; Yablon, 2010), which may be due to shifting sources of emotional support as students age. Gage et al. (2014) found in their investigation of 4,742 students in grades 3-12 that as students age, they become more dependent on peer rather than teacher support following bullying experiences. Gender differences in reporting behaviors have also been identified, with female students demonstrating higher reporting behaviors than their male peers (Baly et al., 2014; Yablon, 2010).

Disparities in reporting behaviors have also been found in sexual and gender minority students. When compared to their peers, LGBTQ students are less likely to report instances of bullying to school staff (Bauman et al., 2016; Crothers et al., 2017). LGBTQ youth also often fail to report victimization experiences to their parents. Over half of LGBTQ students who have experienced peer victimization have never shared their experiences with their parents (Kosciw et al., 2018). These reporting behaviors were more likely, however, if the student was open with their parents about their sexual orientation or gender identity (Kosciw et al., 2018). Several reasons for failure to disclose LGBTQ victimization experiences to adults have been identified including the concern that it may exacerbate the situation, uncertainty regarding staff follow-through, and lack of comfort with school staff.

For LGBTQ youth, another complicating factor in victimization reporting is the fear of being "outed." Additionally, these experiences are often accompanied by shame and

embarrassment, further prohibiting disclosure. The most commonly cited reason for not reporting bullying, however, was doubting that the teacher would take action (Kosciw et al., 2018). Students are more likely to report if they believe their teacher will intervene (Cortes & Kochenderfer-Ladd, 2014) and LGBTQ youth are more likely to report if they have witnessed the teacher correct homophobic behavior in the past (Berger et al., 2019). While LGBTQ students are apprehensive to reporting victimization, adults are often unaware of this apprehension and report perceived student comfort reporting bullying (Crothers et al., 2017).

Adult Responses to Bullying

Current literature indicates that adults are often unaware of and under involved in bullying incidents (Wachs et al., 2018). In one study, over a third of students indicated that they had not received adult help for bullying (Frisen et al., 2008). When they are aware of such occurrences, staff generally report that they effectively intervene in instances of bullying (Crothers & Kolbert, 2004; Holt & Keyes, 2004). Conversely, students report that staff often fail to act (Kosciw et al., 2018) or make the situation worse (Bradshaw et al., 2007). Under responsive and unhelpful teacher responses are disproportionately reported by LGBTQ youth. When LGBTQ students make reports of bullying, they report that the perpetrator is rarely disciplined. Sixty percent of students indicated that teachers have failed to act or encouraged them to ignore the bully. Additionally, further perpetuating the problem, one-fifth of reporting students were told to modify their behavior in response to their report of peer victimization (Kosciw et al., 2018). Such inadequate responses may be due to teacher attitudes and lack of training. For example, in a study of 323 teachers in Rome, Italy, Nappa et al. (2018) found that homophobic attitudes were correlated with feelings of helplessness and inaction following instances of LGBTQ victimization, whereas positive attitudes toward LGBTQ students predicted

motivation to intervene following bullying. Consistent with Wachs et al. (2018)'s finding that supportive responses were most helpful, Bauman et al. (2016) found that the most commonly cited helpful response was adults' listening to youth or students. Additionally, students have indicated that effective staff responses following victimization reports include disciplinary action, educating the perpetrator, contacting the bully's parents, and filing a formal report (Kosciw et al., 2018).

School Level Characteristics that Support Adjustment

Due to the pervasive nature of bullying in schools, and the well documented adverse social and health outcomes associated with bullying, researchers have considered the possible mitigating effects of school-based supports such as antibullying policies, school climate, and teacher support. Antibullying policies are a commonly used strategy for decreasing bullying on school campuses and increasing student support and intervention when bullying occurs; however, literature has reported mixed findings on their effectiveness (Hall, 2017). Studies have found that many antibullying policies are not comprehensive, leaving out critical forms of bullying and failing to highlight vulnerable groups (Stickl Haugen et al., 2020). It has been hypothesized that the quality of policy impacts effectiveness; however, this has been disputed in the literature, with some studies finding no difference in effectiveness based on comprehensiveness (Gower et al., 2017).

More consistent in the extant literature is the effectiveness of an authoritative school climate on student experiences with victimization and associated outcomes. An authoritative school climate is one with high levels of structure, such as consistently enforced rules, and high levels of support, such as that received from teachers (Gregory et al., 2010). Such environments are associated with lower levels of peer victimization (Cornell & Huang, 2016; Gregory et al.,

2010; Thornberg et al., 2017). For example, Cornell et al. (2015) found in their survey of 39,364 7th and 8th-grade students that consistently enforced school rules were associated with fewer reported victimization experiences. Additionally, students in authoritative school climates have been found to engage in more defending behaviors following instances of victimization (Thornberg et al., 2018). Concerning teacher support, lower levels of peer victimization have been associated with caring, trustworthy, and respectful teachers (Cornell, Shukla & Konold, 2015; Gage et al., 2014). Furthermore, when students have a positive relationship with their teacher, they are more likely to seek their support following instances of victimization (Yablon, 2010). Along with decreasing victimization and increasing defending behaviors, school support and structure have also been found to moderate the relationship between victimization experiences and future negative social/emotional outcomes (Davidson & Demaray, 2007; Yeung & Leadbearer, 2010).

School Level Characteristics that Support LGBTQ Youth Adjustment

While global indicators of positive school climate have been identified, students' perception of school climate is subjective, with different students reporting unique perceptions of their school climate based on their characteristics and experiences (Kosciw et al., 2018). Differential school climate perceptions have been identified between LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ students, with LGBTQ youth generally reporting less supportive school environments (Black et al., 2012; Chesir-Teran & Hughes, 2009; Day et al., 2020; Kosciw et al., 2018). Other studies have not found differences in school climate perceptions between LGBTQ youth and their peers (Birkett et al., 2009).

A positive school climate has been found to support LGBTQ youths' adjustment. Supportive school climate factors such as inclusive programs and policies are associated with

more positive health, social, and academic outcome for LGBTQ youth (Black et al., 2012).

LGBTQ students attending schools with perceived positive school climate report decreased

mental health needs (Colvin et al., 2019). These relationships have been well supported in the

literature. In their survey of 7,376 7th and 8th-grade students, Birkett et al. (2009) found that a

positive school climate serves as a moderator, protecting students from the negative outcomes

associated with being a member of the LGBTQ community. LGBTQ students reporting a more

positive school climate reported lower levels of depression, suicidal ideation, alcohol, marijuana

use, and truancy. This relationship was further supported by Hatzenbuehler et al. (2014) and Wei

and Liu (2019) Using data from the 2005 and 2007 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey

and the 2010 School Health Profile Survey, Hatzenbuehler et al. (2014) found that students

residing in regions with more inclusive school climates reported decreased suicidal ideation.

Similarly, Wei and Liu (2019) found in a survey of 732 LGBTQ students that the presence of an

inclusive school climate was associated with less suicidal ideation.

Social Support

School climate can be broken down into specific support and structure variables

impacting student adjustment (Gregory et al., 2010). Teachers serve as a critical source of

support for LGBTQ youth. LGBTQ students' reliance on school-based adult support may be

particularly pronounced due to the decreased parent support experienced by many (Human

Rights Campaign, 2018; Johnson & Gastic, 2015; Koswic et al., 2018). Johnson and Gastic

(2015) found in their survey of 4,882 7th-12th graders that as compared to their heterosexual

peers, LGBTQ youth were more likely to have school-based adult mentors. Considering all

school staff members, most LGBTQ youths indicated that they were most comfortable speaking

with school-based mental health professionals about personal topics (Kosciw, 2018). Supportive

school-based adults support LGBTQ youth adjustment concerning both academic and mental health outcomes. Seelman et al. (2015) investigated the relationship between the presence of adult allies and LGBTQ students' school engagement. The types of, rather than the number of, adult allies were considered. Interestingly, it was found that students with increased adult ally diversification reported greater school engagement. Such diversification may hint at a globally more LGBTQ inclusive campus climate, which may serve to better support students than individual allies.

Furthermore, it has been hypothesized that the presence of LGBTQ affirming teachers on campus may increase students' feelings of safety and engagement, which could lead to increased academic achievement. Consistent with this hypothesis, Kosciw et al. (2018) found that students' GPA improved as the number of identifiable supportive staff members increased. Students who were able to identify more school staff allies were also more likely to have academic aspirations, such as graduating high school and attending college. The presence of LGBTQ allied adults on school campuses has also been found to impact the self-esteem of both LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ students. Dessel et al. (2017) investigated the impact of teachers' availability, use of homophobic language, and intervention in instances of LGBTQ harassment on students' self-esteem. Adult ally behavior predicted self-esteem for both LGBTQ and heterosexual/cisgender students, indicating that adult ally behavior may positively impact self-esteem. Additionally, positive mental health outcomes have also been associated with the support of school-based adults. In their investigation of 202 LGB students from numerous high schools, Goodenow et al. (2006) found a significant association between supportive staff presence and student experiences of victimization and suicidality. Students without supportive adults reported higher rates of victimization and suicide attempts.

Despite the documented benefit of school-based adult support for LGBTQ youth, they continue to be in short supply. While nearly all LGBTQ students can identify one school staff member ally, fewer can identify multiple. Furthermore, only 44% of students can identify a school staff member who is a member of the LGBTQ community (Kosciw et al., 2018). Moreover, there appears to be a discrepancy between teacher and student perceptions of the availability of adult support for LGBTQ students. Teachers report higher levels of perceived adult support for LGBTQ youth on their school campus than LGBTQ and ally identified students (Crothers et al., 2017). Extant literature suggests that failure to support and defend LGBTQ students is often the result of misunderstanding and uncertainty regarding how to respond best and that professional development can increase teacher ally behaviors (Swanson & Gettinger, 2016). Unfortunately, Payne and Smith (2018) found that many school administrators viewed LGBTQ issues as not present or impacting only a handful of students on their campus and do not see the need for such training or are prohibited from doing so by fear of consequences. Additionally, some administrators reported that they viewed LGBTQ training as a politicized act.

Youth require various types and sources of support, with peers acting as another critical source of support for LGBTQ youth. Watson et al. (2015) explored the relationship between social support and outcomes in a sample of 835 LGB identified youth. LGB students reported that support from their peers is the most essential form of support received. Those students reporting higher levels of peer support reported lower levels of suicidality and depression. While social support has been found to mitigate the negative social and health outcomes for LGBTQ youth in the short-term, their potential for long term impact has also been considered. In their survey of 249 young adults (ages 21-25), Snapp et al. (2015) examined the relationship between social support and long-term outcomes for members of the LGBTQ community. Participants

with a greater number of friends from whom they received sexuality specific support in adolescence reported higher self-esteem and greater life satisfaction in early adulthood. The need for sexuality specific support for LGBTQ youth has been reiterated in the literature. In their investigation of 100 adolescents, Doty et al. (2010) explored the outcomes associated with various forms of support. While LGBTQ youth benefited from receiving support from parents and heterosexual peers, sexuality specific support was most commonly received from LGBTQ peers and was also reportedly the most valuable. This finding highlights the value of LGBTQ specific organizations such as Gender Sexuality Alliances, as they create intentional spaces for the exchange of sexuality-based support among sexual minority youth.

Gender Sexuality Alliances (GSA), previously Gay-Straight Alliances, describe student clubs where youth come together to learn about LGBTQ issues, build connections, seek support, and engage in advocacy (Griffin et al., 2004). Per the literature to date, GSAs have primarily been associated with promoting positive and mitigating negative student outcomes. Students attending schools with a GSA report lower rates of victimization, drug use, and suicidality, as well as higher levels of peer support, improved feelings of safety and belonging on campus, and increased involvement in social justice activities (Day et al., 2020; Goodenow et al., 2006; Heck et al., 2014; Kosciw et al., 2018; Toomey & Russell, 2013; Walls et al., 2010).

It is not clear how many GSAs are supporting students in school, with reports ranging from approximately 30% to 60% of schools (Kosciw et al., 2018; Poteat et al., 2013; Poteat et al., 2019). Kosciw et al. (2018) found that the presence of a Gender Sexuality Alliance or similar organization can profoundly impact LGBTQ students' school experiences. The presence of a GSA organization is correlated with less use of homophobic language and fewer victimization experiences. When instances of bias or harassment occur, students from schools with a GSA also

report increased bystander intervention (Kosciw et al., 2018). Such findings have generally been consistent in the literature. Poteat et al. (2013) used data from the Dane County Youth Assessments in their large-scale investigation of GSAs' impact on student wellbeing. Participants included 15,965 students age 10-18. Results indicate that LGBTQ youth attending schools with a GSA report lower levels of truancy, alcohol use, tobacco use, suicide attempts, and sex with casual partners, compared to LGBTQ youth attending schools without a GSA. Goodenow, Szalacha, and Westheimer (2006) surveyed 202 students from over fifty schools to better understand the relationship between LGB student organizations and student suicidality and victimization experiences. Students attending schools with a GSA or similar organization reported fewer victimization experiences and less suicidality. Heck et al. (2014) surveyed 475 LGBTQ students to consider the relationship between the presence of a GSA or similar organization and drug use. As hypothesized, students who attended a school with gender and sexuality specific organizations engaged in less illicit substance use than students attending campuses without such an organization. The presence of a GSA has also been linked to higher reports of hope and belief in one's ability to enact social change (Poteat et al., 2019).

However, not all studies have supported the relationships between the presence of a GSA and lower rates of victimization and student mental health needs (Colvin et al., 2019; Poteat et al., 2013). Others have examined the elements of a GSA that manage its impact. Some studies have found that specific LGBTQ organization characteristics mediate the relationship between GSAs and positive outcomes for youth. Per a study conducted by Seelman et al. (2015), the size, visibility, and activity of the GSA organization influences the relationship between GSA presence and student engagement, with increased engagement reported when a larger, more visible, and highly active GSA is present. Relatedly, Poteat et al. (2016) surveyed 295 students

currently participating in a GSA and the impact of various GSA characteristics were examined. It was found that students with more structured GSAs, which provided several opportunities for support, socializing, and advocacy, reported higher senses of agency. However, other studies have indicated that the size and type of LGBTQ organization did not prove critical in their protective effects (Goodenow et al., 2006). The presence of a GSA may also signal other supportive school characteristics in that the presence of inclusive programs and the existence of LGBTQ inclusive policies are correlated (Chesir-Teran & Hughes, 2009).

Curriculum Inclusion

Curricular inclusion is another school level factor that supports LGBTQ student adjustment. The presence of an LGBTQ inclusive curriculum has been associated with several positive outcomes. Students attending schools with an inclusive curriculum report fewer instances of bias language use (Kosciw et al., 2018), less frequent and severe victimization, and a greater sense of safety on campus (O'Shaughnessey et al., 2004; Russell et al., 2006; Snapp et al., 2015; Toomey et al., 2012). Students attending schools with inclusive curriculum also report feeling safer and more comfortable speaking with teachers about their identity (Kosciw et al., 2018). Additionally, students report fewer stereotypes about LGBTQ when LGBTQ topics and figures are included in the curriculum (Snapp et al., 2015; Toomey et al., 2012).

Unfortunately, despite the literature indicating its protective power, most LGBTQ students surveyed in the US indicated that LGBTQ history and representations of LGBTQ individuals were absent from their school curriculum (Kosciw et al., 2018). To understand the educator point of view, Richard (2015) investigated 243 Canadian high school teachers' inclusion of LGBTQ topics in the classroom through online teacher interviews. Approximately 8 in 10 teachers reported that they had broached LGBTQ topics with their students. Teachers were found

to be more likely to engage in these discussions if they had previously participated in relevant training. When teachers reported that they did not discuss LGBTQ topics in their classroom, uncertainty, lack of training, and concerns regarding parent reactions were the primary reasons cited. Additionally, most teachers reported that they did not feel they were prepared to have the discussions in their teacher training programs.

Sexual health education has been highlighted as a critical area for LGBTQ curricular inclusion, considering LGBTQ youths' elevated rate of sexual risk-taking behaviors and sexually transmitted infections (Dermody et al., 2020; Kann et al., 2018). Additionally, sexual education is a natural point of inclusion for diverse sexual orientations (Bamms et al., 2017). Unfortunately, only approximately one-fifth of LGBTQ students report that they have received sex education that included LGBTQ specific topics. Furthermore, fewer than one in ten have engaged in sex education that included positive representations of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities (Kosciw et al., 2018). When sex education is LGBTQ inclusive, it serves as a protective factor for LGBTQ youth. In a longitudinal study, Baams et al. (2017) found that comprehensive sex education predicted intervention in instances of LGBTQ specific victimization. Considering regional practices, Proulx et al. (2018) investigated the relationship between comprehensive sex education in local districts and students' reported experiences with bullying and suicidal ideation. Results indicated that regions with more schools teaching inclusive sex education had lower student reported rates for victimization and suicidality. These findings suggest that inclusive sex education may be one point in a larger constellation of school-level factors buffering LGBTQ youth against the associated adverse outcomes.

Inclusive Policies

Inclusive policies have been identified as a school-level factor supporting LGBTQ youth adjustment (Kosciw et al., 2018; Day et al., 2019). Chesir-Teran and Hughes (2009) surveyed 2,037 LGBTQ high school students regarding their schools' characteristics and their victimization experiences. Surveys were completed based on student perceptions of LGBTQ inclusive programs and policies, LGBT harassment on campus, staff interventions, and their own experiences with bullying. The presence of LGBTQ inclusive policies and programs predict student reports of LBGTQ victimization. Similarly, tolerance of LGBTQ victimization was also predicted by the presence of such policies and programs. While several studies have supported the notion that LGBTQ inclusive policies serve to support LGBTQ youth, some have indicated that such policies alone may not significantly impact students' experiences (Russell et al. 2016). Effectiveness seems to be impacted by clarity and enforcement of policies (Sandfort et al., 2010) and the number of policies in place (Russell et al. 2016; Day et al., 2019). Students report fewer mental health needs when policies are consistently enforced (Sandfort et al., 2010). Additionally, victimization rates and LGBTQ students' academic achievement have been predicted by the number of inclusive policies (Day et al., 2019). Furthermore, discriminatory policies have been associated with lower self-esteem and higher depressive symptoms (Kosciw et al., 2018).

Given their high rates of victimization (Kosciw et al., 2018), LGBTQ specific antibullying/harassment policies are particularly important. While all states require districts to have an antibullying policy, the content is not regulated, resulting in a wide range of policies concerning inclusion and breadth (Stickl Haugen et al., 2020). When asked about the antibullying and harassment policies in place on their campuses, approximately one-fifth of students indicated that they were unaware of their school's policies. Over half of the students

surveyed reported that a policy was in place but did not specify LGBTQ individuals as a protected class. Only 13% of students indicated that a comprehensive policy that explicitly protects individuals from bullying and harassment based on their sexual orientation or gender identity is in place on their campus (Kosciw et al., 2018).

The impact of inclusive antibullying policies is clear and consistent in the literature. When such a policy is in place, LGBTQ youth report lower rates of victimization (Berger et al., 2019, Chesir-Teran & Hughes, 2009; Hall, 2017; Kosciw et al., 2018; Kull et al., 2016; Saewyc et al., 2014), homophobic language use, and assault (Berger et al., 2019; Kosciw et al., 2018). When instances of LGBTQ victimization occur, students are more likely to report the incident to an adult if an inclusive policy is in place (Berger et al., 2019; Kosciw et al., 2018). Furthermore, in the presence of an inclusive antibullying policy, students are more likely to intervene in LGBTQ victimization (Chesir-Teran & Hughes, 2009; Hall, 2017; Saewyc et al., 2014). The presence of such policies has also been found to impact adult behavior. Students report increased staff intervention in instances of homophobic victimization when this district has an inclusive antibullying policy. (Berger et al., 2019; Kosciw et al., 2018; Meyer, 2008).

Inclusive policies also impact students' perception of school climate and mental health outcomes. Students at schools with comprehensive policies report a more positive school climate (Kosciw et al., 2018; Saewyc et al., 2014) and a higher sense of safety on campus (Kull et al., 2016). Better mental health outcomes (Chesir-Teran & Hughes, 2009; Hall, 2017; Hatzenbuehler & Keyes, 2013; Saewyc et al., 2014), including less suicidality (Hatzenbuehler & Keyes,2013), has also been associated with inclusive antibullying policies. The same relationships between policies and victimization, adults' responses, and student outcomes are not found when the district utilizes a more generic policy (Berger et al., 2019; Kull et al., 2016).

Many of these school-level factors that support student adjustment are thought to be related, and therefore it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of any one intervention. For example, a school with supportive adults may be more likely to have inclusive antibullying policies. In their survey of LGB youth, however, Goodenow et al. (2006) clarified that even when controlling for the presence of supportive staff and experiences with victimization, the presence of LGB inclusive antibullying policies was independently correlated with fewer student suicide attempts.

Dress code policies have also been identified as a school-level factor impacting LGBTQ youth, particularly gender variant youth. Attire is a form of expression and is a way for individuals to assert their identity (Brower, 2013); however, student dress has long been policed in schools with the use of dress codes. Rational for dress codes include limiting gang activity, sexual harassment and assault, and distraction, while upholding morality (Edwards & Marshall, 2020). However, when examined more closely, dress codes often target specific groups such as black (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein 2012), female (Edwards & Marshall, 2020), and LGBTQ students (Ullman, 2014). It has been argued that dress codes serve to enforce heteronormativity (Ullman, 2014) and often have separate dress requirements for males and females, asserting the gender binary (Edwards & Marshall, 2020). Dress codes legitimize the "incorrectness" of some gender performances and set the foundation for disciplining gender-nonconforming expression (Kosciw et al., 2018; Levi, 2007). Transgender and non-binary youth are more likely to experience disciplinary action for dress code violations than cis-gender students (Koswic et al., 2018). Students are aware of this risk for punitive action in response to their gender expression. In a qualitative study including interviews with 24 trans youth, many expressed concerns regarding dress codes and the potential for disciplinary action for having a

gender-expansive presentation (Sausa, 2005). When LGBTQ inclusive, gender nonconforming, dress codes are in place, it has been argued that LGBTQ youth development is supported through encouragement of self-expression and protection from unnecessary disciplinary action (Glickman, 2016).

Bathroom policies are another regulatory measure impacting LGBTQ and particularly transgender and gender-nonconforming youth. School policies often prohibit transgender and gender nonconforming students from using the gendered bathroom that aligns with their identity (Ingrey, 2012; Porta et al., 2017). These discriminatory policies harm gender nonconforming students' mental and physical health, in that they do not feel safe and are not able to meet their basic physical needs on campus (Seelman 2014, 2016; Sutton 2016). When bathroom policies are nondiscriminatory and inclusive of all gender identities, positive student outcomes are associated. Youth have expressed that access to the bathroom appropriate for their identity increases their sense of safety on campus (Porta et al., 2017). Similarly, using cross-sectional data, Wernick et al. (2017) explored the relationship between bathroom access and gender variant students' sense of safety and academic achievement. Results indicate that unrestricted bathroom access is essential to transgender and nonbinary students' achievement and feelings of safety on campus.

The gender-nonconforming assault literature further supports this increased sense of safety. Nonrestrictive, trans-inclusive, bathroom policies are associated with fewer reported sexual assaults among gender variant youth. When gender variant youth cannot use the bathroom that best fits their gender identity, they are over twice as likely to be sexually assaulted on campus, which is particularly pronounced among transgender girls (Murchison et al., 2019). Furthermore, when a policy is in place, stating that students can use the gendered bathroom that

aligns with their identity, students report lower rates of discrimination in these spaces. Often schools manage the perceived bathroom dilemma by allowing students to use gender-neutral adult campus restrooms; however, the same mitigating effects have not been found when only gender-neutral bathrooms are made available (Kosciw et al., 2018).

While the specific impacts of different aspects of school climate have been documented, these factors are also interdependent. Day et al. (2020) found that students who attend schools with LGBTQ specific policies also report higher teacher support. Additionally, when both LGBTQ specific policies and GSAs were present on campus, students reported increased support from peers and school-based adults, as well as decreased bullying, compared to the impact of a single factor. It has been indicated that single mitigating factors are likely not enough to support LGBTQ adjustment and that multiple supports and policies are required to ensure the health and safety of LGBTQ youth (Poteat et al., 2013; Toomey et al., 2011).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The current study utilized data from the 2019 annual survey by Ditch the Label, an anti-bullying organization in the United Kingdom that engages in advocacy and seeks to better understand the nature and prevalence of bullying. The organization conducts an annual survey of students on bullying experiences and related variables. In 2019, 6,957 students completed some portion of the survey. Each participating school was provided a unique school code, which students were prompted to enter. To ensure appropriate size for analysis, schools with less than 200 participants were omitted, resulting in nine individual schools with a total of 4,751 participants. Participants with a score of 3 or lower on the question, "How honest were you in this survey," (1 = completely dishonest, 5 = completely honest) were also excluded (n=378). Participants who indicated they were "mostly" or "completely" honest were retained (n=2,574). Additionally, those indicating their age as 19 years or above were omitted, resulting in a total of 2,571 participants for the current study.

Participant demographics can be found in Table 1. Frequencies for various student characteristics such as age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability status, region, and school were calculated. Participants range in age from 12 to 18 with a mean age of 13.4. Thirty three percent of participants report they are 12 years old, 23% report they are 13 years old, 23% report they are 14 years old, 16% report they are 15 years old, 5% report they are 16 years old, and less than 1% are 17+ years old.

With regard to gender, the majority of the sample identified themselves as cisgender. Forty eight percent of participants indicated they are male, 50% indicated they are female, .5%

indicated they are transgender, 1% indicated they are non-binary, and .7% reported their gender as "other." Similarly, regarding sexual orientation, the majority of participants (85%) self-identified as heterosexual. Consistent with what has been reported in the literature (Kann et al., 2018; Sadler et al., 2018), approximately 11% of respondents indicated they are members of the LGBTQ community. Of those reporting they are members of the LGBTQ community, 5% report they are bisexual, 1% report they are gay, .7% report they are lesbian, 3% report they are curious/unsure, .5% report they are asexual, and 1% reported their sexual orientation as "other." Four percent of participants reported that they "preferred not to say" their sexual orientation.

For ethnicity, the majority of participants (77%) report they are White British, and 4% of participants indicate their ethnicity as Irish or "any other white background." Approximately 3% of participant report they are African, Caribbean, or Black (other). Two percent of participants report their ethnicity as Pakistani, 2% report their ethnicity as Indian, approximately 1% report their ethnicity as Asian (other), and less than one percent report their ethnicity as Chinese, Bangladeshi or Arab. One percent of respondents indicate they are Gypsy or Irish Traveler. Approximately 3.5% of participants report they are of two or more ethnicities. Three percent of respondents reported their ethnicity as "other" and approximately 1% indicated they preferred not to say.

Most respondents (82%) reported the absence of a disability. Five percent indicated they have a learning disability, 4% indicated they are Autism/Asperger's, and 2% indicated they have a Physical Disability. Five percent of respondents reported they preferred not to indicate disability status.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Demographic Variables	n	Percentage
Age		
12	843	33%
13	582	23%
14	597	23%
15	416	16%
16	124	5%
17	7	.3%
18	2	.1%
Gender		
Male	1240	48%
Female	1272	50%
Transgender	14	.5%
Non-binary	27	1%
Other	18	.7%
Sexual Orientation		
Straight/Heterosexual	2174	85%
Bisexual	118	5%
Gay	28	1%
Lesbian	18	.7%
Curious/Unsure	63	3%
Asexual	13	.5%
Prefer not to say	98	4%
Other	27	1%
Ethnicity		
White (British)	1987	77%
Pakistani	48	2%
Bangladeshi	15	.6%
Chinese	9	.4%
Asian (other)	24	.9%
African	35	1%
Caribbean	31	1%
Black (Other)	24	.9%
Arab	10	.4%
Prefer not to say	20	.8%
Other	79	3%
Irish	11	.4%
Gypsy or Irish Traveler	31	1%

White (other)	95	4%
White and Black Caribbean	22	.9%
White and Black African	14	.5%
White and Asian	27	1%
Multiple Background (other)	34	1%
Indian	58	2%
Disability Status		
Autism/Asperger's	91	4%
Physical Disability	58	2%
Learning Disability	136	5%
No Disability	2103	82%
Prefer not to say	132	5%
Region		
East Midlands	11	.4%
Wales	4	.2%
West Midlands	211	8%
Yorkshire and the Humber	13	.5%
East of England	386	15%
London	337	13%
North East	259	10%
North West	395	15%
Northern Ireland	3	.1%
Scotland	7	.3%
South East	827	32%
South West	121	5%
School		
A	238	9%
B	173	7%
C	303	12%
D	225	9%
E	627	24%
F	178	7%
G	260	10%
H	221	9%
I	346	13%

Measures

The Ditch the Label organization developed the 2019 annual survey (see Appendix A).

Psychometric analyses (e.g., alphas and factor analyses) are presented in the preliminary

analyses in Chapter IV.

Homo/Transprejudice Attitudes. Student were asked to indicate their level of

agreement with a number of homo/transprejudice statements. Participants recorded their

agreement on a scale of 1 "strongly disagree," 3 "somewhere in the middle," 5 "strongly agree."

Items included statements such as, "It's important for women to be gentle and caring," "sex

change operations should be banned," and "many lesbian, gay, and bi people use their sexual

orientation so that they can obtain special treatment or privileges."

Victimization Experiences. Students were asked about their role in bullying incidents.

Participants were asked to consider the prior 12 months and indicate their experiences with

bullying. Participants were able to select all options that apply including "I have been bullied," "I

saw somebody else being bullied," "I have bullied somebody," and "none of the above." Student

victimization experiences were then measured in terms of frequency, type of bullying

experienced, and perception of reason for bullying.

Frequency. Students who indicated they had been bullied were then asked, "In the past

12-months, how frequently have you experienced bullying?" and were given the options:

"unsure," "once a year," "once every 6 months," "once every 3 months," "once a month," "once

a fortnight," "once a week," "several times a week," or "daily."

Type of victimization. All participants were asked about their experiences with various

types of bullying including "verbal bullying (such as name calling/insults)," "physical assault

(such as being attacked or punched)," "intimidation (when somebody purposefully makes you

feel uncomfortable),” “cyberbullying (bullying online),” “social exclusion (e.g., being left out of the group),” and “indirect (e.g., silent treatment and rumors).” Participants were asked to indicate their experience of each form of bullying on a scale of one to nine, with one being “never,” five being “sometimes,” and nine being “constantly.”

Perceived reason for victimization. Participants who indicated they “have been bullied” were also asked to consider why they were bullied with the question, “Why do you think you were bullied?” Participants were given the options, “my physical appearance,” “the clothes I wear,” “my interests/hobbies,” “having a rich family,” “having a poor family,” “I get low grades,” “I get high grades,” “my mannerisms,” “my sexuality,” “being accused of being gay or lesbian when I’m not,” “my race,” “my religion,” “my culture,” “a disability I have,” and “my gender identity,” and were asked to select all that apply.

LGBTQ bullying. Participants who indicated they “have been bullied” were asked to consider why they were bullied with the question, “Why do you think you were bullied?” Those items relating to sexuality and gender identity were used to create the LGBTQ Bullying variable. Students who selected any of the following three perceived reasons for bullying were identified as victims of LGBTQ bullying: “my sexuality,” “being accused of being gay or lesbian when I’m not,” and/or “my gender identity.”

Associated Outcomes. Participants who indicated they “have been bullied” were also asked to report on the outcomes associated with their experiences of victimization. Students were asked, “To what extent do you think that the bullying affects/has affected you in the following areas of your life?” Students were asked about their “studies,” “social life and relationships with others,” “home life,” “self-esteem,” “optimism/positivity,” “ambitious for the future,” “confidence,” and “mental health.” Participants were asked to rate the effect of victimization on

a 9-point scale (1= "no affect," 5= "moderate affect," and 9 "extreme affect"). Students were also asked if "as a result of bullying" they have "engaged in or developed any of the following" and were asked to select all that apply: "self-harm (hurting yourself intentionally, e.g. cutting or injuring yourself," "truancy (not going to school)," "suicidal thoughts," "suicide attempt," "anti-social behavior (for example, hurting others, stealing or breaking the law)," "Alcohol/drug abuse," "risky sexual behavior (not using protection, multiple sexual partners)," "ran away from home," "developed an eating disorder," "social anxiety," and "depression."

Reporting Behaviors. Student reporting behaviors were also assessed. Participants who indicated they "have been bullied" were asked if they have "ever reported bullying." Participants were also asked, "why didn't you report the bullying?" and could select all that apply. Options included "it didn't affect me enough," "I didn't want to feel like a victim," "I was scared of it getting worse," "I felt embarrassed," "I felt like it wasn't going to be taken seriously," "my teachers don't care," "I didn't think it was serious enough," "I could deal with it on my own," "I'd have been called a snitch," "I have in the past and nothing happened," "I didn't want to feel patronized," and "other." Participants who indicated they have reported bullying were also surveyed about to whom they reported the incident and the outcome of their reporting behaviors. Options for who students reported the bullying to included "Ditch the Label," "got advice online," "teacher," "family member," "friend," "counselor," "a phone helpline," "health professional (such as a doctor or school nurse)," and "police." For each option, participants were asked to indicate if they were "satisfied," "dissatisfied," or "didn't report."

Inclusive School Climate. Information pertaining to individual school level characteristics was obtained via school websites. A thorough review of each school website was conducted in March of 2020. All relevant school materials were downloaded including general

policies, anti-discrimination policies, anti-bullying policies, curriculum summaries, dress code policies, and school organization rosters. The presence of individual elements of an inclusive school climate, including LGBTQ specific anti-bullying and discrimination policies, a dress code which allows for variance in gender expression, and an LGBTQ youth organization, were determined via these materials.

School materials were evaluated using the Inclusive School Climate Rubric developed for this study in Appendix B. The rubric includes four questions relating to inclusive school climate. School anti-discrimination and bullying policies were evaluated for their inclusion of LGBTQ individuals as a protected class (0 = neither gender nor sexual minority youth specified, 1 = either gender or sexual minority youth specified, 2 = both gender and sexual minority youth specified). The presence of non-binary/ non-gender specific dress codes was also considered (0 = Inflexible gender specific dress code (i.e. female student must wear skirts), 1 = Dress code gender specific but with flexibility (i.e. female student may choose pants or skirts), 2 = No gender specific dress requirements present). Lastly, schools were scored on the presence of an LGBTQ youth organization (0 = no evidence of an LGBTQ youth organization, 2 = LGBTQ youth organization present).

For each school, two raters independently examined school materials and completed the rubric. The raters were trained on the tool prior to utilization and practiced using materials from three practice schools not included in the final sample. Rubrics were then compared resulting in an interrater reliability of 100%. Raters then used the rubric to evaluate the materials from the nine schools included in the final sample. After independently rating all nine schools, raters compared results. Rater agreement was calculated resulting in 92% agreement. Individual

disagreements in ratings were resolved through discussion and an additional review of school

materials. Results of the Inclusive School Climate Rubric are as follows (see *Table 2)*.

Table 2

Inclusive School Climate Scores

School	Anti-Discrimination Policy	Anti-Bullying Policy	Dress Code	LGBTQ Organization	Total Score
A	2	2	1	2	7
B	2	2	1	0	5
C	1	2	2	2	7
D	2	1	2	0	5
E	2	2	1	2	7
F	2	2	2	2	8
G	1	1	2	2	6
H	2	2	2	0	6
I	2	2	1	0	5

School Level Characteristics

Participants came from nine individual schools from various regions in England.

Information on school region and religious affiliation was obtained from the Office for Standards

in Education (Ofsted) website. Most schools (67%) are not affiliated with a particular religion.

Of the 33% of schools that are religiously affiliated, all are Christian denominations. The number

of participants per school ranges from 173 to 627. Age ranges did not vary by school, with all

schools primarily serving students age 12-16. Three of the schools included served students in

years 7-13 and six of the schools included served students in years 7-11. Variance between

schools is seen in the area of sexual orientation, with the percent of students reporting they are a

sexual minority ranging from 10 to 23. Similarly, percent of students indicating they are a gender

minority range from 1 to 7. Demographic characteristics by school are reported in Table 3.

Table 3

Gender/Sexual Minority by School

Demographic Variables	n	Percentage
School		
Gender Minority	12	5%
Sexual Minority/Other	30	13%
School B		
Gender Minority	12	7%
Sexual Minority/Other	33	19%
School C		
Gender Minority	11	4%
Sexual Minority/Other	69	23%
School D		
Gender Minority	2	1%
Sexual Minority/Other	33	15%
School E		
Gender Minority	8	1%
Sexual Minority/Other	80	13%
School F		
Gender Minority	7	4%
Sexual Minority/Other	22	12%
School G		
Gender Minority	4	2%
Sexual Minority/Other	38	15%
School H		
Gender Minority	4	2%
Sexual Minority/Other	22	10%
School I		
Gender Minority	2	1%
Sexual Minority/Other	41	12%

School A. School A is a non-religiously affiliated school located in the East of England. Following implementation of exclusionary criteria, 238 participants from school A were retained in the final study. Eighteen percent of participants from school A identify as members of the LGBTQ community (n = 42). Per a review of school materials, school A obtained an inclusive school climate score of 7. School A's anti-discrimination and anti-bullying policies specified

LGBTQ individuals as a protected class. School A's dress code was found to be gender specific but with flexibility regarding required clothing. Evidence of an LGBTQ youth organization was also found in school A's materials.

School B. School B is a Christian affiliated school located in South East England. Following implementation of exclusionary criteria, 173 participants from school B were retained in the final study. Twenty-six percent of participants from school B identify as members of the LGBTQ community (n = 45). Per a review of school materials, school B obtained an inclusive school climate score of 5. School B's anti-discrimination and anti-bullying policies specified LGBTQ individuals as a protected class. School B's dress code was found to be gender specific but with flexibility regarding required clothing. Evidence of an LGBTQ youth organization was not found in school B's materials.

School C. School C is a non-religiously affiliated school located in South East England. Following implementation of exclusionary criteria, 303 participants from school C were retained in the final study. Twenty-seven percent of participants from school C identify as members of the LGBTQ community (n = 80). Per a review of school materials, school C obtained an inclusive school climate score of 7. School C's anti-bullying policy specified LGBTQ individuals as a protected class, however, their anti-discrimination policy specified sexual but not gender minority individuals as a protected class. School C's dress code was found to be free of gender specific dress requirements. Evidence of an LGBTQ youth organization was also found in school C's materials.

School D. School D is a Catholic affiliated school located in the West Midlands. Following implementation of exclusionary criteria, 225 participants from school D were retained in the final study. Sixteen percent of participants from school D identify as members of the

LGBTQ community (n = 35). Per a review of school materials, school D obtained an inclusive school climate score of 5. School D's anti-discrimination policy specified LGBTQ individuals as a protected class, however, their anti-bullying policy specified sexual but not gender minority individuals as a protected class. School D's dress code was found to be free of gender specific dress requirements. Evidence of an LGBTQ youth organization was not found in school D's materials.

School E. School E is a non-religiously affiliated school located in the East of England. Following implementation of exclusionary criteria, 627 participants from school E were retained in the final study. Fourteen percent of participants from school E identify as members of the LGBTQ community (n = 88). Per a review of school materials, school E obtained an inclusive school climate score of 7. School E's anti-discrimination and anti-bullying policies specified LGBTQ individuals as a protected class. School E's dress code was found to be gender specific but with flexibility regarding required clothing. Evidence of an LGBTQ youth organization was also found in school E's materials.

School F. School F is a non-religiously affiliated school located in North West England. Following implementation of exclusionary criteria, 178 participants from school F were retained in the final study. Sixteen percent of participants from school F identify as members of the LGBTQ community (n = 29). Per a review of school materials, school F obtained an inclusive school climate score of 8. School F's anti-discrimination and anti-bullying policies specified LGBTQ individuals as a protected class. School F's dress code was found to be free of gender specific dress requirements. Evidence of an LGBTQ youth organization was also found in school F's materials.

School G. School G is a non-religiously affiliated school located in North East England. Following implementation of exclusionary criteria, 260 participants from school G were retained in the final study. Seventeen percent of participants from school G identify as members of the LGBTQ community (n = 42). Per a review of school materials, school G obtained an inclusive school climate score of 6. Both school G's anti-bullying and anti-discrimination policies specified sexual but not gender minority individuals as a protected class. School G's dress code was found to be free of gender specific dress requirements. Evidence of an LGBTQ youth organization was found in school G's materials.

School H. School H is a Church of England affiliated school located in North West England. Following implementation of exclusionary criteria, 221 participants from school H were retained in the final study. Twelve percent of participants from school H identify as members of the LGBTQ community (n = 26). Per a review of school materials, school H obtained an inclusive school climate score of 6. School H's anti-discrimination and anti-bullying policies specified LGBTQ individuals as a protected class. School H's dress code was found to be free of gender specific dress requirements. Evidence of an LGBTQ youth organization was not able to be found in school H's materials.

School I. School I is a non-religiously affiliated school located in London. Following implementation of exclusionary criteria, 346 participants from school I were retained in the final study. Thirteen percent of participants from school I identify as members of the LGBTQ community (n = 43). Per a review of school materials, school I obtained an inclusive school climate score of 5. School I's anti-discrimination and anti-bullying policies specified LGBTQ individuals as a protected class. School I's dress code was found to be gender specific but with

flexibility regarding required clothing. Evidence of an LGBTQ youth organization was not able to be found in school I's materials.

Procedure

Schools were recruited via an email invitation sent to all public secondary schools in the United Kingdom offering participation in the 2019 Ditch the Label annual survey. It was communicated that participation in the survey was voluntary. Administrators who responded were provided access to the survey, including a unique school code. Administrators were notified that all participants under age 16 needed parent permission to participate; however, Ditch the Label did not verify compliance with this requirement. Administrators were also instructed to have students complete the survey at school with teacher supervision. Surveys were administered online. Survey responses were anonymous, unless students chose to enter their email addresses for entry in a raffle. Student email addresses were later removed from the data file. The annual survey was conducted in accordance with the guidelines laid out by the British Education Research Association.

Prior to analysis, the authors university IRB completed an Institutional Review Board (IRB) Letter of Non-Determination. Approval by the IRB was deemed unnecessary as this project used the existing data and did not directly recruit human subjects. Ditch the Label CEO, Liam Hackett, gave consent to use data from the 2019 Ditch the Label annual survey for the purposes outlined above (personal communication, October 9, 2019).

Data Analysis

Analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics 27.0. Research questions, hypotheses, variables, and statistical analyses are outlined in Table 4.

Table 4

Research Questions, Hypotheses, Variables, Statistical Analyses

Research Questions and Hypotheses	Variables	Planned Analyses
RQ 1: What school level factors predict youths' victimization experiences?		
H₁: The presence of an inclusive school climate, as evidenced by a comprehensive antibullying and discrimination policies, an inclusive dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization, will predict LGBTQ youths' victimization experiences, with a higher number of inclusive characteristics associated with fewer victimization experiences.	Inclusive school climate score Number of students who've witnessed bullying Extent of Bullying score LGBTQ Bullying score	Logistic Regression analysis Linear Regression analysis
RQ 2: What school level factors predict student reporting behaviors following instances of victimization?		
H₂: The presence of an inclusive school climate, as evidenced by a comprehensive antibullying and discrimination policies, an inclusive dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization, will predict LGBTQ youths' reporting behaviors, with a higher number of inclusive characteristics associated with more reporting.	Inclusive school climate score Number of students reporting victimization Ineffective Adult Intervention score	Logistic Regression analysis Regression analysis
RQ 3: What school level factors predict students' satisfaction with the outcome of reporting bullying?		
H₃: Students attending schools with an inclusive school climate, as evidenced by a comprehensive antibullying and discrimination policies, an inclusive dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization, will report higher satisfaction with the outcome of reporting.	Inclusive school climate score Teacher Reporting Satisfaction score	Regression analysis
RQ 4: What is the role of an LGBTQ inclusive school climate in the relationship between experiences with victimization and sexual/gender minority student adjustment?		
H₄: The presence of an inclusive school climate, as evidenced by a comprehensive	Inclusive school climate score	Moderation regression analysis

antibullying and discrimination policies, an inclusive dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization, will moderate the relationship between victimization experiences and poor student adjustment for LGBTQ youth.	Extent of Bullying Bullying Impact score Internalizing Behaviors score Externalizing Behaviors score	
RQ 5: What school level factors predict students' homoprejudice and transprejudice attitudes?		
H₅: Students attending schools with an inclusive school climate, as evidenced by a comprehensive antibullying and discrimination policies, an inclusive dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization will hold less homoprejudice and transprejudice attitudes.	Inclusive school climate score Homo/Transprejudice score	Regression analysis

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

Ditch the Label developed the questions and items in the survey used. Since they are not part of existing measure with established psychometric data, preliminary analyses were conducted to explore ways to create scale scores and examine psychometric properties. Scale descriptive statistics are presented in Table 5.

Homo/Transprejudice Attitudes Scale. Ten individual items were considered in the creation of the Homo/Transprejudice Attitudes Scale. On these ten items, participants were asked to indicate their agreement with ten statements regarding gender and sexual diversity on a scale from 1-5 (1= strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Statement such as "celebrations like "gay pride" are ridiculous because they assume that an individual's sexual orientation should be something to be proud of" and "feminine men make me feel uncomfortable." One item required reverse coding, "Lesbian, gay, and bi people who are 'out of the closet' should be admired for their courage." These variables were examined for the development and validation of Homo/Transprejudice scale. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy for this item set was above the cut off of .6 at .90. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also significant (χ^2= 7034.84, df=45, p<.001.) The result of Principal Component Analysis (PCA) indicated that these ten items load onto a single component. Using Kaiser's (1958) eigenvalue criterion, one component was retained, which explains 41% of the variance. The internal consistency was then evaluated using Cronbach's alpha (α= .84), an acceptable level of reliability. All ten items were retained; a high score indicates a high level of homo/transprejudice attitudes.

Extent of Bullying Scale. To gauge the extent of bullying experienced, participants were asked to indicate how frequently they experienced seven different types of bullying: verbal, physical, intimidation, cyber, social exclusion, within an online game, and indirect.) Responses were recorded on a 9-point scale (0= never to 8=constantly). These seven individual items were considered in the creation of the Extent of Bullying Scale, capturing the frequency and types of bullying experienced. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy for this item set was above the cut off of .6 at .86. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also significant ($\chi^2=$ 61226.64, df=21, p<.001.) The results of a Principal Component Analysis (PCA) indicated that these seven items load onto a single component. Using Kaiser's (1958) eigenvalue criterion, one component was retained, which explains 50.04% of the variance. The scales internal consistency was then evaluated using Cronbach's alpha (α= .83), indicating an acceptable level of reliability. All seven items were retained; a high score indicates a high frequency of bullying through multiple means.

Ineffective Adult Intervention Scale. Participants who indicated they had not reported instances of bullying were asked to elaborate on their reasons for not reporting. For the current study, we were interested in those reasons relating to past or assumed ineffective adult intervention and they were used to create the ineffective adult intervention scale. Four individual items were considered in the creation of an ineffective adult intervention variable. Items included reasons like "my teachers don't care" and "I have done so in the past and nothing happened." The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy for this item set was above the cut off of .6 at .73. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also significant (χ^2= 116.71, df=6, p<.001.) The results of a Principal Component Analysis (PCA) indicated that these four items load onto a single component. Using Kaiser's (1958) eigenvalue criterion, one component was retained,

which explains 51.74% of the variance. The scale's internal consistency was then evaluated using Cronbach's alpha (α= .69). All four items were retained; a high score indicates more past or assumed ineffective adult intervention.

Impact Scale. To measure the impact of bullying, participants were prompted to indicate how experiences with bullying have affected eight domains. Examples of domains are studies, home life, self-esteem, and ambitions for the future. Participants rated the impact from 1-9 (1= no affect, 5 = moderate affect, 9=extreme affect). These eight individual items were considered in the creation of a bullying impact score. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy for this item set was above the cut off of .6 at .93. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also significant (χ^2= 2836.47, df=28, p<.001.) The results of a Principal Component Analysis (PCA) indicated that these eight items load onto a single component. Using Kaiser's (1958) eigenvalue criterion, one component was retained, which explains 64.22% of the variance. The scale's internal consistency was then evaluated using Cronbach's alpha (α= .92), indicating a good level of reliability. All eight items were retained; a high score indicates more impact.

Internalizing Behaviors Scale. Participants were asked to indicate what internalizing symptoms/behaviors they have developed or engaged in as a result of bullying. Examples include self-harm, depression, and suicide attempt. These individual items were considered in the creation of an internalizing behaviors variable. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy for these items was above the cut off of .6 at .82. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also significant (χ^2= 760.28, df=15, p<.001.) The results of a Principal Component Analysis (PCA) indicated that these six items load onto a single component. Using Kaiser's (1958) eigenvalue criterion, one component was retained, which explains 46.26% of the variance. The scales internal consistency was then evaluated using Cronbach's alpha (α= .76), indicating an adequate

level of reliability. All six items were retained; a high score indicates more internalizing behaviors.

Externalizing Behaviors Scale. Participants were asked to indicate what externalizing symptoms/behaviors they have developed or engaged in as a result of bullying. Examples include anti-social behavior, truancy, and drug use. These individual items were considered in the creation of an externalizing behaviors score. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy for this set of items was above the cut off of .6 at .78. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also significant (χ^2= 450.432, df=10, p<.001.) Per the results of a Principal Component Analysis (PCA), these five items load onto a single component. Using Kaiser's (1958) eigenvalue criterion, one component was retained, which explains 46.40% of the variance. The internal consistency was then evaluated using Cronbach's alpha (α = .69). All five items were retained; a high score indicates more externalizing behaviors.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics of Study Scales

Scale	N	Range	Mean	SD	Skew	Kurtosis
Homo/Transprejudice Attitudes	2,571	1 - 5	2.35	.79	.56	-.02
Extent of Bullying	2,571	0 - 56	11.09	10.68	1.16	1.21
Ineffective Adult Intervention	191	0 - 4	.88	1.19	1.26	.69
Impact	571	1 - 9	4.50	2.30	.19	-1.01
Internalizing Behavior	571	0 - 6	1.83	1.77	.79	-.42
Externalizing Behavior	571	0 - 5	.62	1.08	1.31	5.56

Note. Varying sample sizes result from the structure of the questionnaire, in which only those who indicated bullying experience were asked about impact, reporting, and associated behaviors. Only those who indicated prior reporting were asked about ineffective adult intervention.

Teacher Reporting Satisfaction. Those participants who have previously reported bullying were then asked about to whom they reported the incident and the outcome of their reporting behaviors. The percent of participants who have ever reported bullying reported to the following categories: Counsellor (21%), Health Professional (14%), Friend (61%), Ditch the Label (14%), Got advice online (17%), Family member (74%), Phone help line (7%), Police (11%), Teacher (77%). Of the options presented, "teacher" was the most common category to whom students reported. Of the students who indicated they had ever reported bullying, 293 (77%) had reported to a teacher. This represents 11% of the total sample. Because of the focus of the current study on school level factors, reporting behaviors to teachers were further examined.

Correlations Among Study Variables. Correlations were computed among eight scales including: Inclusive School Climate, Homo/Transprejudice Attitudes, Extent of Bullying, Ineffective Adult Intervention, Impact, Internalizing Behaviors, and Externalizing Behaviors scales. Results found several statistically significant correlations. There was an inverse relationship between Inclusive School Climate Score and Homo/Transprejudice Attitudes, $r(2,570) = -.09$, $p < .001$, suggesting that students attending schools with higher Inclusive School Climate scores report less Homo/Transprejudice Attitudes. However, there was a statistically significant correlation between Inclusive School Climate Score and Extent of Bullying, $r(2,570) = .07$, $p = .001$; those students attending schools with higher Inclusive School Climate scores report more bullying.

In examining the relationship between Homo/Transprejudice Attitudes and other scales, a statistically significant correlation between Homo/Transprejudice Attitudes and Externalizing Behaviors was found, $r(2,570) = .14$, $p = .001$. Students reporting more Homo/Transprejudice Attitudes also report more engagement in Externalizing Behaviors.

The Extent of Bullying scale was statistically significantly correlated between several other scales including the Ineffective Adult Intervention, Impact, Internalizing Behaviors, and Externalizing Behaviors scales. Students who reported more frequent and more varied forms of bullying reported more assumption of/past experience with Ineffective Adult Interventions following reporting bullying, $r(190) = .44$, $p < .001$. Additionally, in line with hypotheses, participants who reported more frequent and more varied forms of bullying reported a greater impact on functioning after bullying $r(570) = .61$, $p < .001$, and more reports of internalizing $r(570) = .49$, $p < .001$ and externalizing behaviors $r(570) = .34$, $p < .001$.

Similarly, the Ineffective Adult Intervention Scale was significantly correlated with the Impact, Internalizing Behaviors, and Externalizing Behaviors scales. Participants who reported more assumption of/past experience with Ineffective Adult Interventions as a result of reporting bullying indicate they experienced a greater impact on their functioning due to $r(190) = .35$, $p < .001$. Participants reporting higher Ineffective Adult Intervention Scale scores also reported more internalizing $r(190) = .33$, $p < .001$ and externalizing behaviors $r(190) = .19$, $p < .001$ in response to bullying experiences.

Lastly, the Impact, Internalizing Behavior, and Externalizing Behavior scales were all found to be positively correlated. Students reporting more Impact on Functioning after bullying also reported more Internalizing Behaviors $r(570) = .64$, $p < .001$ and Externalizing Behaviors following bullying experiences $r(570) = .37$, $p < .001$. Additionally, students who report Internalizing Behaviors are likely to report Externalizing Behaviors $r(570) = .54$, $p < .001$.

Between School Differences. A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed to examine between school differences on the six scales of interest. Table 6 presents the scale means and standard deviations by school. When considering the model as a

whole, a statistically significant MANOVA effect was obtained, F (48, 875) = 1.40, p = .04, Wilk's Λ =.70, partial η^2 = .06. A linear combination of all scales was significantly different among the nine schools. However, when examining individual scales, no statistically significant variance in means was observed. Homo/Transprejudice Attitude scores did not vary significantly between schools, F (8, 182) = 1.81, p = .08, partial η^2 = .07. Similarly, no significant differences were found among schools in Extent of Bullying, F (8, 182) = 1.02, p = .42, partial $\eta2$ = .04, and Ineffective Adult Intervention, F (8, 182) = 1.77, p = .09, partial η^2 = .07). Impact scores did not vary significantly between schools, F (8, 182) = 1.48, p = .17, partial η^2 = .06). Lastly, no significant school differences were found for Internalizing Behavior, F (8, 182) = .86; p = .56; partial η^2 = .04) and Externalizing Behaviors, F (8, 182) = .72, p = .67, partial η^2 = .03.

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations by School

| Scale | School Level Mean (SD) | | | | | | | | | |
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	Total
1	12.08 (10.77)	11.10 (11.57)	12.44 (11.15)	8.95 (8.64)	11.79 (10.30)	9.81 (10.94)	11.26 (11.41)	12.29 (11.34)	9.08 (10.05)	11.09 (10.68)
2	.54 (.66)	2.25 (2.0)	.67 (.92)	.81 (1.12)	.87 (1.13)	1.00 (1.10)	.76 (1.30)	1.07 (1.14)	.83 (1.42)	.88 (1.19)
3	2.34 (.78)	2.37 (.74)	2.10 (.70)	2.69 (.80)	2.33 (.82)	2.40 (.77)	2.33 (.81)	2.28 (.74)	2.43 (.78)	2.35 (.79)
4	4.21 (2.32)	4.69 (2.83)	4.83 (2.25)	4.07 (2.26)	4.80 (2.25)	4.74 (1.72)	4.30 (2.32)	4.26 (2.33)	4.21 (2.25)	4.50 (2.30)
5	1.39 (1.57)	1.94 (2.12)	1.91 (1.72)	1.73 (1.55)	2.05 (1.90)	1.95 (1.54)	1.88 (1.70)	1.61 (1.86)	1.82 (1.70)	1.83 (1.77)

6	.61 (1.03)	.94 (1.50)	.58 (.88)	.39 (.70)	.67 (1.24)	.80 (1.06)	.63 (1.09)	.58 (1.17)	.52 (.88)	.62 (1.08)

Note. 1 Extent of Bullying, 2 Ineffective Intervention, 3 Prejudice Attitudes, 4 Impact on Functioning, 5 Internalizing Behaviors, 6 Externalizing Behaviors.

Results

RQ 1: What School Level Factors Predict Youths' Victimization Experiences?

Witnessing Bullying. In the sample, (n=747). Table 7 summarizes the frequency of witnessing bullying by school. Students' reports of witnessing were analyzed by school to determine whether there were statistically significant differences. The number of students indicating they had witnessed other students being bullied was not found to vary significantly by school ($\chi^2 = 15.15$, $p = .06$).

Table 7

Frequencies and Percentages by School

| Variable | School n (%) | | | | | | | | | |
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	Total
LGBTQ Bullying	21 (9%)	11 (6%)	27 (9%)	12 (5%)	47 (7%)	5 (3%)	20 (8%)	25 (11%)	11 (3%)	179 (7%)
Witnessed Bullying	68 (29%)	54 (31%)	80 (26%)	78 (35%)	205 (33%)	49 (28%)	70 (27%)	62 (28%)	81 (23%)	747 (29%)
Reported Bullying	44 (18%)	25 (14%)	59 (19%)	20 (9%)	87 (14%)	14 (8%)	43 (17%)	40 (18%)	48 (14%)	380 (15%)
Reported to Teacher	31 (13%)	20 (12%)	44 (15%)	15 (7%)	68 (11%)	11 (6%)	32 (12%)	30 (14%)	42 (12%)	293 (11%)
Teacher R. Satisfaction	21 (9%)	16 (9%)	23 (8%)	11 (5%)	45 (7%)	8 (4%)	15 (6%)	18 (8%)	25 (7%)	182 (7%)

A pair of logistic regression models were conducted to determine what school level factors predicted witnessing bullying for all participants. The dichotomous dependent variable was whether students had observed other students being bullied in the prior year (yes/no). The independent variables in the model included: total school climate score, inclusive anti-bullying policy, inclusive anti-discrimination policy, dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization. The first model included only total school climate score as the independent variable. The second model included the four individual components of an inclusive school climate as predictors: inclusive anti-bullying policy, inclusive anti-discrimination policy, dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization.

Table 8
Logistic Regression Models Predicting Witnessing

Model	Variable	*B*	SE	Wald	*df*	Sig.	Exp(B)
Model 1	Cox & Snell R^2 = .00, χ^2 = .26, *p* = .61						
	Inclusive School Climate	.02	.05	.26	1	.61	1.02
Model 2	Cox & Snell R^2 = .00, χ^2 = 6.81, *p* = .15						
	Anti-Discrimination Policy	.33	.15	4.6	1	.03	1.39
	Anti-Bullying Policy	-.22	.13	2.81	1	.09	.80
	Dress Code	.02	.12	.02	1	.89	1.01
	LGBTQ Student Organization	.09	.05	2.68	1	.10	1.09

The first logistic regression model was not significant, Cox & Snell R^2 = .00, χ^2 = .26, *p* = .61. This model found that total school climate score was not a significant predictor of witnessing bullying (*B*=.02, SE=.05, Wald=.26, df=1, *p* =.61). Similarly, the second logistic regression model, including the four individual elements of an inclusive school climate, was not significant, Cox & Snell R^2 = .00, χ^2 = 6.81, *p* = .15. Inclusive anti-bullying policy, dress code,

and LGBTQ youth organization were not significant contributors to the model (see Table 8). Anti-discrimination policy was a significant contributor (*B*=.33, SE=.15, Wald=4.63, df=1, *p* =.03), though the model as a whole was not significant. However, this relationship was in the opposite direction as hypothesized. Holding all other independent variables constant, with each one unit increase in inclusive anti-discrimination policy score, there is a .33 unit increase in witnessing bullying *SE*=.15, *p*<.05. Those students attending a school with an inclusive anti-discrimination policy were 1.39 times more likely to have witnessed bullying in the prior year.

   Witnessing Bullying Among LGBTQ Participants. Per the result of a chi square analysis, witnessing bullying was found to vary significantly by sexual orientation and gender identity (χ^2 = 4.12, *p* = .04). Participants who identify as LGBTQ were more likely to report having observed another student being bullied in the prior year (33%) as compared to their heterosexual and cisgender peers (28%). Considering only those participants who identify as LGBTQ, witnessing bullying was not found to vary significantly by school (χ^2 = 10.51, *p* = .23).

   The same pair of logistic regression models were conducted to determine what school level factors predicted witnessing bullying only for those participants identifying as LGBTQ (*N*=380). The first model included only total school climate score as the independent variable. The second model included the four individual components of an inclusive school climate as predictors. Consistent with the results for the entire sample, the first logistic regression model was not significant for this subset, Cox & Snell R^2 = .01, χ^2 = 2.66, *p* = .10. This model found that total school climate score was not a significant predictor of witnessing bullying for LGBTQ students (*B*=-.18, SE=.11, Wald=2.65, df=1, *p* =.10). Similarly, the second logistic regression model for this subset, including the four individual elements of an inclusive school climate, was

not significant, Cox & Snell R^2 = .01, χ^2 = 3.82, p = .43. None of the four elements of inclusive school climate were significant contributors to the model (*see Table 9*)

Table 9

Logistic Regression Models Predicting LGBTQ Witnessing

Model	Variable	B	SE	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Model 1	Cox & Snell R^2 = .01, χ^2 = 2.66, p = .10						
	Inclusive School Climate	-.18	.11	2.65	1	.10	.83
Model 2	Cox & Snell R^2 = .01, χ^2 = 3.82, p = .43						
	Anti-Discrimination Policy	.19	.37	.28	1	.60	1.21
	Anti-Bullying Policy	-.26	.32	.66	1	.42	.77
	Dress Code	-.03	.31	.01	1	.93	.97
	LGBTQ Student Organization	-.14	.14	1.06	1	.30	.87

Extent of Bullying. In the sample, 16% of participants indicated that had never experienced any form of bullying. Of the 84% that reported some prior bullying experience, extent of bullying ranged widely on the 56-point scale. Average extent of bullying score for the sample was 11.06 (SD=10.68). Extent of bullying score did not vary significantly by school, $F_{(8, 182)}$ = 1.02, p = .42; partial η^2 = .04.

To investigate what school level factors predicted the extent of bullying, a pair of linear regression models were conducted. The continuous dependent variable was students' reported extent of bullying score. The predictor variables in the models included: total school climate score, inclusive anti-bullying policy, inclusive anti-discrimination policy, dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization. The first model included only total school climate score as the independent variable. The second model included the four individual components of an inclusive

school climate as predictors: inclusive anti-bullying policy, inclusive anti-discrimination policy, dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization.

The first regression model was statistically significant, $R^2 = .005$, F(1, 2569)=12.02, $p = .001$. This model found that total school climate score statistically significantly predicted extent of bullying ($B = .76$, $df = 1$, $p = .001$) (see *Table 10)*. This indicates that for every one unit increased in total school climate score, extent of bullying increased by .76 units. This finding is contrary to the hypothesized relationship between variables. This model explained approximately .5% of the variance in extent of bullying scores ($R^2 = .005$). In the second model, the four individual inclusive school climate variables were considered. Similarly, this model was also significant, $R^2 = .007$, F(4, 2566)=4.48, $p = .001$. Anti-discrimination policy ($p = .22$) and dress code ($p = .73$) were not found to statistically significantly predict extent of bullying. Anti-bullying policy ($p = .02$) and LGBTQ student organization were found to be significant predictors of extent of bullying ($p = .03$).

Table 10

Linear Regression Models Predicting Extent of Bullying

Model	Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
Model 1	$R^2 = .005$, F(1, 2569)=12.02, $p = .001$					
	Inclusive School Climate	.76	.22	.07	3.47	.001
Model 2	$R^2 = .007$, F(4, 2566)=4.48, $p = .001$					
	Anti-Discrimination Policy	-.89	.73	-.03	-1.22	.22
	Anti-Bullying Policy	1.47	.64	.05	2.28	.02
	Dress Code	.20	.58	.01	.35	.73
	LGBTQ Student Organization	.54	.26	.05	2.13	.03

Extent of Bullying Among LGBTQ Participants. Per the results of a one-way ANOVA, extent of bully scores were found to vary significantly based on LGBTQ status, $F (1, 2569) = 74.41, p > .001$). Participants who identified themselves as members of the LGBTQ community reported increased frequency and severity of bullying (M = 15.39) as compared to their peers (M = 10.34). When considering school level differences, extent of bullying was not found to vary significantly by school among LGBTQ participants $F (1, 371) = 1.01, p = .42$.

To investigate what school level factors predicted the extent of bullying for LGBTQ students, pair of linear regression models were conducted similar to those conducted for the whole sample. Model one was not significant, $R^2 =.004, F(1, 378)=1.45, p = .23$. In this model, total school climate score was not found to statistically significantly predict LGBTQ participants' extent of bullying score ($B = .85, df = 1, p = .23$). Similarly, in model two, the four individual inclusive school climate variables were not found to predict LGBTQ students' extent of bullying score, $R^2 =.02, F(4, 375)=1.63, p = .17$ (*see Table 11*).

Table 11

Linear Regression Models Predicting LGBTQ Extent of Bullying

Model	Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
Model 1	$R^2 =.004, F(1, 378)=1.45, p = .23$					
	Inclusive School Climate	.85	.70	.06	1.21	.23
Model 2	$R^2 =.02, F(4, 375)=1.63, p = .17$					
	Anti-Discrimination Policy	-.22	2.25	-.08	-.99	.33
	Anti-Bullying Policy	-1.82	2.01	-.05	-.91	.37
	Dress Code	-1.57	1.94	-.06	-.81	.42
	LGBTQ Student Organization	1.19	.84	.09	1.42	.16

LGBTQ Bullying. Seven percent of participants reported having experienced LGBTQ bullying (n=179), which represents 31% of those who reported any form of bully victimization. The rate of LGBTQ bullying was analyzed by school to determine if there were statistically significant differences. Table 7 summarizes the frequency of LGBTQ bullying by school. Per the results of a Pearson's chi-square analysis, frequency of LGBTQ bullying was found to vary significantly by school (χ^2 = 23.40, p = .003). Students in schools A, C, and H report the highest instances of LGBTQ bullying with frequency ranging from 9-11%. Schools I and F report the lowest instances of LGBTQ bulling with frequencies of 3% reported.

A pair of logistic regression models were conducted to determine what school level factors predicted LGBTQ bullying. The dichotomous dependent variable was whether students had experienced LGBTQ bullying in the prior year (yes/no). The independent variables in the model included: total school climate score, inclusive anti-bullying policy, inclusive anti-discrimination policy, dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization. The first model included only total school climate score as the independent variable. The second model included the four individual components of an inclusive school climate as predictors: inclusive anti-bullying policy, inclusive anti-discrimination policy, dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization.

The first logistic regression model was not significant, Cox & Snell R^2 = .00, χ^2 = 1.81, p = .18. This model found that total school climate score was not a significant predictor of LGBTQ bullying (B=.11, SE=.08, Wald=1.80, df=1, p =.18) (see *Table 10*). Similarly, the second logistic regression model, including the four individual elements of an inclusive school climate, was not significant in predicting LGBTQ bullying, Cox & Snell R^2 = .00, χ^2 = 3.83, p = .43. None of the included variables were significant contributors to the model (see *Table 12*).

Table 12

Logistic Regression Models Predicting LGBTQ Bullying

Model	Variable	B	SE	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Model 1	Cox & Snell $R^2 = .00$, $\chi^2 = 1.81$, $p = .18$						
	Inclusive School Climate	.11	.08	1.80	1	.18	1.12
Model 2	Cox & Snell $R^2 = .00$, $\chi^2 = 3.83$, $p = .43$						
	Anti-Discrimination Policy	-.16	.26	.38	1	.54	.85
	Anti-Bullying Policy	.22	.23	.90	1	.34	1.25
	Dress Code	.16	.21	.55	1	.46	1.17
	LGBTQ Student Organization	.07	.10	.53	1	.47	1.07

LGBTQ Bullying Among LGBTQ Participants. Experiences of LGBTQ bullying were found to vary significantly by sexual orientation and gender identity ($\chi^2 = 98.88$, $p < .001$). Participants who identify as LGBTQ were more likely to report having been the victim of LGBTQ specific bullying in the prior year (19%) as compared to their heterosexual and cisgender peers (5%). Considering only those participants who identify as LGBTQ, LGBTQ bullying was also found to vary significantly by school ($\chi^2 = 15.71$, $p = .047$). Rates of LGBTQ specific bullying within LGBTQ identified participants varied widely by school ranging from 8-33%. Schools A, F, and I all had LGBTQ bullying within this population below 10%, while schools G and H had rates above 30%.

The same pair of logistic regression models were run to determine what school level factors predicted LGBTQ bullying for those participants identifying as LGBTQ (*N*=380). The first model included only total school climate score as the independent variable. The second model included the four individual components of an inclusive school climate as predictors.

Consistent with the results for the entire sample, the first logistic regression model was not significant, Cox & Snell R^2 = .00, χ^2 = .12, p = .73. This model found that total school climate score was not a significant predictor of LGBTQ bullying for LGBTQ students (B=.05, SE= .14, Wald= .12, df=1, p =.73). Similarly, the second logistic regression model, including the four individual elements of an inclusive school climate, was not significant, Cox & Snell R^2 = .02, χ^2 = 6.06, p = .20. None of the four elements of inclusive school climate were significant contributors to the model (*see Table 13*).

Table 13

Logistic Regression Models Predicting LGBTQ Bullying

Model	Variable	B	SE	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Model 1	Cox & Snell R^2 = .00, χ^2 = .12, p = .73						
	Inclusive School Climate	.05	.14	.12	1	.73	1.05
Model 2	Cox & Snell R^2 = .02, χ^2 = 6.06, p = .20						
	Anti-Discrimination Policy	-.34	.43	.62	1	.43	.71
	Anti-Bullying Policy	-.18	.36	.26	1	.61	.83
	Dress Code	.29	.39	.56	1	.45	1.03
	LGBTQ Student Organization	-1.04	1.50	.48	1	.48	.35

RQ 2: What School Level Factors Predict Student Reporting Behaviors Following Instances of Victimization?

Reporting Bullying. Fifteen percent of participants indicated that they have reported instances of bullying to an adult (n=380), which represents 67% of those who have experienced bully victimization. Between school differences were considered. Reporting behaviors were not found to vary significantly by school (χ^2 = 12.80, p = .12).

A pair of logistic regression models were conducted to determine what school level factors predicted bullying reporting behaviors. The dichotomous dependent variable was whether students had reported instances of bullying in the prior year (yes/no). The independent variables in the model included: total school climate score, inclusive anti-bullying policy, inclusive anti-discrimination policy, dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization. The first model included only total school climate score as the independent variable. The second model included the four individual components of an inclusive school climate as predictors: inclusive anti-bullying policy, inclusive anti-discrimination policy, dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization.

Table 14

Logistic Regression Models Predicting Reporting Bullying

Model	Variable	B	SE	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Model 1	Cox & Snell R^2 = .00, χ^2 = .28, p = .60						
	Inclusive School Climate	.05	.10	.28	1	.60	1.05
Model 2	Cox & Snell R^2 = .01, χ^2 = 6.99, p = .14						
	Anti-Discrimination Policy	-.46	.32	2.06	1	.15	.63
	Anti-Bullying Policy	.23	.26	.80	1	.37	1.26
	Dress Code	-.51	.26	3.81	1	.05	.600
	LGBTQ Student Organization	-.04	.12	.09	1	.76	.96

The first logistic regression model was not significant, Cox & Snell R^2 = .00, χ^2 = .28, p = .60. This model found that total school climate score was not a significant predictor of reporting behaviors (B=.05, SE=.10, Wald=.28, df=1, p =.60). Similarly, the second logistic regression model, including the four individual elements of an inclusive school climate, was not significant not significant, Cox & Snell R^2 = .01, χ^2 = 6.99, p = .14. Inclusive anti-bullying

policy, anti-discrimination policy, dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization were not significant contributors to the model (see Table 14).

Bullying Reporting Among LGBTQ Participants. Reporting behaviors were found to vary significantly by sexual orientation and gender identity ($\chi^2 = 4.22$, $p = .04$). Participants who identify as LGBTQ were less likely to have reported bullying in the prior year (59%) as compared to their heterosexual and cisgender peers (69%). Consistent with whole sample findings, considering only those participants who identify as LGBTQ, reporting behaviors were not found to vary significantly by school ($\chi^2 = 10.37$, $p = .24$).

The same pair of logistic regression models were run to determine what school level factors predicted LGBTQ students' reporting behaviors ($N=380$). The first model included only total school climate score as the independent variable. The second model included the four individual components of an inclusive school climate as predictors. Consistent with the results for the entire sample, the first logistic regression model was not significant, Cox & Snell R^2 = .00, $\chi^2 = .12$, $p = .73$. This model found that total school climate score was not a significant predictor of reporting behaviors for LGBTQ students (B=-.07, SE= .21, Wald= .12, df=1, p =.73). Similarly, the second logistic regression model, including the four individual elements of an inclusive school climate, was not significant Cox & Snell R^2 = .03, $\chi^2 = 4.55$, $p = .34$. Anti-bullying policy, dress code, and LGBTQ student organization were not found to be significant contributors to the model (*see Table 15*). Anti-Discrimination Policy was found to significantly predict LGBTQ students' reporting behaviors following bullying incidents. This relationship exists in the opposite direction as hypothesized, with each one unit increase in Anti-discrimination policy associated with a -1.33 unit decrease in reporting behaviors.

Table 15

Logistic Regression Models Predicting Reporting Bullying Among LGBTQ

Model	Variable	B	SE	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Model 1	Cox & Snell R^2 = .00, χ^2 = .12, p = .73						
	Inclusive School Climate	-.072	.21	.12	1	.73	.93
Model 2	Cox & Snell R^2 = .03, χ^2 = 4.55, p = .34						
	Anti-Discrimination Policy	-1.33	.67	3.93	1	.05	.27
	Anti-Bullying Policy	-.08	.47	.03	1	.87	.93
	Dress Code	-.94	.58	2.65	1	.10	.39
	LGBTQ Student Organization	-.26	.27	.96	1	.33	.77

Ineffective Adult Intervention. Participants who indicated they had not reported instances of bullying were asked to elaborate on their reasons for not reporting. Those reasons related to ineffective adult intervention were used to create the ineffective adult intervention scale. The average Ineffective Adult Intervention scale score reported was .88 (1.19). Between school differences were examined. Ineffective Adult Intervention scores were not found to vary significantly between schools, $F (8, 182) = 1.77$, $p = .09$, partial $\eta^2 = .07$, with school membership accounting for 7% of the variance in Ineffective Adult Intervention scale scores.

To investigate what school level factors predicted perceptions of Ineffective Adult Intervention, a pair of linear regression models were conducted. The continuous dependent variable was Ineffective Adult Intervention scale score. The predictor variables in the models included: total school climate score, inclusive anti-bullying policy, inclusive anti-discrimination policy, dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization. The first model included only total school climate score as the independent variable. The second model included the four individual

components of an inclusive school climate as predictors: inclusive anti-bullying policy, inclusive

anti-discrimination policy, dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization.

The first regression model was not significant R^2=.009, F(1, 189)=1.70, p = .19. This

model found that total school climate score did not statistically significantly predict Ineffective

Adult Intervention score (B = -.129, df = 1, p = .19) (see *Table 16)*. In the second model, the four

individual inclusive school climate variables were considered. This model was not significant R^2

=.02, F(4, 186)=.97, p = .43. Anti-discrimination policy, anti-bullying policy, dress code, and

LGBTQ student organization were not found to statistically significantly predict Ineffective

Adult Intervention score (see table 16).

Table 16

Linear Regression Models Predicting Ineffective Adult Intervention

Model	Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (*p*)
Model 1	R^2=.009, F(1, 189)=1.70, p = .19					
	Inclusive School Climate	-.15	.21	-.09	-.69	.50
Model 2	R^2=.02, F(4, 186)=.97, p = .43					
	Anti-Discrimination Policy	.15	.66	.05	.22	.83
	Anti-Bullying Policy	-.09	.50	-.03	-.19	.85
	Dress Code	-.27	.57	-.10	-.48	.64
	LGBTQ Student Organization	-.13	.27	-.09	-.47	.64

Ineffective Adult Intervention Among LGBTQ Participants. Per the results of a one-way

ANOVA, ineffective adult intervention scores were not found to vary significantly based on

LGBTQ status (F (1, 189) = 2.77; p =.10). When considering school level differences,

ineffective adult intervention score was not found to vary significantly by school among LGBTQ

participants F (7, 47) = .91, p = .51).

To investigate what school level factors predicted the ineffective adult intervention scores for LGBTQ students, a pair of linear regression models were conducted mirroring those conducted for the whole sample. Model one was not significant $R^2 = .009$, $F(1,53)=.47$, $p = .50$. In this model, total school climate score was not found to statistically significantly predict LGBTQ participants' ineffective adult intervention score ($B = -.15$, $df = 1$, $p = .50$). Similarly, in model two, the four individual inclusive school climate variables were not found to predict LGBTQ student's ineffective adult intervention score $R^2 = .03$, $F(4, 50)=.34$, $p = .85$. (*see Table 17*).

Table 17

Linear Regression Models Predicting Ineffective Adult Intervention Among LGBTQ

Model	Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (*p*)
Model 1	$R^2 = .009$, $F(1,53)=.47$, $p = .50$					
	Inclusive School Climate	-.15	.21	-.09	-.69	.50
Model 2	$R^2 = .03$, $F(4, 50)=.34$, $p = .85$					
	Anti-Discrimination Policy	.15	.66	.05	.22	.83
	Anti-Bullying Policy	-.09	.50	-.03	-.19	.85
	Dress Code	-.27	.57	-.10	-.48	.64
	LGBTQ Student Organization	-.13	.27	-.09	-.47	.64

RQ 3: What School Level Factors Predict Students' Satisfaction with the Outcome of Reporting Bullying?

Teacher Reporting Satisfaction. Those participants who have previously reported bullying were then asked about to whom they reported the incident and the outcome of their reporting behaviors. Of the options presented, "teacher" was the most common category to which students reported. Of the students who indicated they had ever reported bullying, 293

(77%) had reported to a teacher. This represents 11% of the total sample. Participants were asked to indicate if they were "satisfied" or "dissatisfied" with the result of having reported bullying to a teacher. Of those who reported instances of bullying to a teacher, the majority (62%) indicated they were satisfied with the outcome, which represents 7% of the total sample. Between school differences in teacher reporting satisfaction were considered. Teacher reporting satisfaction did not vary significantly between schools ($\chi^2 = 14.09$, $p = .592$).

To investigate what school level factors predicted teacher reporting satisfaction, a pair of linear regression models were conducted. The continuous dependent variable was students' reported satisfaction after reporting bullying to a teacher. The predictor variables in the models included: total school climate score, inclusive anti-bullying policy, inclusive anti-discrimination policy, dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization. The first model included only total school climate score as the independent variable. The second model included the four individual components of an inclusive school climate as predictors: inclusive anti-bullying policy, inclusive anti-discrimination policy, dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization.

Table 18

Linear Regression Models Predicting Reporting Satisfaction

Model	Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
Model 1	$R^2 = .002$, F(1,315)=.526, $p = .50$					
	Inclusive School Climate	-.03	.04	-.04	-.73	.47
Model 2	$R^2 = .02$, F(4,312)=1.94, $p = .10$					
	Anti-Discrimination Policy	.14	.13	.10	1.10	.27
	Anti-Bullying Policy	.04	.11	.02	.37	.71
	Dress Code	-.05	.11	-.04	-.47	.64
	LGBTQ Student Organization	-.02	.05	-.03	-.48	.63

The first regression model was not significant $R^2 = .002$, $F(1,315) = .526$, $p = .50$. This model found that total school climate score did not statistically significantly predict teacher reporting satisfaction, $B = -.03$, $df = 1$, $p = .47$ (see *Table 18)*. In the second model, the four individual inclusive school climate variables were considered. This model was not significant $R^2 = .02$, $F(4,312) = 1.94$, $p = .10$. Anti-discrimination policy, anti-bullying policy, dress code, and LGBTQ student organization were not found to statistically significantly predict teacher reporting satisfaction (see table 18).

Teacher Reporting Satisfaction Among LGBTQ Participants. Per the results of a one-way ANOVA, teacher reporting satisfaction scores were not found to vary significantly based on sexual orientation and gender identity, $F(7, 58) = .79$, $p = .60$. When considering school level differences, teacher reporting satisfaction was not found to vary significantly by school among LGBTQ participants, $F(1, 371) = 1.01$, $p = .42$.

Table 19

Linear Regression Models Predicting LGBTQ Reporting Satisfaction

Model	Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
Model 1	$R^2 = .03$, $F(1,64) = 1.16$, $p = .14$					
	Inclusive School Climate	-.14	.09	-.19	-1.50	.14
Model 2	$R^2 = .06$, $F(4,61) = .92$, $p = .46$					
	Anti-Discrimination Policy	.20	.33	.16	.58	.56
	Anti-Bullying Policy	-.06	.20	-.05	-.32	.75
	Dress Code	.17	.29	.14	.57	.57
	LGBTQ Student Organization	-.09	.12	-.14	-.77	.45

To investigate what school level factors predicted the teacher reporting satisfaction scores for LGBTQ students, the same pair of linear regression models were conducted. Model one included Total School Climate Score as the independent variable. This model was not significant R^2=.03, F(1,64)=1.16, p = .14. Per these results, total school climate score was not found to statistically significantly predict LGBTQ participants' teacher reporting satisfaction scores, B = -.14, df = 1, p = .14. Model two included the four individual inclusive school climate variables. Similarly, this mode was not significant R^2=.06, F(4,61)=.92, p = .46. In model two, the four inclusive school climate variables were not found to predict LGBTQ student's teacher reporting satisfaction scores (*see Table 19*).

RQ 4: What is the Role of an LGBTQ Inclusive School Climate in the Relationship Between Experiences with Victimization and Sexual/Gender Minority Student Adjustment?

An MANOVA was conducted to examine between group differences between LGBTQ participants and the rest of the sample. Student adjustment, as measured by impact of bullying on functioning, internalizing behaviors, and externalizing behaviors, was found to vary by LGBTQ status (see *Table 20)*. Across adjustment indicators, LGBTQ students exhibit poorer adjustment as compared to their heterosexual/cisgender peers. Per the results of a one-way MANOVA, impact scores were found to vary significantly based on LGBTQ status, F (1, 570) = 19.43, p > .001. Participants who identified themselves as members of the LGBTQ community reported more severe impact on functioning as a result of bullying experiences as compared to their peers. A similar pattern was observed with regard to development of internalizing, F (1, 569) = 45.51, p > .001 and externalizing, F (1, 569) = 9.47, p = .002, behaviors following instances of bullying.

Students self-identifying as LGBTQ reported higher rates of internalizing and externalizing compared to their peers.

Table 20

Means and Standard Deviations LGBTQ Status

Variable	LGBTQ Status	Mean	*SD*	F	*p*	η^2
Impact Score	Total	4.50	2.30	19.43	.000	.03
	LGBTQ	5.25	2.34			
	Non-LGBTQ	4.27	2.23			
Internalizing Behavior	Total	1.83	1.77	45.51	.000	.07
	LGBTQ	2.70	1.87			
	Non-LGBTQ	1.56	1.65			
Externalizing Behavior	Total	.62	1.08	9.47	.002	.02
	LGBTQ	.87	1.37			
	Non-LGBTQ	.54	.96			

When considering school level differences among LGBTQ participants, impact scores were not found to vary significantly by school, $F (8, 126) = .79$, $p = .61$. Similarly, internalizing behavior schools were not found to vary significantly by school among LGBTQ participants, $F (8, 126) = 1.64$, $p = .12$. In contrast, externalizing behavior scores were found to vary significantly by school among LGBTQ participants, $F (8, 126) = 2.39$, $p = .02$. Students attending schools A, B, and E reported more severe externalizing behavior development (M = 1.50) following instances of bullying as compared to the other schools (M = .53).

To investigate the moderating role of an LGBTQ inclusive school climate in the relationship between experiences with victimization and sexual/gender minority student adjustment, a series of moderation regression analyses were performed with a subsample of sexual and gender minority youth. In the first model, the outcome variable for analysis was

LGBTQ student impact score. The predictor variable was extent of bullying score. The

moderator variable evaluated for the analysis was total school climate score. Possible

multicollinearity was considered, VIF = 1.01 for both variables, indicating there is no

multicollinearity among factors. This model was significant, R^2 =.41, F(3, 131)=30.17, $p < .001$.

Results indicate that LGBTQ students' extent of bullying scores statistically significantly predict

impact scores (see *Table 21)*. The relationship was positive, meaning that higher extent of

bullying scores was associated with greater impact. The interaction between extent of bullying

score and total school climate score, however, was not a statistically significant predictor of

LGBTQ student impact score ($B = -.03$, $df = 3$, $p = .08$), providing no support for the

hypothesized moderation of total school climate score (see *Table 21)*.

In the second model, the outcome variable for analysis was LGBTQ student internalizing

behavior score. The predictor variable was extent of bullying score. The moderator variable

evaluated for the analysis was total school climate score. This model was significant R^2 =.32,

F(3, 131)=20.93, $p < .001$. Results indicate that LGBTQ students' extent of bullying scores

statistically significantly predict internalizing behavior scores (see *Table 21)*. The relationship

was positive, meaning that higher extent of bullying scores was associated with more

internalizing behaviors. The interaction between extent of bullying score and total school climate

score was not a statistically significant predictor of LGBTQ student internalizing behavior score

($B = -.02$, $df = 3$, $p = .07$), which does not support the hypothesized moderation effect of total

school climate score (see *Table 21)*.

In the third model, the outcome variable for analysis was LGBTQ student externalizing

behavior score. The predictor variable was extent of bullying score. The moderator variable

evaluated for the analysis was total school climate score. This model was significant, R^2 =.17,

F(3, 131)=8.73, $p < .001$. Results indicate that LGBTQ students' extent of bullying scores did

not statistically significantly predict externalizing behavior scores (see *Table 21)*. Additionally,

the interaction between extent of bullying score and total school climate score was a statistically

significant predictor of LGBTQ student externalizing behavior score ($B = -.01$, $df = 3$, $p = .49$),

inconsistent with the hypothesized moderation of total school climate (see *Table 21)*.

Table 21

Moderation Regression Models Predicting LGBTQ Student Adjustment

DV	Predictor	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (*p*)
Predicting Impact Score	$R^2=.41$, $F(3, 131)=30.17$, $p < .001$					
	Extent of Bullying	.28	.10	1.48	2.94	.00
	Total School Climate Score	1.05	.40	.38	2.61	.01
	Extent x Total Climate	-.03	.02	-.94	-1.77	.08
Predicting Internalizing Score	$R^2=.32$, $F(3, 131)=20.93$, $p < .001$					
	Extent of Bullying	.22	.08	1.49	2.77	.01
	Total School Climate Score	.88	.34	.40	2.57	.01
	Extent x Total Climate	-.02	.01	-1.03	-1.82	.07
Predicting Externalizing Score	$R^2=.17$, $F(3, 131)=8.73$, $p < .001$					
	Extent of Bullying	.09	.07	.78	1.30	.20
	Total School Climate Score	.42	.28	.26	1.49	.14
	Extent x Total Climate	-.01	.01	-.44	-.70	.49

Given the pattern of nonsignificant findings for the moderation, post hoc analyses were

conducted to examine the moderation of individual school climate variables(inclusive anti-

bullying policy, inclusive anti-discrimination policy, LGBTQ organization, dress code) on the

relation between the extent of bullying and adjustment, instead of Total School Climate. Similar nonsignificant findings were found for all individual school climate variables. A summary of regression analyses is reported in Appendix C.

RQ 5: What School Level Factors Predict Students' Homoprejudice and Transprejudice Attitudes?

Homoprejudice/Transprejudice Attitudes. Students were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a number of homo/transprejudice statements. Responses were used to create the Homo/Transprejudice Attitudes scale. Between school differences were considered. Homo/Transprejudice Attitude scores did not vary significantly between schools, $F(8, 182) = 1.81$; $p = .08$; partial $\eta^2 = .07$.

To investigate what school level factors predicted students' homoprejudice and transprejudice attitudes, a pair of linear regression models were conducted. The continuous dependent variable was students' Homoprejudice/Transprejudice Attitudes scale score. The predictor variables in the models included: total school climate score, inclusive anti-bullying policy, inclusive anti-discrimination policy, dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization. The first model included only total school climate score as the independent variable. The second model included the four individual components of an inclusive school climate as predictors: inclusive anti-bullying policy, inclusive anti-discrimination policy, dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization.

The first regression model was significant $R^2 = .009$, $F(1,2569) = 22.92$, $p < .001$. Per these results, total school climate score statistically significantly predicted Homoprejudice/Transprejudice Attitudes scale score ($B = -.08$, $df = 1$, $p > .001$) (see *Table 22)*. This indicates that for every one unit increased in total school climate score,

Homoprejudice/Transprejudice Attitudes decreased by -.08 units. This finding is in line with the

hypothesized relationship between variables, in that inclusive school climate is associated with

less Homoprejudice/Transprejudice Attitudes. In the second model, the four individual inclusive

school climate variables were considered. Similarly, this model was significant R^2=.03, F(4,

2566)=18.56, $p < .001$. This model found that the four individual school climate variables

statistically significantly predicted Homoprejudice/Transprejudice Attitudes scale scores (see

Table 22). This model explained approximately 2.80% of the variance in

Homoprejudice/Transprejudice Attitudes scores.

Table 22

Linear Regression Models Predicting Homo/Transprejudice Attitudes

Model	Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
Model 1		R^2=.009, F(1,2569)=22.92, $p < .001$				
	Inclusive School Climate	-.08	.02	-.09	-4.80	.00
Model 2		R^2=.03, F(4, 2566)=18.56, $p < .001$				
	Anti-Discrimination Policy	.56	.05	.13	4.80	.00
	Anti-Bullying Policy	-.29	.05	-.14	-6.07	.00
	Dress Code	-.02	.04	-.01	-.44	.66
	LGBTQ Student Organization	-.02	.02	-.03	-1.10	.27

LGBTQ Student Organization (*B=-.02, p = .27*) and dress code (*B =-.02, p = .66*) were

not found to be statistically significant contributors to the model. Anti-Discrimination Policy and

Anti-bullying policy, however, were found to be significant predictors of

Homoprejudice/Transprejudice Attitudes scores. Holding all other independent variables

constant, with each one unit increase in inclusive anti-discrimination policy score, there is a .26

unit increase in Homoprejudice/Transprejudice Attitudes score. The direction of this relationship is contrary to that hypothesized. In line with hypotheses, however, holding all other independent variables constant, for each one unit increase in inclusive anti-bullying policy score, there is a -.29 unit decrease in Homoprejudice/Transprejudice Attitudes score.

Homoprejudice/Transprejudice Attitudes Among LGBTQ Participants.

Homo/transprejudice attitudes among LGBTQ and heterosexual/cis gender participants were considered. Per the results of a one-way ANOVA, Homo/transprejudice attitude scores were found to vary significantly based on sexual orientation and gender identity, F (1, 2569) = 65.14; $p <$.001. Students who identify as members of the LGBTQ community report fewer homo/transprejudice attitudes with a mean score of 2.06 as compared to their peers who report a mean score of 2.41.

To investigate what school level factors predicted homo/transprejudice attitudes for LGBTQ students, a pair of linear regression models were conducted. Model one included Total School Climate Score as the independent variable. This model was not significant R^2 =.003, F(1, 378)=.99, p = .32. In this model, total school climate score was not found to statistically significantly predict LGBTQ participants' homo/transprejudice attitudes scores (B = -.04, df = 1, p = .32). Model two included the four individual inclusive school climate variables. Similarly, this model was not significant R^2 =.03, F(4,375)=2.32, p = .06. The model did not statistically significantly predict LGBTQ student's homo/transprejudice attitude scores. In model two, three of the four individual inclusive school climate variables were not found to predict LGBTQ student's homo/transprejudice attitudes scores (*see Table 23*). Anti-Discrimination policy was found to predict student homo/transprejudice attitudes (B = .30, df = 1, p = .04). The direction of

this relationship is contrary to that hypothesized, with each one unit increase in anti-

discrimination policy associated with a .30 unit increase in homo/transprejudice attitudes.

Table 23

Linear Regression Models Predicting LGBTQ Homo/Transprejudice Attitudes

Model	Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
Model 1	R^2 =.003, F(1, 378)=.99, p = .32					
	Inclusive School Climate	-.04	.04	-.05	-.99	.32
Model 2	R^2 =.03, F(4,375)=2.32, p = .06					
	Anti-Discrimination Policy	.30	.14	.16	2.10	.04
	Anti-Bullying Policy	-.13	.13	-.06	-1.05	.30
	Dress Code	-.01	.12	-.01	-.11	.92
	LGBTQ Student Organization	.01	.05	.01	.13	.90

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Due to their specific needs and differential experiences, general school climate
interventions have largely failed to have the intended impact for LGBTQ students (Kosciw et al.,
2018). Many experts have proposed the need for targeted LGBTQ school-based support to meet
the specific needs of LGBTQ youths' unique ecological niche (Day et al., 2020; Kosciw et al.,
2018). School climate variables considered have included social support (Heck et al., 2014;
Seelman et al., 2015; Watson et al., 2015), comprehensive anti-bullying and anti-discrimination
policies (Berger et al., 2019; Kull et al., 2016), and flexible dress codes (Glickman, 2016). While
individual variables have been identified, it has been argued that single factors are likely not
enough to support LGBTQ adjustment, with need for multiple supports to ensure the health and
safety of this at-risk group (Poteat et al., 2013; Toomey et al., 2011). In the extant literature,
however, typically only one or two school-level factors are examined, limiting the investigation
of the cumulative impact of the total school climate. Moreover, the possible moderating effect of
an inclusive school climate on the relationship between victimization experiences and poor
student adjustment for LGBTQ youth has not yet been clarified.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of an inclusive school climate on
student adjustment and bullying experiences to contribute to our understanding of best practices
for supporting LGBTQ youth. The current study explored the individual and cumulative utility of
the various LGBTQ specific school climate elements previously identified in the extant
literature. Additionally, this study sought to understand the possible moderating role of inclusive
school climate in the relationship between victimization experiences and poor student adjustment
for LGBTQ youth. Inclusive school climate variables selected included the presence of an

LGBTQ student organization, inclusive anti-bullying policy, inclusive anti-discrimination policy, and inclusive dress code. This study also differed from extant literature in that school-based data were derived from school materials, rather than student report. Results aligned with previous findings regarding higher prevalence of bullying experiences and poor adjustment among LGBTQ identified youth in comparison to their peers. Results largely failed, however, to support the mitigating role of an inclusive school climate in LGBTQ bullying and negative adjustment.

LGBTQ Youth's Experiences

Consistent with prior research, the present findings suggest school continues to be a challenging space for LGBTQ youth. In line with extant literature, LGBTQ youth in the current study were found to report greater frequency and severity of bullying as compared to their peers (Berger et al., 2019; Donahue et al., 2017; Human Rights Campaign, 2018). Furthermore, participants who identified as LGBTQ were substantially more likely to report having been the victim of homo and transphobic bullying, a particularly damaging form of bullying (Poteat et al. 2011). Following instances of victimization, sexual orientation and gender identity were also found to predict reporting behaviors, with participants who identify as LGBTQ less likely to have reported bullying in the prior year (59%) as compared to their heterosexual and cisgender peers (69%) (Bauman et al., 2016; Crothers et al., 2017).

Based on substantial support from extant literature, it was also hypothesized that LGBTQ youth would report poorer adjustment as compared to their peers and would report greater impact on adjustment as a result of bullying experiences. In line with hypotheses, across all adjustment indicators, LGBTQ students unfortunately exhibited poorer adjustment as compared to their heterosexual/cisgender peers. LGBTQ youth endorsed higher rates of both internalizing and externalizing problems, corroborating results of previous studies (Fenaughty et al., 2019; Guz et

al., 2020; Human Rights Campaign, 2018; McKay et al., 2019). The current study found a

significant relationship between victimization experiences and adjustment as hypothesized, with

higher bullying victimization scores predicting greater impact on functioning. While this

relationship was significant for the whole sample, it was particularly pronounced for LGBTQ

identified participants. LGBTQ participants reported a more severe impact on functioning as a

result of bullying experiences as compared to their peers, echoing prior research (Aragon et al.,

2014; Collier et al., 2013). This difference may be due to both type of bullying and behaviors

following bullying. Homophobic bullying has long been understood to be a particularly

damaging form of bullying due to its discriminatory, bias-based, nature (Poteat et al., 2011; Price

et al., 2019). Additionally, LGBTQ youth's documented reluctance to report said incidents may

also further exacerbate the damaging impact of bullying.

However, when considering internalizing and externalizing separately, the results were

inconsistent. LGBTQ students' extent of bullying scores were found to predict their internalizing

behaviors, but a significant relationship was not found between extent of bullying and

externalizing behaviors. While some studies have found a relationship between bullying

experiences and externalizing behaviors, the connection between LGBTQ bullying and

internalizing behaviors has been demonstrated more consistently (Birkett et al., 2009; Button et

al., 2012; Kosciw et al., 2018). LGBTQ youth are particularly at risk for depression and

suicidality as a results of victimization experiences (Bouris et al., 2016; Burton et al., 2013).

Consistent with extant literature (Aguirre, et al., 2021; Chaux & León, 2016; Dierckx, et

al., 2017; Prati et al, 2011), the findings suggest that homoprejudiced and transprejudiced

attitudes continue to be pervasive in schools. However, these self-reported homo/transprejudiced

attitudes were found to vary significantly by gender identity and sexual orientation, with students

who identify as members of the LGBTQ community reporting fewer homo/transprejudice attitudes. It should be noted that students self-identifying as LGBTQ also reported some degree of homo/transprejudice attitudes, highlighting continued internalized heteronormativity (Francis, 2017).

While findings suggest a continued hostile school environment for LGBTQ students, some findings suggest improvements. One factor thought to impact likelihood of reporting bullying is the belief that the adult will take helpful action. Prior studies have found that students are more likely to report bullying if they believe their teacher will intervene; however, LGBTQ youth disproportionately report non-responsive and unhelpful teacher responses (Cortes & Kochenderfer-Ladd, 2014; Kosciw et al., 2018). The current study did not find ineffective adult intervention scores to vary by LGBTQ status, suggesting that in this sample students perceive adults are intervening with similar efficacy for LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ students.

Illustrating this point, when considering satisfaction with reporting bullying to a teacher, satisfaction was not found to vary by sexuality and gender identity. This finding is similarly contrary to that hypothesized and to extant literature in which LGBTQ youth have been found to report low satisfaction after reporting instances of bullying (Kosciw et al., 2018). While contrary to that hypothesized, with the majority of participants indicating satisfaction with teacher intervention, this finding could indicate a positive change for LGBTQ youth. Teachers may be providing similar responses to reports of bullying regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation. Is there anything the data says about teachers' overall efficacy and kids' satisfaction for LGBTQ and Non combined?

Findings Related to Inclusive School Climate

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of an inclusive school climate on student adjustment and bullying experiences. Based on extant literature, it was hypothesized that an inclusive school climate would be associated with lower general and LGBTQ specific bullying (Cornell & Huang, 2016; Gregory et al., 2010; Thornberg et al., 2017). Unfortunately, results did not support the hypothesis. With regard to overall victimization experiences, higher total school climate scores were found to be associated with no change in witnessing of victimization, contrary to extant literature. For LGBTQ bullying specifically, the incidence of LGBTQ related bullying was found to vary by school but was not explained by the inclusive school climate variables measured. These findings are surprising, considering extant literature on the importance of school climate for positive peer relationships and low bullying/victimization (Cornell & Huang, 2016; Gregory et al., 2010; Thornberg et al., 2017).

Another unexpected finding was no significant relationship between inclusive school climate and student reporting. When investigating the individual elements of an inclusive school climate, having an inclusive anti-discrimination policy predicted less reporting of bullying among LGBTQ students, which is in the opposite direction as hypothesized. This is contrary to extant literature that has found that when instances of LGBTQ victimization occur, if an inclusive policy is in place, students are more likely to report the incident to an adult (Berger et al., 2019; Kosciw et al., 2018). Furthermore, the current study did not find any support for the hypothesized relation between inclusive school climate and perceived outcomes of teacher responses (i.e., effectiveness and satisfaction).

Central to the present study was an interest in investigation the potential of an inclusive school climate as a protective factor for LGBTQ youth. It was hypothesized that the presence of

an inclusive school climate, as evidenced by a comprehensive antibullying and discrimination policies, an inclusive dress code, and LGBTQ youth organization, would moderate the relationship between victimization experiences and poor student adjustment for LGBTQ youth. While the hypothesized relationship between victimization experiences and LGBTQ student adjustment was supported by present findings, total school climate score did not moderate this relationship. Furthermore, none of the individual school climate variables were found to moderate the relationship between LGBTQ youth victimization and negative adjustment.

However, a few significant findings in the hypothesized direction were found with regarding homo/transprejudiced attitudes. It was hypothesized that students attending schools with an inclusive school climate, would hold less homoprejudiced and transprejudiced attitudes. As hypothesized, total school climate score was found to predict homo/transprejudice attitudes scores for the whole sample, with more inclusive school climates associated with less prejudice attitudes. While the effect was small, more inclusive school climates were associated with lower homo/transprejudiced attitudes. When individual school climate elements were examined, having an anti-bullying policy was associated with less prejudiced attitudes. This finding is consistent with extant literature highlighting the efficacy or school policy in reducing LGBTQ prejudice (Berger et al., 2019; Kosciw et al., 2018; Saewyc et al., 2014). It should be noted that the same relationship between school climate score and homo/transprejudiced attitudes was not found in those students self-identifying as members of the LGBTQ community.

As summarized above, the findings do not support the hypothesized relations between inclusive school climate and other study variables (victimization, reporting victimization, LGBTQ specific victimization, student adjustment, homoprejudice attitudes, internalizing and externalizing problems). Given the robust findings for the role of positive school climate in

previous studies, these findings are difficult to interpret. However, a few conceptual and methodological issues may explain these unexpected findings. For example, the previous studies (e.g., Berger et al., 2019, Hall, 2017; Kosciw et al., 2018) gather information about inclusive policies and organizations via student or school personnel report whereas the current study gathered policy and organization information from school documents. While this method of data collection has advantages, such as objectivity, it also only measures the presence of said policies and organizations. A hallmark of an authoritative school climate is one with consistently enforced rules (Gregory et al., 2010). It is possible that schools with inclusive policies in the current study varied in terms of how they implemented the policies as well as the nature of school climate resulting from the implementation.

Existent literature often gathers data on school policies and organizations via student report. This design requires the policy not only be present and implemented but also requires student awareness of the policy. It is possible that student knowledge of a given policy, suggestive of consistent implementation, may lead to decreased victimization and improved outcomes for LGBTQ youth, by way of increased feelings of safety and support. This differentiation between presence and implementation is illustrated in the extant literature on LGBTQ student clubs. While many existing studies found the presence of LGBTQ organizations to be associated with less bullying (Day et al., 2020; Heck et al., 2014; Kosciw et al., 2018; Toomey & Russell, 2013), some have failed to find this relationship (Colvin et al., 2019; Poteat et al., 2013). It has been suggested that the size, visibility, and structure of the organization determine their utility in decreasing bullying (Poteat et al. 2016; Seelman et al. 2015).

Furthermore, it should be noted that when reviewing school policies, it was noted that several schools appeared to use the same policy template. This was particularly apparent with

regard to anti-discrimination policies. While these templates were inclusive of LGBTQ youth, since they were not independently generated by the schools who used them, they may be less representative of the actual ideals and actions of the school. Moreover, it could be hypothesized that those schools that wrote their own policies, rather than using the template, engaged in more intentional anti-discrimination action, despite their policies failing to include LGBTQ inclusive language. This difference in intentionality and presumed action could in part account for this otherwise perplexing relationship present between inclusive anti-discrimination policies and decreased reporting behaviors among LGBTQ youth.

In the current study, the inclusive school climate was measured by presence of an inclusive antibullying policy, inclusive antidiscrimination policy, LGBTQ student organization, and inclusive dress code. It is possible that these dimensions do not culminate in the desired inclusive school climate. Other aspects not included in the present study may play a vital role in an inclusive school climate. Variables to consider include number of supportive adults, homophobic staff behavior, visual messages of support, and adult supervision on campus (Berger et al., 2019; Dessel et al., 2017; Kosciw et al., 2018).

As previously mentioned, LGBTQ youth continue to be an at-risk group, facing discrimination in the world at large. Failure to find significant relationships in the present study may speak to the other systems at play. Per the Systems View of School Climate (SVSC) framework (Rudasill et al.,2018), school climate is just one element impacting the school microsystem. A multitude of factors within the school context likely impact LGBTQ youth adjustment. For example, when looking at reporting behaviors, even with inclusive policies and supportive teachers, other factors, such as fear of being outed, may impact LGBTQ reporting behaviors. Furthermore, while school is a critical component of youths' total environment, it

represents just one of many systems. As the Bioecological Model of Human Development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) implies, LGBTQ youth exist in numerous interacting contexts. Schools are nestled within communities, which are impacted by culture at large, macrosystems that may include a heteronormative and gender binary ascribing culture (Human Rights Campaign, 2018). Many LGBTQ youth also return at the end of the day to home microsystems lacking support (Grossman et al., 2019; Montano et al., 2018). Considering their total ecological system, inclusive school climate may not be enough to buffer victimized LGBTQ youth against the homo and transprejudice faced across systems.

Study Limitations

The present study has several limitations. Student data was derived from the Ditch the Label annual survey in the UK. Because schools self-selected to participate, data were not representative of the UK student population. Data was acquired though student self-report, raising concerns related to honesty of responses. Attempts were made to control for dishonest responses, with the present study only retaining data from those students who indicated they were "mostly" or "completely" honest. However, the potential validity issues present when using self-report data must be considered such as social desirability. Additionally, as noted in the demographics section, the majority of participants identify as white, cisgender, and heterosexual, limiting the generalizability of findings to the overall population. With regard to LGBTQ identity, due to the small percent of students identifying as gender variant, transgender and non-binary students were combined with all students self-identifying as anything other than heterosexual under the LGBTQ participants category. This prohibited the study from considering the unique experiences of gender variant students, separate from those of cis-gender non-

heterosexual sexual students. Similarly, due to constraints imposed by sample size, age-based differences in student experiences were unable to be assessed.

School level data were obtained through materials found on school websites. While this approach allowed for a more objective consideration of the presence of various policies, it also presents with limitations. Obtaining information this way may have led to incomplete data. For example, it is possible that a given school does have a LGBTQ student organization, but that it was not indicated on the school club rosters on the school website. This may have allowed for unrepresentative data. Furthermore, the use of information available on school websites limited to inclusive school climate variables considered. This led to the exclusion of potentially important variables, such as bathroom access, curricular inclusivity, teacher allyship, and visual representation (e.g., pride and safe space stickers and posters). The exclusion of these variables may have provided an incomplete representation of school climate.

It was also not possible to consider other potential variables such as community climate, macrolevel LGBTQ prejudice, and individual family support. Moreover, due to the cross-sectional design, this study did not allow for causal findings. Lastly, while students at many schools completed the survey, only those with an adequate participant size were retained for the purpose of this study. It is possible that those schools who had large student turn out differ from those with less student participation. Additionally, this method led to the exclusion of small schools. Despite these limitations, the large sample size and unique and varied methods of data collection allow for meaningful findings leading to future directions for research.

Future Directions and Practical Implications for Protecting LGBTQ Youth

Despite recent progress, including legislative change, an increase in representation, and shift in public perception, the present study found that LGBTQ youth continue to be at increased

risk for victimization and negative outcomes. Findings from this study indicate that LGBTQ students experienced higher rates of general and LGBTQ specific victimization as compared to their peers, the latter of which is particularly damaging due to its discriminatory nature (Poteat et al., 2011; Price et al., 2019). LGBTQ prejudice attitudes, rooted in heteronormativity, perpetuate such victimization (Francis, 2017). The present study found that homo and transprejudiced attitudes continue to be prevalent on school campuses. LGBTQ youth were also found to be less likely to report instances of victimization to an adult. These findings may in part explain why, in the present study, LGBTQ participants reported a greater impact on functioning and internalizing behaviors as a result of bullying as compared to their peers. Findings that all underscore the need for continued efforts to protect and support LGBTQ youth, particularly as related to mitigating the impact of victimization on outcomes. Due to some existing evidence of their efficacy, the present study attempted to identify the school climate variables potentially successful in decreasing victimization and improving outcomes for LGBTQ youth.

While findings regarding various school climate factors and total school climate score were largely nonsignificant, the presence of LGBTQ inclusive policies did predict homo/transprejudice attitudes. This finding is of importance as LGBTQ-prejudiced attitudes are thought to be the foundation of LGBTQ victimization. When considering inclusive policies, it is recommended that schools take stock of their unique student population and campus needs and write original site-specific anti-discrimination and anti-bullying policies with parent, student, and teacher participation, increasing their intentionality and pertinence. Furthermore, prior research suggests that clarity, number of policies, and enforcement impact the effectiveness of such policies (Day et al., 2019; Russell et al. 2016; Sandfort et al., 2010). School administrators should ensure enforcement of policies though staff trainings and accountability. It is postulated

that lack of significant findings in the present study is in part due to the focus on existence rather than implementation of policies. It is recommended that future studies gather policy information from multiple sources allowing for more comprehensive examination. For example, objective information regarding policies could be obtained through policy documents as conducted in the present study. This information could then be considered alongside student and teacher reports of policies, speaking to policy awareness and implementation.

It has been suggested, however, that policies alone may not adequately address LGBTQ victimization and associated negative outcomes (Russell et al. 2016). Future research should continue to explore the efficacy of various LGBTQ inclusive school climate variables. Consideration of the school climate variables explored in the current study, as well as other structural, inclusive, and adult support variables would enrich understanding of school climate. Examples of those identified in extant literature include bathroom access, curricular inclusivity, access to athletics, physical allyship visuals, and teacher LGBTQ identity and allyship. Looking at a wider range of school climate variables would allow for a more accurate assessment of inclusive school climate for a given school and also would allow for further exploration of the efficacy of each individual variable.

Furthermore, further consideration of larger ecological systems and the differential experiences of specific identities would deepen our understanding of the challenges faced by and specific supports needed for this at-risk group. For example, further consideration of the role of local laws, public perception, and school religious affiliation would add to understanding of the role for school climate in mitigating negative outcomes for LGBTQ youth. Additionally, due to sample size, the present study grouped all LGBTQ identifying students into one category. Interventions would be better directed following an exploration of the unique experiences of

different sexual and gender divergent groups. Similarly, age-based differences in bullying experiences and behaviors should be investigated to target interventions. Lastly, development of interventions would benefit from further consideration of intersectionality, including the interplay between students' sexuality, gender identify, race, ethnicity, class, etc. Through increased nuance, more targeted and individualized interventions could be generated.

APPENDIX A

Survey Questions from the 2019 Ditch the Label Annual Bullying Survey

1. How old are you?
Please choose only one of the following:
   o 11 or younger
   o 12
   o 13
   o 14
   o 15
   o 16
   o 17
   o 18
   o 19
   o 20
   o 21
   o 22
   o 23
   o 24
   o 25
   o 26 or older

2. Which gender do you identify as?
Please choose only one of the following:
   o Male
   o Female
   o Transgender
   o Non-binary
   o Other

3. Which region are you from?
Please choose only one of the following:
   o East Midlands
   o East of England
   o London
   o North East
   o North West
   o Northern Ireland
   o Scotland
   o South East
   o South West
   o Wales
   o West Midlands
   o Yorkshire and the Humber

4. How would you describe your sexuality?
Please choose only one of the following:
- o Straight/Heterosexual
- o Bisexual
- o Gay
- o Lesbian
- o Curious/unsure
- o Asexual
- o Prefer not to say
- o Other

5. What is your ethnicity?
Please choose only one of the following:
- o English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
- o Irish
- o Gypsy or Irish Traveler
- o Any other White background
- o White and Black Caribbean
- o White and Black African
- o White and Asian
- o Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background
- o Indian
- o Pakistani
- o Bangladeshi
- o Chinese
- o Any other Asian background
- o African
- o Caribbean
- o Any other Black/African/Caribbean background
- o Arab
- o Prefer not to say
- o Other

6. Do you have any of the following?
Please choose all that apply:
- o Learning disability
- o Autism/Asperger's
- o Physical disability
- o None of the above
- o Prefer not to say

7. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following?

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree		Somewhere in the Middle		Strongly Agree

- o People are either men or women

- Many lesbian, gay and bi people use their sexual orientation so that they can obtain special treatment or privileges
- Feminine men make me feel uncomfortable
- It's important for women to be gentle and caring
- If I found out my best friend was changing their sex I would freak out
- Lesbian, gay and bi people who are "out of the closet" should be admired for their courage
- Celebrations like "gay pride" are ridiculous because they assume that an individual's sexual orientation should be something to be proud of
- Sex change operations should be banned
- Masculine women make me feel uncomfortable
- It's important for men to be strong and in control

8. In the past 12-months, what has been your experience with bullying?
Please choose all that apply:
- I have been bullied
- I saw somebody else being bullied
- I have bullied somebody
- None of the above

9. In the past 12-months, how frequently have you experienced bulling?
Please choose only one of the following:
- Unsure
- Once a year
- Once every 6 months
- Once every 3 months
- Once a month
- Once a fortnight
- Once a week
- Several times a week
- Daily

10. In the past 12-months, how frequently did you experience the following?
Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	never				sometimes				constantly

- Verbal
  (such as name calling/insults)
- Physical
  (such as being attacked or punched)
- Intimidation
  (when somebody purposely makes you feel uncomfortable)
- Cyberbullying
  (bullying online)
- Social exclusion
  (e.g., being left out of the group)

- o Within an online game
- o Indirect
  (e.g., silent treatment and rumors)

11. Why do you think you were bullied?
Select as many as is applicable:
- o My sexuality
- o Being accused of being gay or lesbian when I'm not
- o My gender identity

12. Have you ever reported the bullying?
Please choose only one of the following:
- o Yes
- o No

13. Why didn't you report the bullying?
Check all that apply:
- o I didn't want to feel patronized
- o Feel like it isn't going to be taken seriously
- o My teachers don't care
- o I have done in the past and nothing happened

14. Who did you report the bullying to and how satisfied were you with the outcome:
Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Didn't report
o Teacher			
o Family member			
o Friend			
o Counselor			
o Helpline			
o Social networking			
o Health professional (such as a doctor or nurse)			
o Police			
o Ditch the Label			

15. To what extent do you think that the bullying affects/has affected you in the following areas of your life?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	No affect			Moderate affect			Extreme affect		

- o Studies
- o Social life and relationships with others
- o Homelife
- o Self-esteem
- o Optimism/positivity
- o Ambitions for the future
- o Confidence

o Mental health

16. As a result of bullying, have you engaged in or developed any of the following?
Please choose all that apply:
- o Self-harm
- o Depression
- o Social anxiety
- o Developed an eating disorder
- o Suicidal thoughts
- o Suicide attempt
- o Anti-social behavior (for example, hurting others, stealing or breaking the law)
- o Truancy (not going to school)
- o Alcohol/drug abuse
- o Risky sexual behavior (not using protection, multiple sexual partners
- o Ran away from home

17. How honest were you in this survey?
- o Completely dishonest
- o Mostly dishonest
- o In the middle
- o Mostly honest
- o Completely honest

APPENDIX B

Inclusive School Climate Rubric

Anti-Discrimination Policy/ Equality Objectives			
LGBTQ individuals specified as a protected class 0 = neither gender nor sexual minority youth specified 1 = either gender or sexual minority youth specified 2 = both gender and sexual minority youth specified	2	1	0
Anti-Bullying Policy			
Bullying on the basis of LGBTQ identity specified 0 = neither gender identity nor sexual orientation specified 1 = either gender identity or sexual orientation specified 2 = both gender identity and sexual orientation specified	2	1	0
Dress Code			
Non-binary/ non-gender specific dress code present 0 = Inflexible gender specific dress code (i.e. female student must wear skirts) 1 = Dress code gender specific but with flexibility (i.e. female student may choose pants or skirts) 2 = No gender specific dress requirements present	2	1	0
LGBTQ Youth Organization			
LGBTQ youth organization present	2		0
TOTAL	___/8		

APPENDIX C

Moderation Regression Models Predicting LGBTQ Student Adjustment by School Climate Variables

Anti-Discrimination Policy

DV	Predictor	B	SE(B)	β	*t*	Sig. (*p*)
Predicting Impact Score	R^2 =.37, F(3, 131)=26.09, *p* < .001					
	Extent of Bullying	.09	.05	.47	1.98	.05
	Anti-Discrimination Policy	-.49	.74	1.10	-.66	.51
	Extent x Anti-Discrimination	.02	.03	.16	.61	.54
Predicting Internalizing Score	R^2 =.30, F(3, 131)=18.30, *p* < .001					
	Extent of Bullying	.09	.04	.61	2.41	.02
	Anti-Discrimination Policy	.54	.62	.14	.87	.39
	Extent x Anti-Discrimination	-.01	.02	-.08	-.28	.78
Predicting Externalizing Score	R^2 =.16, F(3, 131)=8.71, *p* < .001					
	Extent of Bullying	.02	.03	.15	.53	.60
	Anti-Discrimination Policy	-.01	.50	-.00	-.01	.99
	Extent x Anti-Discrimination	.02	.02	.28	.90	.37

Anti-Bullying Policy

DV	Predictor	B	SE(B)	β	*t*	Sig. (*p*)
Predicting Impact Score	R^2 =.39, F(3, 131)=27.32, *p* < .001					
	Extent of Bullying	.17	.05	.91	3.27	.00
	Anti-Bullying Policy	1.24	.79	.23	1.57	.12
	Extent x Anti-Bullying	-.03	.03	-.35	-1.12	.26
Predicting Internalizing Score	R^2 =.30, F(3, 131)=18.94, *p* < .001					

DV	Predictor	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
	Extent of Bullying	.11	.04	.75	2.52	.01
	Anti-Bullying Policy	.97	.67	.23	1.46	.15
	Extent x Anti-Bullying	-.02	.03	-.25	-.76	.45

Predicting Externalizing Score	$R^2=.13$, $F(3, 131)=7.66$, $p < .001$					
	Extent of Bullying	.04	.04	.34	1.04	.30
	Anti-Bullying Policy	.24	.54	.08	.44	.66
	Extent x Anti-Bullying	.00	.02	.04	.10	.92

Dress Code

DV	Predictor	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
Predicting Impact Score	$R^2=.36$, $F(3, 131)=26.41$, $p < .001$					
	Extent of Bullying	.08	.04	.42	1.77	.08
	Dress Code	-.41	.75	-.09	-.55	.58
	Extent x Dress Code	.02	.03	.23	.88	.38
Predicting Internalizing Score	$R^2=.30$, $F(3, 131)=19.92$, $p < .001$					
	Extent of Bullying	.01	.04	.09	.38	.70
	Dress Code	-1.41	.62	-.37	-2.28	.02
	Extent x Dress Code	.04	.02	.50	1.81	.07
Predicting Externalizing Score	$R^2=.17$, $F(3, 131)=10.14$, $p < .001$					
	Extent of Bullying	.06	.03	.59	2.18	.03
	Dress Code	-.18	.50	-.06	-.36	.72
	Extent x Dress Code	-.02	.02	-.27	-.90	.37

LGBTQ Student Organization

DV	Predictor	B	SE(B)	β	*t*	Sig. (*p*)
Predicting Impact Score	$R^2 = .40$, F(3, 131)=28.54, *p* < .001					
	Extent of Bullying	.15	.02	.79	6.24	.00
	LGBTQ Organization	.83	.37	.33	2.22	.03
	Extent x LGBTQ Org.	-.03	.01	-.35	-1.83	.07
Predicting Internalizing Score	$R^2 = .30$, F(3, 131)=19.92, *p* < .001					
	Extent of Bullying	.11	.02	.76	5.57	.00
	LGBTQ Organization	.73	.31	.37	2.33	.02
	Extent x LGBTQ Org.	-.02	.01	-.42	-2.04	.04
Predicting Externalizing Score	$R^2 = .16$, F(3, 131)=8.27, *p* < .001					
	Extent of Bullying	.05	.02	.43	2.83	.01
	LGBTQ Organization	.31	.26	.21	1.21	.23
	Extent x LGBTQ Org.	-.01	.01	-.12	-.53	.60

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