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Thematic Narrative of LGBT Faculty Members' Professional Identity and Activism

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Walden University
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Abstract

Thematic Narratives of LGBT Faculty Members' Professional Identity and Activism

by

Kathy Luanne Williamson Gall

MS, University of Phoenix, 2011

BS, University of Phoenix, 2009

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Psychology

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Abstract

Over the past 20 years, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals have
made progress in attaining the same basic civil rights as heterosexual individuals. As in
other civil rights movements, the college campus has played an important role. The
LGBT community participates in academic and campus life, and numerous colleges are
developing and supporting an inclusive, safe, and respectful culture. However, bias and
prejudice continue to occur. While researchers have studied the repercussions of
prejudice, discrimination, and low evaluation scores for LGBT faculty, little research has
been done to explore professional identity and activism in LGBT faculty at traditional 4-
year universities. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore how the narratives
of LGBT faculty at traditional 4-year universities inform the experience of professional
identity and activism. Using social identity theory and the concept of activism as
conceptual frameworks, 13 faculty from college campuses across the United States were
interviewed. The data were analyzed using NVivo software and hand coding. Ten themes
were identified: coming out, identity, gender fluidity, stigmatization, campus climate,
blatant prejudice and discrimination, resources, advocacy, responsibility, and positive
experiences. Participants described professional identity as being fused with their sexual
and social identity and described activism as an obligation. The results of this study will
be shared in the scholarly and professional communities to support civil rights, activism,
and advocacy for the LBGT community on campuses. Future research is recommended
regarding the struggles of coming/being out in the academic workplace, as well as
activism for LGBT issues on college campuses.

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Acknowledgments

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Over the past 20 years, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals have made significant progress in attaining the same basic civil rights as heterosexual individuals (Githens, 2012; Harper & Schneider, 2003; Messinger, 2011). As in other civil rights movements in the United States, the college campus has played an important role (Garvey & Drezner, 2013; Githens, 2012; Renn 2010). The LGBT community participates in academic and campus life, and numerous colleges are developing and supporting an inclusive, safe, and respectful culture (Fletcher & Bryden, 2007; Kotler, Bowen, Makens, Xie & Liang, 2006; Sausa, 2002). However, bias and inappropriate behaviors such as student bullying continue to occur on college campuses (Boysen, Vogel, Cope, & Hubbard, 2009; MacDonald & Roberts-Pittman, 2010; Taylor, 2011). Issues such as discrimination, not being granted tenure, and low evaluation scores, have been reported by faculty (Blumenfield, Weber, & Rankin, 2016; Ripley, Anderson, McCormack, & Rockett, 2012; Taylor, 2011; Weber-Gilmore, Rose, & Rubinstein, 2011). Homophobia and *heterosexism*, which is defined as discriminatory preference for heterosexual persons, continue to happen (Tomlinson & Fassinger, 2003; Woodford, Kulick, Sinco, & Hong, 2014). LGBT individuals who wish to avoid homophobia and discrimination often conceal their identity and restrict their activities because of psychological distress (Clair, Beatty, & Maclean, 2005; Cook & Glass, 2008; Vaccaro & Mena, 2011).

In higher education, instructors and professors have the opportunity to act as role models and leaders. Studies have documented the influence of faculty as role models and

positive campus climates as sources of influence (Blumenfield et al., 2016; Komarraju, Musulkin, & Bhattaacharya, 2010; Umbach &Wawrzynski, 2005). Furthermore, faculty have perceived the college campus as a good place for pursuing personal and professional development in both academic and social domains (Clark & Hollingsworth, 2002). Reports of discrimination, homophobia, and heterosexism may affect faculty's willingness to become involved in mentoring and taking active roles of leadership (Beasley, Torres-Harding, & Pedersen, 2012; Worthen, 2012).

What is missing from the literature is a more insightful understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by LGBT faculty. The LGBT community presents as an interesting social group to explore advocacy and activism. Therefore, the purpose of this thematic narrative analysis was to better understand the professional identity of LGBT faculty related to activism and the challenges they face on campus.

In this chapter, I describe the problem and the purpose of the study, briefly summarize the literature, describe the gap in the research, explain the framework used, and define terms. This chapter is the beginning for an in-depth look at the past research, describe why this research was needed, present research questions, describe the theory and conceptual framework used, provide a concise rationale, clarify assumptions, address limitations, and explain the significance of the study.

Background

While public discussion of LGBT rights and advocacy in the media is rich and revealing, there are few scholarly studies examining professional development and advocacy. In a case-study analysis of LGBT alumni related to university philanthropy,

Garvey and Drezner (2013) revealed difficulties in recruiting LGBT leadership and

people in the LGBT community to be active on the college campus and suggested further

research regarding leadership on campuses. Similarly, a study on college students'

attitudes towards LGBT individuals revealed challenges faced by LGBT faculty, yet the

researchers did not investigate how the faculty dealt with these challenges (Worthen,

2012). In a study examining LGBTQ (Q meaning queer) activists seeking domestic

partner benefits within a university, Githens (2002) found that activists censor their

approaches because of perceived negative homophobic attitudes. Therefore, a study that

highlights the challenges and experiences of higher education LGBT faculty with

professional identity and activism was needed to address the gap in the literature.

Problem Statement

Although LGBT acceptance across the United States has increased, existing

homophobia, heterosexism, and biases may still inhibit LGBT faculty willingness to

become involved in activism and act as leaders and role models for others (Bilimoria &

Stewart, 2009; LaSala, Jenkins, Wheeler, & Fredriksen-Goldsen, 2008). The opportunity

to explore these phenomena is well-suited for the context of a college campus. University

and college life allow both students and faculty the opportunity to explore, participate and

express themselves on social and political issues. LGBT individuals allow a compelling

social community to explore sexual identity and how it relates to social and even

professional identity expressed through activism, as many college campuses are explicitly

or implicitly homophobic or avoidant of the presence of the gay voice on campus

(Blumenfield et al., 2016; Evans & Broido, 2002; Rhoads, 1995).

Researchers have examined the experience of LGBT students in a few qualitative studies (McEntarfer, 2011; Vaccaro & Mena, 2011). Little is known about how LGBT faculty experience their sexual identity related to their social and professional identity (which will be explained and defined later) and how this is expressed through activism on campus. Linley et al. (2016) state that LGBT students find difficulty reaching their full potential because of identity challenges; therefore, this might be generalized onto LGBT faculty as well. Vaccaro and Mena (2011) specifically stated that LGBT needs need to be understood and ability to resolve challenges in relation to identity discrimination are needed. McEntarfer (2011) stated that active LGBT role models can demonstrate a group's dedication to the university and allows all involved a richer connection with identity. Finally, Messinger (2011) called attention to the need for a better understanding of LGBT faculty activism to promote working closely together and strengthen identity bonds. Understanding the experiences of individuals who identify as part of this marginalized population might contribute to understanding how homophobia and heterosexism are managed.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this thematic narrative research was to explore professional identity and activism in LGBT faculty on traditional 4-year university campuses. I chose the narrative approach to examine the experiences of LGBT faculty and explore common stories about being out on a college campus as a professor.

Research Questions

The research question for this study was as follows: How do the narratives of LGBT faculty on traditional 4-year university campuses inform the experience of professional identity and activism? The following subquestions were also asked:

- What does professional identity mean for LGBT faculty?

- What does activism mean for LGBT faculty?

I used social identity theory (SIT; Tajfel, 1979) to guide the examination of LGBT professional identity in the campus setting. Tajfel (1979) stated that individuals identify with a social group and that this group has emotional meaning for them and gives them a sense of belonging. This theory guided the identification of key concepts to explore, the development of the interview questions, and the analysis process. This theory will be explained in more detail in Chapter 2. Also, because sexual identities are fluid (Patridge, Barthelemy, & Rankin, 2014) and SIT was used to support LGBT faculty identity, professional identities emerge from this knowledge and resources. Patridge et al. expressed that while in a professional environment, LGBT faculty sometimes experience "professional outness", meaning their sexual identity overlaps or becomes apparent in their workplace.

To examine the dimensions of activism for the faculty and describe what it means to them, I also used London's (2010) advocacy framework. London proposed that low-risk and high-risk activism exists and that each level engaged has a different meaning and experience for each person. The concept of activism will also be more fully described in Chapter 2.

Nature of the Study

I chose a narrative analysis as the qualitative tradition for the study. According to Riessman (2008), narratives are useful to study as they reveal the power of social interaction on personal identity and inform the reader of the meaning of affiliation. In the present research, I explored professional identities and levels of activism in the detailed experiences of the LGBT faculty using narrative analysis. This approach can engage audiences and mobilize those who would like to influence positive social change (Riessman, 2008).

Narrative analysis relies on details, extended accounts, and categorizing sequential and structural features of the participants' stories (Riessman, 2008). I collected data from narratives using semi structured interviews. The interviews were recorded and analyzed using NVivo qualitative analysis. The analysis plan was guided by Riessman's (2008) thematic analysis protocol. I interpreted the themes extracted from the narratives using SIT and advocacy models to answer the research questions.

Definition of Terms

Activism: Actions to support ideas, persons, groups and needs to promote social change in a positive way. Any act or behavior that supports and backs a cause or idea can be activism (London, 2010; Rees-Turyn, 2007).

Advocacy: A behavior involved in speaking out and acting to support another individual's needs to effect change (London, 2010).

Cisgender: Denoting or relating to a person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their birth sex (Oxford Living Dictionaries, 2018).

Heterosexism: Hetero- means different or other, and *sexism* means attitudes or behaviors based on traditional sexual roles. In combination, the term *heterosexism* is defined as the prejudice or discriminatory views of heterosexuals against homosexuals (Airton, 2009; Allen, 2011; Fine, 2011; Mizzi, 2010).

Homophobia: An irrational fear of or aversion to homosexuality or homosexuals (Dinkel, Patzel, McGuire, Rolfs, Purcell, 2007; Fine, 2011; Mizzi, 2010).

Lavendar graduation: An annual ceremony conducted on numerous campuses to honor lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and ally students and to acknowledge their achievements and contributions to the university (Human Rights Campaign, 2018).

LGBTQAI: An acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, asexual, intersex (Grison, Heatherton & Gazzaniga, 2017).

Non-binary: Preferred umbrella term for all genders other than female/male or woman/man (Trans Student Educational Resources, 2018).

Pride: Gay pride or LGBT pride is the positive stance against discrimination and violence toward LGBT people to promote their self-affirmation, dignity, and equal rights, and to increase their visibility as a social group, build community and celebrate sexual diversity and gender variance (Stands4 Network, 2018).

Professional identity: The identity one carries around co-workers, supervisors, colleagues, and other staff in the workplace by branding, or making a name for oneself within the profession (Justyna, 2014).

Pronouns: Pronouns typically used by any LGBTQ+ identifying as female use she/her/hers. Those identifying as male use he/him/his. Those who do not identify as either female or male use they/them/theirs.

Safe space training: Explains the difference between sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, and defines terminology used to describe sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression (Campus Pride, 2018).

Sexual identity: The term sexual identity can relate to one's preference of being with the same or opposite sex (Knopp, 1999).

Social identity: Describes people's relationship to others around them, how they fit in, and how they behave around other people (Postmes, Spears, & van Zomeren, 2008; Stets & Burke, 2000; Tajfel, 1979).

Assumptions

Narrative research assumes that insights can be gained from interviews with participants who can articulate the lived experience of the phenomena in question (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006; Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2002). The present research involved the following assumptions: (a) that sexual and social identity overlapped with professional identity of LGBT faculty and (b) that they could describe these experiences in terms of events and experiences from their campus lives. LGBT faculty come into contact and socialize with other staff, administration, and peers within the college setting where they work, and it was hoped that these stories would shed light on the key phenomena of interest. It was also assumed that LGBT faculty who were active on campus would be able to provide accurate descriptions of LGBT faculty experiences. I

worked to build rapport and trust so that participants felt comfortable in freely sharing their authentic experiences. I also assumed that I would be able to suspend my own preconceptions regarding the research question. Strategies for addressing researcher bias are discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

Scope and Delimitations

The focus on expressed professional identity and activism of LGBT faculty was chosen because of my interest in understanding how LGBT faculty develop personally and professionally despite the continuous challenges of bias and prejudice towards the LGBT community on campus. This study was limited to LGBT faculty over the age of 18 years old who have self-identified as LGBT to staff, administration, and students, and who are active with LGBT issues on campus. LGBT faculty who have not self-identified and are not active on campus, perhaps to avoid revealing their sexual identity in the workplace were excluded to respect their privacy and maximize homogeneity of the sample.

Queer theory was not chosen for this study because this theory contests the categorization of gender and sexuality, and claims these identities are not fixed, cannot be categorized or labeled, and consist of many components (Jagose, 1996). It was hoped that other concepts in addition to sexual and social identity would emerge and expand the understanding of professional identity experiences related to LGBT activism. Using SIT and the concept of activism may help explain how identities may overlap (Shenton, 2004; Stake, 1994). As suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Firestone (1993), the

responsibility of the researcher is to provide the stories of the experiences in the field to enable others to relate and transfer the understanding.

Limitations

Narrative analysis concerns itself with the transferability of qualitative research, and therefore discussions of generalizability are not relevant (Shenton, 2004). However, if readers relate the findings to their own personal experiences, this relatability will increase transferability.

Reissman (2008) suggested bracketing the concepts within the told stories. Reissman addressed the challenge of linking theory to the story as told by the participant and then again as told by the researcher. In addition, being a participant observer is unique to narrative in that the researcher is influencing the participants via his or her responsiveness (verbal and nonverbal) to the participants' stories, as well as the researcher's interpretation of the story (Reissman, 2008). Because I am an LGBT faculty member, biases may have influenced interpretation of the narratives. However, to reveal and minimize bias, I used audit trails and member checking.

To prevent me from leading participants, the interview questions were reviewed by content and methodology experts (see Creswell, 2007). For the interviews, I used open-ended questions. To prevent distortions of data, interviews were recorded and transcribed. Audit trails and in-depth descriptions of the research process were used to increase trustworthiness (see Carlson, 2010; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009).

An additional limitation to thematic narrative analysis is that it may be assumed that every participant within the interviewed cluster meant the same thing when they

described similar details of their stories, and this assumption could obscure the in-depth meanings in a particular context (Riesmann, 2008). Accurate transcriptions, peer review, and support of a professional reviewer were used to keep this limitation at a minimum.

Significance

Potential contributions of this study are to advance the knowledge and understanding of LGBT faculty, meaning of their professional identity, and reasons to become active on a college campus. Understanding the experiences of individuals who identify as part of this marginalized population might contribute to understanding how homophobia and heterosexism are managed. Publishing this research, providing college staff and administration with the findings, and reaching out to various campus organizations will be part of my effort to inform readers and the college professional community.

Social implications of this research include encouraging a better understanding of LGBT professional identity and how to manage experiences of homophobia and heterosexism. Furthermore, recognizing LGBT faculty challenges may promote increased leadership and more attentiveness to support students to achieve success.

Summary

In Chapter 1, I presented the background of the problem, citing several studies reporting evidence of homophobia and prejudice on college campuses. The purpose of the present research was to explore professional identity and activism for LGBT faculty in a traditional 4-year campus setting. The research questions were given and the nature of the study was offered. I also provided definitions of several terms used throughout the

research, such as *homophobia; heterosexism; self, social,* and *professional identity;* and

activism. This chapter also included the assumptions, scope of the research, and

limitations. Chapter 2 will consist of a detailed review of past research in order to provide

a foundation for this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The LGBT community has made critical progress in attaining basic civil rights (Githens, 2012; Messinger, 2011). Activists' movements in the United States on college campus have brought about great positive changes (Garvey & Drezner, 2013; Githens, 2012). However, bias, homophobia, and heterosexism still exist on campus (Brumenfield et al., 2016; D'Augelli, 2006; Messinger, 2011; Ripley et al., 2012; Sausa, 2002). For LGBT faculty, issues such as not being granted tenure and low appraisal have been reported (Juul, 1994; Messinger, 2011; Ripley et al., 2012) as well as homophobia and heterosexism.

The U.S. college experience has been, for many, the origin of their social activism and advocacy. In addition, this setting offers instructors, teachers, and professors the opportunity to be a role model and to advocate for students about their social identity and the ability to act on issues they believe in. This can be a critical and fulfilling aspect of the college teaching profession. The purpose of the present research was to explore professional identity and activism of LGBT faculty on a traditional 4-year university campus. Chapter 2 begins with a description of the databases and terms used in searching for relevant literature and a history of LGBT civil rights. I then discuss research on the existence of homophobia and heterosexism and provide a concise review of the studies on activism and advocacy, focusing on research on LGBT faculty and students. The theoretical framework of SIT and ideas of advocacy offered is to develop the

instrumentation and data analysis plan to examine the social activism experiences of LGBT faculty on campus.

Databases and Search Terms

Databases researched included Google Scholar, EBSCO Host, PsycARTICLES, ProQuest, MEDLINE, PsycINFO, Academic Search Complete, Education Research Complete, ERIC, LGBT Life with Full Text, PsycEXTRA, Research Starters-Education, SocINDEX with Full Text, and Teacher Reference Center. I searched these databases using several key words in various orders and combinations to flush out possible research. These terms included *lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, faculty, academia, college, higher education, civil rights, gay rights, LGBT, teaching, activism, sexual identity, professors, campus, challenges, alumni, advantages, professional identity, stigmatized, homophobia, being out, self-identity, heterosexism, advocacy,* and *avoidance of LGBT voice on campus.*

The Emergence of LGBT Civil Liberties

Throughout history, support for homosexuality has varied from one society to the next. In some early civilizations—such as those that developed in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Rome, and Greece—there were no laws forbidding same-sex relations, and same-sex unions may have been publicly recognized (Cviklova, 2012; Dynes & Donaldson, 1992; Hertz & Doskow, 2012; Pickett, 2004). In other early civilizations, however, same-sex relations were ignored, reviled, or punished, as was the case in ancient India, Sudan, and Pakistan (Amnesty International, 2016; Lee, n.d.; Misra, 2009).

Support for homosexuality is no less volatile today than it was in ancient times. There is unprecedented acceptance of homosexuality in places such as Canada and Western Europe but such acceptance is hardly universal. Buchanan (2015) reported that homosexuality remained illegal in 75 countries and was punishable by death in the nations of Mauritania, Sudan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen. Ironically, in Iran homosexuality is illegal, yet having a sex change is not (Drescher, 2009).

Studies of Homosexuality and Sexual Preference

Although homosexuality has been a topic of philosophical discussion for millennia (Jones, Cox, & Navarro-Rivera, 2013), the scientific study of homosexuality did not begin until the late 19th century. Early studies of homosexual behavior were done by Freud, Hirschfeld, and Kinsey. Freud's research consisted primarily of case studies (Drescher, 2010; Harper & Schneider, 2003; Strachey, 1962). He studied homosexuality in both male and females, and he observed that every person is born with bisexual tendencies. Freud argued that homosexuality could not be labeled as a degenerative condition because he found that homosexuals were unimpaired, highly intellectual, and ethical in nature (Drescher, 2010; Strachey, 1962). Freud concluded that homosexuality was only a case of hindered sexual development (Drescher, 2010; Freud, 1935; Strachey, 1962). Interestingly, Freud's early research provided some of the support for later LGBT civil rights activism for equal rights.

Hirschfeld also studied homosexuality and was one of the most visible and articulate advocates for LGBT civil rights (Bauer, 2006; Morris, 2015; Oswald, 2004). Hirschfeld focused on transgenderism as well as homosexuality (Harper & Schneider,

2003). Hirschfeld's research revealed a commonality of sexual preference diversity across all nations and religions with few privileged patterns, and that each culture normalized its sexuality beliefs (Bauer, 2006; Dose, 2014). Unfortunately, in 1933 all Hirschfeld's papers, studies, and research at the sex institute that he established were destroyed, leaving a void for future scientists.

Kinsey's (1948) landmark studies of male sexuality shed light on the prevalence of homosexual behavior in the general population (Brown & Fee, 2002; Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 2003). Following male sexuality studies, Kinsey produced a book about female sexual behavior in 1953. During these studies, Kinsey reported a vast difference in social attitudes compared to actual practices (Brown & Fee, 2003). Kinsey's views, studies, and advances in sexual research made him known as a secular evangelist for sexuality.

Sodomy laws affected homosexuals not only in America but also around the world. The work of Freud and others was challenged and led some scientists, such as Bieber (1962) and Socarides (1978), to believe they could "cure" homosexuality (Drescher, 2002; Drescher, 2010; Spitzer, 2003). Bieber conducted a study in which 106 gay males were exposed to treatment designed to change their sexual orientation. He reported that 13% of the participants in that study were "exclusively heterosexual" after receiving treatment (Bieber, 1962; Drescher, 2010; Spitzer, 2003). More than a decade later, Socarides conducted a similar study with a different treatment approach. He reported that 44% of initially gay participants in his study were heterosexual after treatment, yet he did not include information about sexual attraction (Spitzer, 2003).

Spitzer (2003) studied over 200 self-selected individuals who reported after treatment

that they were predominately or exclusively heterosexual and claimed there is evidence

that reparative therapy is effective in some men and women. It should be noted that most

of these studies' claims have been refuted (Drescher, 2001; Haldeman, 2002). Numerous

attempts at "treatment" have emerged, but modern science recognizes that (a) sexual

orientation is an inborn characteristic and (b) homosexuality is a normal variant of sexual

behavior (Jayaratne et al., 2006; Stein, 2014).

Gay Civil Rights Prior to 1960

Of particular relevance to the proposed study is the evolution of LGBT civil rights

during the past 70 years. Studies of these events were nonexistent prior to World War II

(D'Emilio, 2012; Harper & Schneider, 2003; Morris, 2015). The first documented gay

civil rights organization in the United States, The Society for Human Rights, formed in

Chicago in the 1920s, but it did not last long because of political pressure (Harper &

Schneider, 2003). This group made efforts to improve homosexual rights through legal

due process, yet found political harassment, steadfast attitudes, and unwillingness to

change (Gerber, 1962).

It was not until the 1950s that the gay rights movement in the United States began

to gain traction. Gay rights organizations that formed at that time included the Mattachine

Society in Los Angeles and the North American Conference of Homophile Organizations

where meetings were held in various locations around the United States (Cain, 1993;

LaRocque & Shibuyama, 1966-1970; Marine & Nicolazzo, 2014; Robson, 2002).

However, LGBT persons continued as individuals to suffer ridicule, harassment, and violence (Harper & Schneider, 2003; Morris, 2015; Thomas & Marcus, 1995).

LGBT Life before the "Revolution"

Before the visible struggle of riots and activism for LGBT civil rights, life was extremely challenging for LGBT individuals. Gay men were blackmailed and imprisoned, and lesbians were disapproved and harassed (Lesbian and Gay NewsMedia Archive, 2016; Nardi, Sanders, & Marmor, 1994). Various actions took place to exclude homosexuals from public spaces, including threats from authorities, warnings from citizens to reveal a person's sexual preference, and banning LGBT people from community places (Chauncey, 1995). Prejudice and discrimination in the form of vocal and physical harassment overwhelmed the LGBT community who remained undercover due to fear of such persecution. LGBT life was much more dangerous than it is now, although today, violent hate crimes still exist, such as in the case of a woman who was gang raped several times because of her sexual orientation in California in 2008 (Leadership Conference of Human and Civil Rights, 2016). This is only one example of the physical discrimination acts that LGBT individuals continue to face.

Gay Civil Rights after 1960

Once the LGBT civil rights movement began in the 1960s, more tolerance and acceptance occurred (Marine & Nicolazzo, 2014; McCarn & Fassinger, 1996). However, it was not without violence, disruption and struggle. The police raid of the Stonewall Inn in New York in 1969 was a landmark event for gay rights in terms of public visibility in the context of other recognized civil rights movements (Cain, 1993; Harper & Schneider,

2003; Marine & Nicolazzo, 2014; Morris, 2015; Renn, 2010; Robson, 2002). The Stonewall Inn was a neighborhood bar frequented by gays and lesbians, and the police were routinely brought in to close it down because of illegal alcohol sales. On the night of June 28, 1969, the LGBT community responded to the raid by fighting back openly for the first time: resisting arrest, throwing rocks into the windows of the Inn, and shouting at the police about unfair treatment, encouraging participants to be vocal and physical against the police. This led to a six-day riot (D'Emilio, 2012; Hertz & Doskow, 2012; Kochman, 1997; Morris, 2015; Nguyen, 1999; Witt, Thomas, & Marcus, 1995). This pivotal event inspired individuals and groups to vocalize and initiate actions to demand equal rights for the gay community including nondiscrimination policies and practices, in education, business, and healthcare institutions, as well as domestic partner benefits, nonsegregated congregations, equal housing and marriage equality.

In the 1970s, political groups in support of the LGBT community began to form along with gay men's organizations, lesbian support groups, and feminist coalitions. The first out gay minister was ordained in 1972 (Johnson, 2007; Morris, 2015; United Church of Christ, 2015). Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) was formed that same year (PFLAG, 2015; Witt et al., 1995), and in 1973 the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force was established, which is now call the National LGBTQ Task Force (National LGBTQ Task Force, 2016).

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) still maintained influence over the labeling of LGBT preferences and behaviors in the 1970s (Drescher, 2010; Zucker & Spitzer, 2005). When the DSM-II removed homosexuality

from its list of mental disorders in 1973, the term was replaced with the diagnostic label

of sexual orientation disturbance (Milar, 2011; Morris, 2015; Zucker & Spitzer, 2005). In

the 1980s, two diagnoses were added to the DSM-III, gender identity disorder for

children and transsexualism (Zucker & Spitzer, 2005). The DSM-IV added the

identification of Gender Identity Disorders in 2000 (Drescher, 2010; Harper & Schneider,

2003; Morris, 2015). Numerous LGBT activists have argued that labeling anyone who

expresses gender variance or sexual preferences beyond heterosexual preference as

disordered is wrong and argued this point during the writing of the DSM-V. Zucker and

Spitzer (2005) challenged the historical interpretation of these diagnoses by revisiting the

history of the DSM and homosexuality. They specifically examined the claim that the

diagnosis of gender identity disorder for children was added to the DSM-III as a

"backdoor maneuver" to replace homosexuality (p. 32). Zucker and Spitzer stated that no

hidden agenda was apparent for the APA to change the diagnoses, and that the diagnoses

were a collaborative effort among scientists and clinicians. Furthermore, they stated that

homosexuality was delisted from the DSM-III-R because no empirical data were present

to support the diagnosis, and that some of the scientists and practitioners who argued the

delisting were on the DSM-III subcommittee on psychosexual disorders; none of them

were interviewed to find out if a conscious decision was made to intentionally replace the

diagnosis (Zucker & Spitzer, 2005). So, in retrospect, the controversies of the diagnoses

of homosexuality, gender identity disorders, and so on have been debated since the start

of the DSM. Today in the DSM-V, gender dysphoria is diagnosed to anyone whose born-

with sex does not match his or her gender identity (APA, 2016).

The AIDS Epidemic and Changes in the 1980s and 1990s

In the 1980s, the AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) epidemic became a robust and progressive moving disease risk for homosexual men and became known as the "gay disease". Originally known as Gay Related Immune Disease (GRID), scientists discovered it originated in Africa in the 1970s. The first case of AIDS in the United States was documented in 1981 (Smith, 1996; Witt et al., 1995). When the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) published the first reports of AIDS cases in the United States, it described the disease as a pneumonia that affected the gay male population (CDC, 2001; fohn.net, 2005). It was later discovered that anyone, regardless of their sexual orientation, can contract AIDS, but because of the way the first AIDS outbreak was reported as "sweeping the gay male population", and being labeled as GRID, the disease was immediately linked with homosexuality in the public mind. This belief contributed to the stigmatization of homosexuality and impeded the gay rights movement. For partners of those that were afflicted with AIDS, rights in the context of healthcare became an even greater issue as many were denied the right to make medical decisions for the ones they loved (Hertz & Doskow, 2014).

In the 1990s LGBT individuals and communities began visibly advocating for same-sex benefits in the workplace and rights for LGBT military (Miller & Clay, 2013; Zimar, 2003). With no domestic partner benefits at numerous workplaces and the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy in place in the military, LGBT individuals began to demand more from public institutions in support of their civil rights. In addition, popular TV shows featuring gay and lesbian individuals, who included Ellen DeGeneres, and musicians like

KD Lang and Melissa Ethridge, raised awareness of the gay community among viewers and music listeners in the United States and beyond. Gay celebrities and performers began to openly acknowledge their sexual orientation and speak in support of their lifestyle and the struggle of equality (Meyer, 1995).

Current and Political Events

In the 2000s America saw nondiscrimination laws continued to become prevalent, civil unions began to become legal, and some states even allowed LGBT marriages under state laws (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2015). Yet in 2001, only 13 states had antidiscrimination laws to protect gay and lesbian employees in the workplace (Harper & Schneider, 2003).

LGBT political and social changes became visible in a variety of educational institutions, including public schools, colleges and university campuses. Graves (2012) discussed LGBT in education having a history and in the college environment, although, for example, Oklahoma had passed a law that allowed for the dismissal of any LGBT teacher or any teacher who supported LGBT issues.

Colleges and universities were also slow to update policies. In fact, Sausa (2002) stated that by 2001, only three universities in the United States had even included any verbiage related to gender identity in any of their non-discrimination policies. Cook and Glass (2008) studied how policies associated with the LGBT community impacted gender and racial diversity. The authors collected data from several sources, including the AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business), accreditation office, the Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity office, and the website for

the Human Rights Campaign. They examined matters such as domestic partner benefits, and nondiscrimination policies and found that while racial diversity impacted these policies, gender did not.

The struggle for legalization of gay marriage has been ongoing for decades (Polikoff, 2016). The first state to legalize gay marriage was Massachusetts in 2004 with other states such as New York, Vermont, Connecticut, Iowa, and New Hampshire to follow, yet the same-sex couples in other states around the United States were denied that right (Hackl, Boyer, & Galupo, 2012). Probably known as the biggest progressive step in the gay civil rights movements has been the legalization of gay marriage in the United States approved by the Supreme Court in June of 2015. Thousands of LGBT relationships were able to be recognized by law. Controversy continues among political officials and groups, some who support this legalization, and some who do not (Dimock, Doherty, & Kiley, 2013; Salka & Burnett, 2011; Todd & Ong, 2012). Whether political tension and debates will continue remains to be seen.

The Contemporary Experience of Homophobia and Heterosexism

The research has clearly demonstrated that LGBT people have encountered adverse reactions to their sexual identities (e.g., Doe, 2010; Jones, 2010; Smith, 2010). These reactions take various forms, including homophobia, heterosexism, and blatant discrimination. Homophobia is the fear of men and women who are attracted to the same-sex as themselves, whereas heterosexism is the perceived belief that the heterosexual identity is superior to any other and is the preferred identity of all human beings (Herek, Gillis, & Cogan, n.d.; Jones, 2010; Mizzi, 2010).

Homophobia and heterosexism have been studied and shown to have adverse effects on those who encounter these challenges. For example, Vaccaro and Mena (2011) studied the experiences of balancing family, career, and activism among queer activists of color by conducting interviews. They stated that these activists experienced more stressors from factors which marginalize their societies, such as homophobia and heterosexism, which in turn left them burned out, exhausted and depressed.

Getz and Kirkley (2006) examined steps taken by a Roman Catholic university to implement programs to improve relationships between the heterosexual and homosexual individuals on campus and questioned 23 participants. The authors recognized three major themes: increased awareness of social identity, implemented programs increased confidence levels to serve as allies for LGBT community, and that the programs had an overall positive impact; yet, prejudice and discrimination continue to prevail.

Homophobia and heterosexism are pervasive in contemporary society (Fine, 2011: Ripley et al., 2012; Tomlinson & Fassinger, 2003). Members of the LGBT community frequently experience stigma, prejudice, discrimination, and crime as a result of their minority status (Airton, 2009; Kitchen & Bellini, 2012; Sanders, 2012; Woodford et al., 2014). LGBT individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds other than Caucasian American experience homophobia and various displays of discrimination as in Vaccaro and Mena's (2011) study mentioned above (Cook & Glass, 2008; Vaccaro & Mena, 2011). Clair et al. (2005) researched sexuality, illness, and diversity correlated with stigma, disclosure, and identity within past literature to create an invisible identity model.

They stated that LGBT individuals who wish to avoid homophobia and discrimination often concealed their identity, remaining closeted because of psychological distress.

Invisible gay populations exist in almost every organization, business, and institution (Mudrey & Medina-Adams, 2006). Clair et al. (2005) examined invisible identities in the workplace including LGBT, disabilities, and racial/ethnic identities, and found that this area is underexplored. The authors integrated numerous identity models and proposed a generalized model to describe how individuals manage invisible identity due to variances of experiences in the workplace and the experience of stigma. Herek et al. (n.d.), also stated that sexual identities are invisible and unacknowledged. When men and women reveal these identities, they are seen as abnormal, unnatural, and behaviors such as shunning in lines with heterosexism can occur.

Heterosexism and homophobia can be the result of these stigmatized views. Fine (2011) conducted focus groups on the countering of heterosexism and homophobia and found that groups resisted these issues. She investigated how college students understood heterosexism and homophobia they encountered and concluded that students minimize these experiences and desire to have separate sexual identities than academic identities. The campus was viewed as mostly a positive environment, yet many students resisted change of combating heterosexism and homophobia. However, Worthen (2012) stated individuals and groups can diffuse homophobia and heterosexism by trying to explore and understand attitudes towards the LGBT population. The author examined attitudes about LGBT individuals by surveying 33 sociology classes at a university. She found that

one's sexual orientation, relationships with LGBT affiliates, and mutual beliefs about sexuality were predictors of attitudes towards the LGBT community.

Homophobia, Heterosexism, and Attitudes on Campus

Campus life is no exception to these negative influences (Beasley et al., 2012; Blumenfield et al., 2016; Getz & Kirkley, 2011; Wisneski & Kane, 2013). The learning environment often impacts students and teachers alike and during this time of learning, growth, and opportunity, a safe environment can be established and held to a higher standard of tolerance for diversity. Woodford et al. (2014) investigated the role of blatant victimization in contemporary heterosexism on campus and established that younger, undergraduate LGBT students reported more victimization in comparison to older graduate students, which led to psychological distress.

McNamara (1997) discussed the social identities comparing students and teachers and how this affects classroom language. He stated these social identities are not fixed, but fluid, and depend on the multiple aspects of the intergroup settings. Considering these compound settings, social change can be endeavored to change the outlook on these fluid identities. Blumenfield et al. (2016) stated that even though progress on college campuses has been made, the campus climate still remains difficult. The authors continued to point out that despite some positive growth by creating welcoming and inclusive environments, discrimination still exists and that researchers, educators, and administration need to understand LGBT professional identities in order to invoke more positive change. Patridge et al. (2014) also expressed the need for more research on campus climate that affects the LGBT population.

One way to endorse these social changes is to educate teachers during their education. Kitchen and Bellini (2012) examined how teacher education can make schools safe and how the teachers can address homophobia. The authors discovered that implementing a 2-hour workshop to address these issues was helpful in cultivating this knowledge within the teaching profession. Fredriksen-Golden, Luke, Woodford, and Gutierrez (2011) provided evidence to support the inclusion of LGBT content into course curriculum and found that faculty development addressed social attitudes integrating gender identity into their diversity education.

A constructivist case study analysis of 60 participants was conducted by Garvey & Drezner (2013) who explored philanthropy in higher education in support of LGBTQ issues and found that LGBTQ alumni play a critical role to establish resources on a college campus sustaining this diversity. The results supported the significance of staff and alumni in promoting LGBTQ philanthropy. For attitudes to positively change on campus and for resources to be available, being out and active might be the solution and needs to be further explored. Sausa (2002) suggested factors such as updating policies and forms, using appropriate language, creating safe environments, increasing awareness and educating and establishing resources for positive change to take place.

Being out on campus is challenging as expressed by Gust (2007) who stated he was warned to be cautious of male student attitudes against him as a gay male teacher. Attitudes of students play a huge role in whether a teacher feels comfortable in self-identifying and being active. As a teacher serves as an authority figure, a mentor, a role model, and a leader, students view on that instructor influences said teacher on a level of

boundaries, levels of involvement, and on levels of academic responsibility. Weber-Gilmore et al. (2011) concluded that benefits, such as higher levels of job satisfaction and commitment to the workplace, existed with teachers being able to self-identity and act as role models. Allen (2011) stated that heterosexuals are open in the classroom so why should not every teacher be allowed to be open? Often these boundaries of balancing the teacher/student relationships are hard enough but throw in a self-identified LGBT faculty member who is out and active on campus and a compromised student view of that authoritive figure and one might perceive issues surrounding the situation.

A college campus can be a unique environment aside from an everyday community, culture, or workplace due to the ages of the students, the professionalism and leadership roles of the staff and faculty, and the academic focus of the setting. Ripley et al. (2012) explored the relationships between open LGBT professors and heteronormativity by interviewing 32 students and found students' perceptions further the progression of heteronormativity in the college classroom. With this affirmation of heteronormativity, this unique atmosphere can provide an understanding of LGBT faculty identity and reasons for activism because they are at the forefront of being able to mentor the students, act as role models, and also teach the students how to be active in civil rights for progression in social change. Beasley et al. (2012) also looked at attitudes surveying 176 students after a virtual panel intervention and found that LGBT virtual panels did reduce homonegative attitudes. LGBT faculty activism via virtual panels of discussions, questions, and answers might help this continuing rejection of LGBT individuals.

Rankin (2005) posited that sexual minority contributions through leadership and activism are not adequately represented. Patridge et al. (2014) also supported this notion especially in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) faculty and stated that LGBT identities include sexual, public, and professional factors and are continuous. Therefore, LGBT faculty who are out and active are needed on the college campus to influence this positive growth. LGBT professors have been encouraged to self-identify, become active, represent a stigmatized population, and illustrate LGBT issues in curricular content (Check & Ballard, 2014; Cook & Glass, 2008; D'Augelli, 2006; Messinger. 2011). However, teachers and professors are still hesitant to discuss anything related to gay issues, such as antigay language or homophobic bullying, due to fear of homophobia and heterosexism on campus (Renn, 2010; Tomlinson & Fassinger, 2003; Woodford et al., 2014). When instructors do finally speak out to these issues, some students believe a LGBT professor becomes an activist for LGBT issues on campus because the instructor has a political agenda (Anderson & Kanner, 2011; Beasley et al., 2012; Githens, 2012; Knopp, 1999; Rothblum, 1993;). This identity and activism that result in prejudice, discrimination, and lack of tolerance isolate all involved (Woodford et al., 2014).

Even though being out and active on a college campus has been highlighted in some past research, most studies revolve around students being out and active, and very few review LGBT faculty activism. D'Augelli (2006) discussed developing resources for LGBT students/professors and the progression of institutional and policy changes on university campuses to make a safer, more tolerant environment to self-identify and

become active. Renn (2010) rendered a status of the educational field about LGBT issues and identified although higher education has been an excellent source of LGBT research, the campus environment neglects to embrace the identity and activism of LGBT students and faculty which hinders the further progression of an all-inclusive environment. Rees-Turyn (2007) examined mental health professionals being out and active in their profession and stated being able to self-identify is a form of activism and could reduce prejudice. Wisneski and Kane (2013) examined positive results for students with the presence of a gay-straight alliance being available and teachers active in this setting. They found that schools had the ability to decrease harmful outcomes and victimization with these programs on sight.

Westbrook (2009) conducted a qualitative study of 30 participants who were LGBT students and staff. He found several factors influenced the likelihood of becoming active including the use of resources available on campus, identification of a critical gender gap, lack of opportunity to collaborate with like-minded peers, and the lack of LGBT leadership opportunities on a college campus. Some activists fight for domestic partner benefits (DPBs) on campus as explored by Githens (2012). He viewed a case study within a three-campus university system of the groups who provided social support and sought organizational change on campus. This researcher discovered that structured groups were successful in activism on campus and achieved desired results in attaining DPBs. LGBT activism located at universities provides a platform for LGBT individuals to advocate for LGBT issues and create a social change of tolerance and civil rights.

Messinger (2011) also analyzed LGBT activism on campus and interviewed faculty members who became involved in different levels of advocacy. She discussed social identity and collective action and found five damaging consequences of LGBT faculty activism, including discrimination, a decreased chance of being promoted, exclusion from professional networks, harassment, and devaluation of their professional contributions. She also stated that LGBT faculty who are out and active have an opportunity to give voice to this marginalized population and conceded that further research is needed for better understanding of faculty advocacy. Juul (1994) observed that LGBT faculty members struggle to balance personal identities with occupational identities and indicated that job satisfaction relies on professional identity. This result gives support for LGBT faculty to self-identify and be active in the college atmosphere.

Missing from the Juul (1994) study were specific data from all faculty who have already self-identified as being LGBT and knowing the experiences of already out faculty could help illuminate identity and activism reasoning. Brown, Horner, Kerr, and Scanlon (2014) stated that professional identity in the teaching profession is understudied and disassociated. Missing from this study making this research relevant is incorporating probing interviews allowing the faculty to describe their in-depth experiences of professional identity and activism. Thus, the missing parts from past studies qualifies the need for a fully comprehensive, in-depth, and thorough study that highlights the challenges the LGBT faculty face with professional identity and activism on college campuses and might offer some insight and answers on how to prevent homophobic

discrimination. It would also offer how LGBT faculty can move into leadership roles and opportunities, lessening their fears of coming out in the workplace.

Although Messinger (2011) explored and reported on LGBT faculty identity and activism about DPBs on campus, this is only one area of activism that LGBT faculty must continue. Githens (2012) examined prolific case-studies of LGBTQ activists who were also struggling for DPBs. He provided the diversity approaches used by faculty to argue for these benefits and reported despite challenges in activism; the faculty efforts were well-respected and effective. Yet Renn (2010) explicitly stated that although student sexual identities have been exposed, LGBT faculty remain under-researched. Renn's (2010) article explored the status of LGBT research in the field of higher education and found it lacking in the faculty area. Exploring a more in-depth and rich analysis of LGBT faculty is needed. Professional identity and activism may offer a chance to act as role models and leaders for all.

Hardie (2012) examined the dilemmas of being out as a school teacher and gave a rich, in-depth account of sexuality in the classroom and how important being a role model can be to LGBT students. This type of research moves forward the progressive social change needed on college campuses for LGBT resources and support. Hardie (2012) found that evolution in teacher diversity, continued leadership, and professional support for other LGBT individuals on campus is critical for advancement.

Linley et al. (2016) emphasized the importance of faculty as sources of support for LGBT students. The researchers identified roles for faculty in a qualitative national study and found that teacher support for students is critical for the students' success. The

authors went on to say that institutions should recognize faculty efforts and reward them. Therefore, LGBT faculty might be considered support for LGBT students, leading to not only positive campus climate for the faculty but the students as well.

<center>**Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks**</center>

Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) (SIT) and the concept of advocacy as described by London (2010) are the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that were used during this research. In combination, these two structures can help define and explain LGBT faculty professional identity and how they act as leaders on a college campus. Because social identity, how men and women interact on a social level, the workplace is critical to professional identity, combining these two notions might describe why a LGBT professor is out and active.

Social Identity Theory

SIT was presented by Taifel (1982) and then later by Tajfel & Turner (1986). This theory describes social identity as "the individual's knowledge that [she] or he belongs to certain social groups (Tajfel, 1982, as cited by Hogg, 2006, p. 113) and recognizes that this knowledge has emotional meaning. So, the focus was initially more on how people see themselves in relation to a group (a collection of people who share certain qualities). In the late 1980s, this theory evolved to include cognitive components, self-categorization, social categorization, and social identity and self-esteem (Brown, 2000; Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Krane et al., 2002; Tajfel, 1978; Turner & Oaks, 1986).

The definition of self-categorization is how a man or woman identifies him or herself through the interaction of a social group (Dutt & Grabe, 2014; Krane et al., 2002;

Stets & Burke, 2000). In other words, a person relates to a definite group, such as an

English LGBT faculty member who can identify with the English department, the LGBT

community, and or a member of the faculty, in turn placing them into a category that is

defined and classifiable. By self-categorizing, a person identifies with a group and

therefore forms an identity defined by that group. Then they are able to personify the

group's traits allowing them to belong and be accepted (Krane et al., 2002; Ripley et al.,

2012; Stets & Burke, 2000).

Social categorization is demarcated by sustaining the group's status and wellbeing

about other groups within society (Hogg, 2006; Tajfel, 1978; van Zomeren, Postmes, &

Spears, 2008). This categorization process commands comparisons not only with out-

groups, groups outside their own, but also within the group membership; i.e., a group is

only as strong, salient, and sustainable as its members see it. The group develops a

collective self-esteem. If the group sees itself as positive and has a sense of pride, then

the group and the individuals within the group feel valued and important. Consequently,

this view causes them to see themselves as a critical component to the environment and

additional groups (Crocker & Luhtanen, 1990; Krane et al., 2002; Stets & Burke, 2000).

For instance, an English LGBT faculty member may identify with the English department

on campus, and this cluster holds a positive group-esteem because they are involved with

local community volunteerism in elementary schools. Some elementary schools are

private and religious in nature and are not necessarily accepting of LGBT individuals. In

order for faculty to remain part of the group with positive esteem, the LGBT faculty

member remains closeted.

The definition of social comparison is comparing the unit to another regarding power, prestige, and status (Stets & Burke, 2000). For example, the English department mentioned above may compare itself to the History department because an award for the most involvement in the community is being given by the Dean. The English department is ahead of the History group and therefore, holds themselves to a higher status. The individual self-esteem within the group is reciprocal to the collective self-esteem, which helps to maintain the group ranking (Brown, 2000; Krane et al., 2002; Trepte, 2006). With this component, traits such as solidarity and positive social identity are formed, maintaining the groups wellbeing (Brown, 2000; Trepte, 2006;).

Social identity theory supported and expanded. Research on SIT has been supported and expanded by numerous researchers (e.g. Abrams & Hogg, 1998; Clair et al., 2005; McNamara, 1987; Turner & Onorato, 1998). While SIT in the early stages focused on individual's interactions with a group and how they fit in, Padilla & Perez (2003) expanded SIT to include cultural aspects, social cognition and understanding of group dynamics, and how social identity and stigma influenced them and others in the group. Hogg (2006) also extended ideas about SIT, stating that this theory defines self-conception and group cognitive factors, such as prejudice, discrimination, conflict within the group, group behavior, and group polarization. More expansion on this theory has been mentioned in Dutt and Grabe's (2014) research on lifetime activism, stating many scholars have used this philosophy for understanding relations among each other to address social and political inequities.

Krane, Barber, and McClung (2002) examined the process of identity development through participation in the 1998 Gay Games; and explored how this would affect social identity. The sample included 123 female athletes of various ethnicities' and ages. The researchers found that the experiences of the athletes were overwhelmingly positive, only negative esteem resulted from poor group performance, reports of improved personal identity, and a desire to become involved in social change, anywhere from simply coming out to being more involved with politics regarding LGBT individuals.

Ripley et al. (2012) used social identity theory in research exploring heteronormativity in the university classroom. These authors concluded that SIT was a useful categorization through stereotyping, including LGBT faculty as the "other group" in the classroom. They found that students, as a way to continued support for heteronormativity, overestimated LGBT faculty mentioning LGBT issues and underestimated heterosexual references; in fact, the ratio from heterosexual to homosexual references were two to one. They stated that categorizing and stereotyping was a way of maintaining group distinctiveness.

LGBT studies including social identity theory. Cox and Gallious (1996) examined identity development using SIT in regards to LGBT individuality. They examined models of homosexuality identity development, outlined SIT, and illustrated how SIT can be expanded to address the distinctiveness of this oppressed group. The authors argued that SIT is concerned with all identity development, not necessarily the

content, i.e. homosexual, and that SIT accounts for a large range of individualities, regardless of specific social group membership.

Krane and Barber (2003) investigated social identity perspective in lesbian experiences in sport. Social identity perspective combines both SIT by Tajfel (1978) and social categorization theory by Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Watherell (1987). Basically, this perspective examines social forces, self-concept, collective self-esteem and identity development through the perception of group membership. The authors stated that this expansion to SIT focuses on studying psychosocial phenomena of maintaining a positive self-image through evaluation of group membership (Krane & Barber, 2003).

Why social identity theory is relevant to this research. In this investigation, the LGBT faculty professional identity was defined by factors of SIT to determine if the faculty felt comfortable enough to come out and advocate for LGBT individuals and issues. SIT is useful in this research because SIT represents the relationship of individuals to other people in their everyday environment often dictating how the person behaves. Since the development of SIT and its expansion, four key processes can help to identify LGBT faculty professional identity including how the professors socially categorize themselves, how they form their professional identity on campus, how they compare themselves with others, and how they search for psychological distinctiveness (Mcnamara, 1997).

SIT may help to identify reasons why individual faculty members do or do not come out and become active in LGBT issues. Revealing one's sexual identity and being

active with LGBT issues are very personal issues and are linked to several factors. Gust (2007) wrote that this choice, to come out or not, can be "unadvisable, possibly joyous, potentially disastrous, positively political, and just plain hard" (p.43), emphasis in the original). Whether any LGBT person comes out, in any environment, the reduction of prejudice and discrimination is not guaranteed. Understanding the LGBT faculty experience is critical for forward progress on tolerance. Professors have reported not being open about their sexuality due to reprisals, whether these reprisals be from the professional environment or even one's social arena (Githens, 2012; Rankin, 2005).

Professional identity has been identified as an aspect of social identity (Blin, 1997). "The notion that one of the aspects of social identity is its professional nature assumes that are in the professional context identity is mobilized first and foremost in relation to other identities" (Blin, 1997; Cohen-Scali, 2003, p. 238). Building ones' professional identity with a group such as faculty members where many heterosexuals exist may cause a dissonance in self-balance. The needs and concerns of LGBT faculty are visible in various areas; for example, the noticeable signs of transitioning, reactions and questions from students, other faculty responses, administration retort about being LGBT, using the correct bathroom facilities, and DPBs, as well as harassment policies are issues that can occur. LGBT faculty experiences can illuminate on fears, concerns, needs, wants, and professional identity issues related to SIT. To simply have a professional identity that is not judged or degraded or used to manipulate circumstances tends to be a desire of numerous professors. The ability to just give back, to teach, to inform, to be passionate about bringing up today's youth and influencing adult learners as

accepting, tolerant and nondiscriminatory professionals of today's world lends understanding of the boundless profession of teachers and the social identity that surrounds them.

Lack of resources on campus for faculty and students can be an identifier of struggles in identity and activism. Several public entities offer support in this minority community but whether they expand onto university campuses remain to be unseen. Support groups and resources on a college campus tend to support only that, those on the campus, with no overlapping features or partnerships with community resources. Further research regarding LGBT faculty professional identity and activism on campus through the SIT lens is necessary.

Advocacy

London (2010) defined advocacy as a behavior that one displays to support an idea, need, person, or a group. In this exploration, the term advocacy and activism are used interchangeably, while advocate refers to the individual, and activism denotes the act or behavior. Advocates can act alone or with others. Advocates use cognitive, emotional, and behavioral strategies to influence others and create social change. The advocacy literature has explained that sponsors can engage in two types of activism, low-risk and high-risk (London, 2010; McAdam, 1986; Messinger, 2011). Low-risk activism includes factors such as signing petitions, writing proposal letters, or becoming a supportive member of a group or organization. High-risk activism involves public speaking, protesting, and risking monetary and legal possessions. (McAdam, 1986; Messinger, 2011).

Research supporting activism. McAdam (1986) explored low/high-risk activism related to a previous study called the Freedom Summer project that took place in Mississippi in 1964. Data from 720 participants were included to explain the likelihood of participation in the project. The author stated that research over the last decade began to show dissatisfaction with recruitment efforts for applicants and wanted to examine the reasons why people chose to become involved with activism. The evidence revealed that microstructural factors helped to influence participation, indicating the location to the project was the largest influential factor of becoming involved.

London (2010) examined the characteristics of leaders who become advocates in the organizations and communities in which they are involved. London (2010) defines advocacy, stating three development elements, and used altruism to help explain motivation in helping others. London (2010) quoted past literature supporting goals, strategies, and outcomes of advocacy, and then deliberated on low and high-risk activism and the reactions to both. Characteristics and skills of an individual who becomes involved were conversed, and the author concluded that these factors will determine the success of the person's involvement in the advocacy behavior.

LGBT research that includes activism. Renn (2007) explored common patterns in LGBT students on campus related to identity, activism, and leadership. Using theoretical frameworks of LGBT identity theories, and student leadership identity theory, Renn (2007) studied 15 LGBT-identified students involved in activism and leadership. Activism and identity together showed an increased public identity, more people were

aware of those who were active and acted as advocates, and therefore identified them as leaders and role models.

Vaccaro and Mena (2011) investigated the experiences of self-identified queer activists of color and explored coping tools with family life, academics, and involvement in activism. Six college students from a LGBT activist group were identified and interviewed, and the authors found several psychological meanings emerged, which included, internal and external demands, desire for support, setting limits, taking care of oneself during the process, and knowing when to lessen responsibilities. They concluded these factors resulted in burnout and mental health crises.

Gray and Desmarais (2014) examined distinctions between sexual identities related to activism and collective self-esteem of a group. The researchers surveyed 256 participants across 33 various Canadian universities and used a regression model to compare sexual identity categories with collective self-esteem and activism. They showed that the sexual identity of bisexual students engaged in activism was lower than that of queer activists.

Messinger (2011) analyzed activism among 30 faculty members working to secure LGBT supportive policies on various campuses. The results showed four areas of study, including faculty reasons for becoming involved in advocacy, types of activism the faculty engaged in, elements related to successful LGBT encouragement, and challenges faced in the advocacy process. Messinger (2011) stated that institutional forces in higher education are against LGBT activism, so the future of activism in this arena is uncertain, which has led to this research. By using SIT, related to LGBT advocacy and LGBT

activism, I wish to bring forth a better understanding of experiences with LGBT faculty to help this type of activism be more welcome on college campuses.

Faculty Experience

Fear of one's safety and not receiving fair reviews are some reasons why LGBT faculty do not come out or become supportive in LGBT issues on campus (Clair et al., 2005; Renn, 2010; Taylor, 2011; Vaccaro & Mena, 2011; Weber-Gilmore et al., 2011). Self-identifying as LGBT and supporting LGBT issues are very personal issues and are linked to several factors. Gust (2007) wrote that this choice, to come out or not, can be "unadvisable, possibly joyous, potentially disastrous, positively political, and just plain hard." (p43). There is no promise that a reduction in prejudice and discrimination will happen when an LGBT person is forthcoming in any environment. Understanding the LGBT faculty experience is critical for forward progress on tolerance. Professors have reported being closed about their sexual identity due to reprisals, whether these reprisals be from the professional environment or even ones' social environment (Juul, 1994; Messinger, 2011; Ripley et al., 2012). Balance of life is essential for people to succeed and achieve happiness and a LGBT professor is no different, struggling to reach balance with self-identity, social-identity, and professional identity in relation to one's sexual preference. Having a group identity within the realm of being a teacher where many are heterosexual may cause a dissonance in self-balance (Hargreaves, 1998). Professional identity encompasses the social relationships held in the workplace, and as stated earlier, Patridge et al., (2014) discussed professional outness as being expressed sexual identity

within the workplace. The professional identity, for purposes of this research, encompasses the sexual identity of the LGBT faculty.

The needs and concerns of LGBT faculty are visible in various area such as the noticeable signs of transitioning, reactions and questions from students, other instructors, and administration about being LGBT, using the correct bathroom facilities, and DPBs as well as harassment policies. LGBT faculty experiences can reveal fears, concerns, needs, wants, and professional identity challenges. To simply have a professional identity that is not judged, nor degraded or used to manipulate tends to be a desire of a plethora professors. The ability to give back, to teach, to inform, to be passionate and influential as accepting, tolerant, and nondiscriminatory professionals of today's world lends understanding of the boundless profession of teachers.

LGBT resources on a college campus can help LGBT faculty and students, as well as anyone in this environment, be supported and figure out the balance of identity (Cook & Glass, 2008; Getz & Kirkley, 2011; Messinger, 2011). Lack of resources can be an identifier of LGBT faculty struggles in identity and activism. Several public entities offer support in this minority community but whether they expand on to university campuses remain to be unseen. Support groups and resources on a college campus tend to support only that, those on the campus, with no overlapping features or partnerships with community resources (Avery, Hardwood, Jones, Potter, Boettcher, & Ploskonka, 2016). Further research in the relation to LGBT faculty identity and activism related to campus resources and community resources is necessary.

Summary and Conclusions

Experiences of LGBT students are well documented within the presented research but very little study has been done of the LGBT faculty. The lack of research on the experiences of professional identity and activism in this group points to the need to explore this poignant topic in order to bring contribute to positive social change on a campus environment as well as contribute to the scholarly literature. The continued existence of homophobia and heterosexism as pointed out by so many researchers in this chapter (e.g., Blumenfield et al., 2016; Patridge et al., 2014) shows an understanding in this area is needed to further the social movement for the LGBT community and community at large.

By using SIT and advocacy framework, the experiences of LGBT faculty relating to professional identity and activism may provide a better understanding in this area. The concepts of SIT and the ideas of advocacy, explained fully in the following chapter, may provide a more in-depth view and explanation of these experiences.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this thematic narrative research was to explore professional identity and activism in LGBT faculty on traditional 4-year university campuses. Tajfel's (1979) SIT served as the theoretical framework for developing the interview questions and guiding the data analysis process. In the following sections, I review the research design used in this study and the rationale for its use, the role of the researcher and any potential biases, the methodology and procedures, data analysis, the issues of trustworthiness, ethical procedures, and finally data management.

Research Design and Rationale

A thematic narrative analysis was conducted in this narrative research to explore professional identity and activism of LGBT faculty by asking the following question: How do the narratives of LGBT faculty on traditional 4-year university campuses inform the experience of professional identity and activism? The primary phenomena of interest include professional identity and activism, particularly with respect to LGBT issues in a campus environment. For this study, I explored the following subquestions:

- What does professional identity mean for LGBT faculty?

- What does activism mean for LGBT faculty?

I chose a qualitative approach to better understand the identification of professional identity by LGBT faculty and their experiences with activism. Professional identity intertwines with social identity and advocacy and activism are also connected. Thematic narratives focus on told stories of research participants and interpretive

accounts (Riessman, 2008), which are used to construct narratives about specific phenomena. In the present study, SIT informed the construction of narratives about professional identity and activism among LGBT faculty based on their told stories. Awareness of the lived experience of the LGBT faculty in these areas may inspire action to reduce homophobia and heterosexism.

Blaikie (2000) stated that the interpretive paradigm places a greater emphasis on a socially constructed and understood world. The present research will focus on understanding the socially constructed and understood world of LGBT faculty through thematic narration. Detailed narrative interviews gave the participants the opportunity and freedom to share their stories in order to illuminate the phenomena of interest (see Riessman, 2008). Sandelowski (2000) put emphasis on an interpretive description that allows the researcher to stay close to the data, instead of personally interpreting the stories, which allows understanding of the stories to effect social change in this area. Therefore, I strove to make the interview data rich with stories, analogies, and turning points of the participants' experiences.

I chose the thematic narrative approach over other qualitative approaches to provide a story-based understanding of challenges, opportunities, and consequences of professional identity and activism of LGBT faculty. This approach offers accessibility and flexibility to analyzing qualitative data (Braun & Clark, 2006).

The phenomenological approach was not chosen because it is better suited for investigations that focus on the present moment of a phenomenon, a description of truth that comes from within the current happening (Moran, 2000), and assumptions of what

the world is really like (Berrios, 1989; Patton, 2002). A case study was not chosen because I planned on interviewing people from many campuses and would not have been able to locate their experience within a specific bounded context of a single setting (see Eisenhardt, 1989; Trochim, 2001). Grounded theory was not chosen because the research question is not focused on developing a theory or model (see Creswell, 2009; Patton, 2002). Finally, ethnography was not chosen because a specific cultural experience was not being sought (see Patton, 2002).

The theoretical framework of SIT and the conceptual framework of advocacy was used to develop interview guide questions and was applied to the data generated from the interviews in order to guide the identification of potential categories or themes. The results provided an understanding of LGBT professional identity and activism; and it is hoped that the results will contribute to understanding and celebrating diversity on a college campus.

<div align="center">**The Role of the Researcher**</div>

The role of the researcher in qualitative studies, as explained by Taylor and Ussher (2001), is to identify patterns and themes of interest and report them to the reader. My role in this research was to formulate open-ended interview questions about the lived experience of LGBT faculty concerning their professional identity and activism with LGBT issues on college campuses. My role was as an observer-participant. I am both a member of the LGBT community and a professor, so this role closely fits my position as LGBT faculty. I have had the experience of coming out to the students I teach, to the colleagues I work with, and also to my supervisor on campus. I have also acted as an

advocate for students and shared my LGBT coming out experience. Recognizing and auditing my own experiences as I collected and analyzed the data helped me distinguish meaning and experience from the told stories of the participants and detail their stories as a research partner (see Berg, 2004; Fink, 2000).

I took steps to address several self-reported biases that might influence my research. One step was participant verification, otherwise known as member checking (Carlson, 2010; Harper & Cole, 2012). Each participant had the opportunity to read a summary of his or her transcript to check for accuracy. I attempted to recognize and minimize potential biases of my own with a review of the research questions and interview guide by a subject matter expert (see Creswell & Miller, 2000). I also kept a journal to create an audit trail which included researcher reflections on the data collection and the analysis process (see Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2002). Also, none of the faculty members were previously known by me, nor were any of them from the campus on which I work. This helped to minimize the influence an existing or prior relationship might have had on the interview experience.

Other Ethical Considerations

Each participant had the opportunity to review and sign the informed consent agreement for the study. This helped participants understand that some of the questions might provoke emotional distress, and that they could withdraw from participation at any time. I explained the data collection and analysis process and how the data were to be used, and I located a comfortable and neutral off-campus location to conduct interviews so that participants would be free to speak. This is described in more detail below.

Methodology

Participant Selection

The sampling criteria include persons 18 years of age or older who have: (a) identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender; (b) are faculty within a traditional 4-year United States university; (c) have come out on their respective campuses either to administration, staff, students, or all; and (d) who self-report as being active in LGBT issues. Being active was defined as something as simple as writing a letter of support for an LGBT student (low risk), writing a grant for the college in regards to LGBT issues, or even protesting an LGBT issue on campus (high risk). These are only examples of activism and not an exhaustive list. The email invitation to invite participants is included below in the procedures.

Sampling Strategy

I employed two sampling strategies to recruit participants from two different sources: snowball sampling and criterion sampling. Snowball sampling is defined as asking a potential participant or current participant to refer the research to another potential participant, and they refer another, and so on (Atkinson & Flint, 2001; Kuper, Lingard, & Levinson, 2008). I emailed or called LGBT colleagues and requested that they forward the email invitation to persons they know (outside of their place of employment) who meet the sample criteria. If that individual participated, I asked him or her for a referral to colleagues and associates who fit the criteria, once again, outside their place of employment.

Criterion sampling was used to invite individuals from a specific organization who met the above criteria (Coyne, 1997; Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013). I contacted the Consortium for Higher Education LGBT Resources and followed the posting invitations policies to post an invitation on their listserv of 300 members.

The target sample size of approximately 10 to 15 participants was determined from recommendations by several qualitative methodology resources that described the guidelines for reaching saturation (i.e., gathering enough data so that no new data would add to the understanding of a particular construct or category; Bowen, 2008; Guest et al., 2006; Mason, 2010; Riessman, 2008). Tuckett (2004) stated that a qualitative study relies on the richness and detailed descriptions rather than the amount of data. Bowen (2008) argued that sample size is crucial when considering issues of saturation. Saturation may be slightly different for each qualitative study, but as long as the sample size adequately answers the research question, the number will vary (Marshall, 1996). Not every person who emailed or called me was to participate, and this was made clear to the potential participants in the invitation, which indicated that only the first 10 to 15 participants who met the criteria would be included. Any potential participant who did not meet all the criteria or anyone who contacted me after the initial 15 participants was excluded.

Instrumentation and Materials

Questions were derived from key concepts identified in the literature and conceptual frameworks. These included SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and advocacy (London, 2010). I had the RQ and interview guide reviewed by subject matter experts,

which enhanced the credibility of the data collection process. A pilot interview was conducted with an LGBT faculty member. Questions for the interview were as follows:

- Before we begin with your personal story, tell me a little about yourself and the college or university you currently teach at.

- Now let's turn to the story of your coming out. What happened?

- What did coming out mean to you in terms of your social identity (with your friends, family)?

- Can you give me an example?

- What did coming out mean to you in terms of your professional identity (with your peers, supervisors, students)?

- Can you give me an example?

- Tell me about your experience when you started as faculty member in your current position?

- How did you identify yourself when you first started at the college/university?

- With peers, with students, with supervisors, with administration?

- Then what happened? Tell me about your experiences as being a LGBT faculty on campus?

- Can you give me an example?

- What is the meaning of coming out to your professional community?

- Tell me about your experience in being an advocate for LGBT issues on your campus?

- Can you give me an example?

- What does it mean to be an advocate for LGBT issues on your campus?

- What do you see, looking forward, as your role in the LGBT community on this campus?

- Is there anything else you'd like to share?

<div align="center">**Procedures**</div>

Invitation and Recruitment

An announcement in the form of an email invitation to LGBT faculty which used snowball and criterion sampling was sent and participants were asked to contact me via email. This invitation stated the purpose of the study, the interview method, and my contact information. Upon contacting me, the participants had a chance to ask more questions about the research, and if willing to participate, were then given the consent form and asked to consent via email or at the start of the interview. The invitation can be found in Appendix B.

A participant screening guide was used (Appendix C) to verify through self-report that interested individuals met the criteria for inclusion. If the person met the criteria I confirmed a time and manner in which to conduct the interview (in person, skype, or phone) and emailed the Informed Consent Form. The interview commenced once the Informed Consent was received by email with an electronic signature.

Data Collection

Once the applicants responded and met criteria for participation, interviews were scheduled to take place in a local office or if possible, at a local library (in a private conference room) to balance neutrality and accessibility of interview sites. If distance

was over one-hour travel time from the Dayton Ohio area, interviews were performed via Skype or telephone.

Using the interview guide described above, and the pilot test interview, I estimated that interviews would last 60 to 90 minutes. The narrative research interview was guided by the participants' yearning to facilitate storytelling. The goal was to generate rich, thick, and details accounts rather than general statements (Reissman, 2008). Though narratives varied in length based on the told stories of each participant, every attempt was made to keep the interview close to 60 minutes out of respect for the participant's time. Interviews were audiotaped to allow for more precise analysis, transcription, and an opportunity for an assistant, professional peer, or supervisor to cross check work if necessary.

Participants were reminded at the beginning of their interview that the interview process could trigger uneasy feelings. Also, it was unknown whether participants in other regions would participate, so the contact information for South Community Counseling Services at 937-293-8300, located in Moraine Ohio (in the Dayton area) was provided, or participants could contact their local 211 (this is typically a free service for community information) for information on other counseling services in their region.

Exit and Debriefing

Debriefing procedures at the end of the interview included expressed gratitude for the willingness to share their stories and a final inquiry regarding the completion status of the interview ("Is there anything else you would like to share?"). Participants were reminded that an interview summary would be emailed to them for review (or hard copy

mailed if preferred), with an invitation to revise, correct, or add data to increase accuracy and ensure that participants felt comfortable with what they disclosed. I also made sure the participants departed with the resources list and verified contact information so that a summary of the results could be sent upon conclusion of the study.

Data Analysis Plan

Riessman (2008) stated that data analysis using the thematic approach and individual interviews can create possibilities for social and group identities which was why SIT (Tajfel, 1979) was utilized. Riessman also stated that data is interpreted by the investigator influenced by prior theory focused on the narrative concept, the constructed data with attention to language, and the unit of analysis (each interview) and the attention to context. This data analysis was done using NVivo software for qualitative analysis. NVivo enables researchers to import and analyze text, place data into themes, code information, make charts and diagrams, and export information to make notations and memos.

The data analysis was conducted using the two-cycle process as identified by Saldana (2016). The first cycle coding employed NVivo coding, a method that allowed the researcher to "tune into" the participants' voices, which was very aligned with a narrative approach (Riessman, 2009). I identified codes that emerged from the interviews themselves. This process included identifying repeated words or phrases that emerged from the interviews that were first coded.

Then, I recoded the data using a *Values* coding method. I used concepts from SIT (Tajfel, 1979) and advocacy/activism models (London, 2010) to identify words and

phrases that reflected participants' values, beliefs, and attitudes regarding professional identity and activism. Codes from the first cycle may have overlapped and merged with these values codes or remained independent.

Then, following Saldana's second cycle process, I organized and re-organized codes into categories (groups of similar codes), and then into themes and sub-themes, which were used to summarize the data and addressed the research question.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Credibility

I established credibility by using an established theory, SIT (Tajfel, 1979), and an established concept by London (2010), advocacy. I also provoked credibility by using thematic analysis, a trusted research method. I also used a reputable organization for sampling. I created a climate of honesty by instituting a rapport with the participants. Shenton (2004) advocated the above strategies for ensuring credibility in qualitative research. I also applied iterative questioning techniques during the interview process. Moreover, I corroborated with superiors about debriefing, employed peer review, and used an audit trail to reflect on the project. Patton (1999) also stated that credibility depends on gathering high quality data practicing validity and reliability, having a credible and experienced researcher, which I used and depended on. Using these strategies increased both the credibility of this research and the transferability of findings. Additional means of increasing transferability are outlined below.

Transferability

I used Howe and Eisenhart's (1992) five strategies to ensure transferability which included: using methods of inquiry that fit the research questions, collecting and analyzing data effectively, using prior knowledge in respect to the research, knowing both internal and external limitations, and assessing the understandability of the findings. Although much of qualitative research is not necessarily transferable (Shenton, 2004), the qualitative data collected can be compared to prior knowledge, refer to limitations, and increase understanding of the subject matter, thereby contributing to transferability.

Dependability

I ensured that dependability and reliability were achieved by allowing for future repetition of the study and gaining the same results (Shenton, 2004). I used a well-established research design for this study, as well as detailed data collection, was described in detail above, allowing for this future research, therefore, achieved dependability.

Confirmability

This research recorded and reported the experiences of LGBT faculty as stated in their own words, thereby increasing confirmability. Anfara, Brown, & Mangoine (2001) stated that confirmability, better known as objectivity in qualitative research, can be achieved by reflexivity. Although researcher bias to a certain extent was inevitable (Shenton, 2004), the findings were reported in alignment with the research questions, method, and measurements used, with researcher reported checks and balances. Audit

trail, member checking, and peer review helped to ensure objectivity in the interpretation of findings.

Ethical Procedures

The participants were invited to voluntarily participate in the study via direct email invitation and referrals. The informed consent form which includes a statement of confidentiality and consent to audiotaping was presented to each participant. This form also included a detailed description of the criteria for inclusion, interview procedures, and resources to contact if there were any experience of distress. The consent form clearly stated that participants were free to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality was maintained by assigning an alphanumeric combination to create a pseudonym for each participant.

Data Management

The interviews were digitally audio taped with participants' written permission. A single copy of the digital tape was coded and is kept in a locked fireproof box. I transcribed the interview audio files and the resulting digital files are password -protected until completion of the study, with the password known only by me. Written notes of the interview and other audit trails are labeled for confidentiality, transferred onto a disc, and kept in the locked fireproof box. The disc is password-protected. Any material using names or locations (colleges or universities) of the participants are kept separately from the interviews in a locked filing cabinet. Raw data is stored for at least 5 years in a locked, fireproof box, and then all materials will be destroyed.

Summary

Chapter 3 identified the thematic narrative approach and the rationale for using this approach in understanding LGBT faculty who are out and active on a higher education campus. My role and any potential biases were discussed. Participant selection was based on invitations using snowball and criterion sampling methods via email.

I designed the questionnaire to be used in this study based on current research supporting SIT (Tajfel, 1979) and the conceptual framework for advocacy as described by London (2010) to explain LGBT professional identity and activism. Data analysis was performed using NVivo qualitative analysis.

Chapter 4 describes the results of the data collection process, the analysis and interpretation of themes derived from the transcripts of participant interviews, distinct differences in their stories, participants' demographics, and activism levels. Processes to support trustworthiness were explained. Finally, it was hoped that themes relevant to LGBT faculty members were revealed and provides insight about the meaning of professional identity and activism.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this research was to explore how the narratives of LGBT faculty on traditional 4-year university campuses inform the experience of professional identity and activism. A thematic narrative analysis was conducted from these intimate stories of the participants to answer the research questions. Ten themes emerged from the experiences of the participants' told stories.

The research question guiding this study was as follows: How do the narratives of LGBT faculty on traditional 4-year university campuses inform the experience of professional identity and activism?

The research subquestions were the following:

- What does professional identity mean for LGBT faculty?

- What does activism mean for LGBT faculty?

Tajfel's (1979) SIT was used as the theoretical framework and London's (2010) advocacy concept was used to discover the meaning of professional identity and activism for the participants. In Chapter 4, I describe the data collection process, the analysis and themes that emerged from the participant interviews, and the professional identity and activism narratives of LGBT faculty. Briefly discussed are demographics of the participants that may or may not have influenced the findings.

Setting

Thirteen interviews took place via cell phone and were recorded. There were no interruptions during the calls. No personal connections existed between the participants and I. One participant did work in close proximity to me but had no relationship. One

participant works at a university that I had previously worked, but again I was not in touch with that participant at that time. There were no family affiliations shared between the participants and me.

Demographics

The sample was composed of seven lesbians, three gay men, one transgender individual, and two participants who identified as nonbinary. All participants were over the age of 25. Participants 3 and 4 disclosed that they were Caucasian. Participant 7 disclosed that she was African American. No other participants disclosed their race or ethnicity. Whether race and ethnicity affected the interview responses or the results of this research is unknown. All of the participants were faculty at traditional 4-year colleges or universities. Three were from the West Coast of the United States; five were from the East Coast; two were from the Midwest; and two were from the South.

Data Collection

I collected data by interviewing 13 participants and recording their experiences. Originally, it was thought that the interviews would take place either in person or over the phone, yet all interviews took place on the phone. Each call was recorded using an Olympus digital recorder. There were no technical issues. In a few moments during the recordings, participants spoke extremely rapidly and with intonation such that part of a sentence was not audible, but the context of the remaining sentence and contextual clues of the surrounding sentences allowed me to decipher what was said. I transferred the interview recordings to a Dell laptop and saved them on a flash drive. I transcribed the first six interviews myself. However, the remaining seven interviews were transcribed by

a transcription company. I then conducted quality control by reading the transcription and listening to the interview simultaneously to ensure that the transcription company had not missed any information or transcribed the interview improperly. I then made corrections as needed.

Interviews took place from June to December of 2017. The average length of an interview was approximately 58 minutes. Originally, I thought that the interviews would take 60 to 90 minutes, and the pilot interview was 62 minutes long. However, while the average was 58 minutes, three of the interviews were less than 35 minutes. Four of the interviews were over 100 minutes. The remaining interviews were on target of 60 minutes by 8 minutes more or less.

Summary of Individual Narratives

Prior to examining the data across cases, I read, reread, and summarized the interviews for each participant and shared these with the participants as part of the member-checking process. Two participants indicated minor changes to make. In the following subsections, I present a summary of each participant's interview to illustrate the narrative experiences faculty professional identity and activism in this group.

Participant One (P1). P1 identifies as a lesbian, has worked at a university in the South for 14 years, and is tenured. Her social identity with friends was open, and revealing, in that once out and active in the LGBT community, relationships with straight friends became distant. P1 stated that in her family she was not disowned but that being gay was a taboo topic. She stated that she only told her mother and everyone else was left to their own assumptions.

P1 indicated that, when coming out to administration, she felt like she was taking a risk. When coming out to peers, she stated that she would not lie, but would try to keep things at a professional level. P1 also stated that, when coming out to students, she felt like she had a dual identity, one as faculty who was informing and teaching, including about LGBT issues, and another identity as just a person in her field where LGBT issues were not discussed.

P1 stated that her professional identity was empowering yet isolating— empowering when working with other LGBT faculty and isolating when working with heterosexual faculty who expressed that she was spending too much time working on LGBT issues. When asked about advocacy work on campus, P1 listed several items: starting a commission, working on domestic partner benefits before marriage equality, working on sexual orientation wording included in nondiscrimination policies, working with the LGBT center, and teaching a freshman seminar with LGBT language included.

Participant 2 (P2). P2 identified as a lesbian and works at a university on the West Coast in a nontenured position. P2 stated that her social identity with friends in high school meant secrecy around her identity, but in college her social identity was based around her sexual identity. She stated that her social identity with family before coming out was secretive because she felt shame. After her identity was revealed, P2 stated, she felt she "got her family back" because she was no longer isolated.

Once starting at the college, P2 identified to administration, peers, and students as queer. P2 stated that it has been critical to align herself with progressive and welcoming people when coming out to her professional community.

When discussing professional identity, P2 stated that it has changed over time. Although P2 stated she was out early in her career, she still felt like she needed to have "a protective stance," but at the same time she was proud of accomplishments and wanted peers to know she was a truth teller and would advocate for others. P2 reported that her advocacy experiences include being the director of the gender and sexuality center, advocating for people on an individual basis, advocating for the preferred name option in the student database, advocating for trans-students to be covered by student health care, and asking for more paid help at the LGBT center.

Participant 3 (P3). P3 identified as a cisgender, gay, white male and worked in the eastern United States. P3 stated that he has been a practitioner for about 25 years and "lives and loves" his work. Coming out with friends in high school and college, P3 stated, would have been highly threatening and costly, so social identity was protected. When he finally came out, he stated that ultimately, he did lose some friendships, but he had established other friends that understood him on a more authentic level. P3 defined his social identity with family as close. He indicated that their relationship has been powerfully transformative.

P3 specified that he has always been out in his position at the college mainly due to his resume. His resume revealed places he had worked, research he had done, and advocate roles he had played which were all centered around LGBT topics and issues. He quantified the importance of being out: it lies in the environment of an education being progressive and inclusive, a need to seek diversity, an environment to be freer with one's identity, and to display educational leadership. P3 stated though, that educational

leadership has been only partly progressive and more reserved, careful about how and when things have been approached in terms of identity. P3 stated that his personal and professional identities have been fused. P3 also stated that he has been the primary advocacy voice for LGBTQ+ issues on campus at this time.

Participant 4 (P4). P4 identified as a 56-year-old white, gay, male who has taught for about 17 years in the health education field at a small, rural, state university in the east. P4 stated coming out to friends was important because he cared for these people and wanted to share his life with them. He indicated that coming out to family was a little different in that when he first came out, he wanted support due to the negative stigma attached with being gay he had seen on TV and wanted to feel good about himself.

P4 stated on his resume, his past research did allude to him being part of the LGBT community, but at first with administrators, P4 identified only as a professional. He explained that with supervisors, a comment was made about interesting research, but no questions were asked and no verification was offered. With peers, within a few weeks, he stated that eventually he came out to most people. P4 declared that with students, he doesn't normally come out. P4 stated it's important to come out in one's professional community: to network, collaborate on research, compare stories, and to give one another encouragement.

P4's advocacy experience includes: speaking with the president of the university to help start an LGBT president's commission, bringing in speakers and trainers to the campus, and cultivating funds from alumni.

Participant 5 (P5). P5 identified as lesbian professor at a Jesuit school in the south. P5 came out around 19 or 20 years old even though she dated the opposite sex in high school. P5 stated that she felt the need to come out in order not to be fraudulent. She indicated that once she came out, she quickly learned who her friends were. During the time P5 came out and realized her social identity and role with friends, it was clear what "family of choice" meant. After coming out to family, P5 stated she felt responsible in some ways for the collective view of gay people. For example, she quantified that if she failed at a relationship or said a certain thing pertaining to gay life, then people in her family would form the opinion that all gay people did that.

P5 stated that no one at her workplace ever asked her if she was gay. There was never a time when P5 made a formal announcement that she was a lesbian but stated she never kept it a secret. She shared experiences about her life which included her wife. With students, P5 specified that sometimes she taught a lesson that pertained to LGBT and when appropriate, revealed her identity at that time.

P5 identified that she believed it is crucial to be open about her identity in her professional circle because there was no shame attached to being authentic. P5 stated that she has advocated on behalf of LGBT faculty for insurance and was involved with rewriting the policy handbook concerning sexual orientation.

Participant 6 (P6). P6 identified as a lesbian and works in the English department in the east. After coming out, she stated she told her mother immediately and her mother told her father and siblings and it took about a year for the family to adjust. To her college friends, she stated it was clear she was a lesbian due to the person she was

dating. P6 stated coming out didn't really affect her friendships that much; being gay was just another part of her, and that's how she behaved and the friends followed suit.

When she identified to administration and supervisors, she stated through normal everyday conversation, her curriculum vitae, and research, she did not need to identify as gay because they already knew. P6 stated coming out feels integrated with her professional life. She stated coming out to students does not feel cohesive with what she is discussing in class.

P6 has helped to advocate for non-conforming students to use their bathroom of choice, and part of helping in a movement for queer youth during suicidal times. She has helped bring in speakers, hold conferences and film festivals.

Participant 7 (P7). P7 identified as a 28-year-old African American lesbian and taught at a private college in the Midwest. P7 stated when she came out it was quick and smooth and nothing really changed with her social identity with her friends. She indicated some of her family moved away so she didn't speak to them much which made identifying as LGBT a nonissue.

With administration, P7 stated she identified as a lesbian only when she felt comfortable, but that they were even more distant with her after she identified; therefore, she felt there were not a lot of people she could go to for support. With peers, P7 stated she identified as a lesbian but it felt awkward and her peers never really talked with her about it. She affirmed she came out to those she felt most comfortable and would support her. With students, when she first started, P7 stated she never brought up her identity.

Now, she detailed that she identifies as a lesbian only when it comes up as an issue, or if students seek her out because of her identity.

P7 stated whether people know she was out or not, she was an open person and an advocate, and loves that part about herself. For advocacy experience, she detailed that she was a faculty advisor for Pride; she questions "if you can call that advocacy," because she didn't do anything. Likewise, there was a person on campus trying to figure out if he was gay and she stated that she helped him with mentoring and advice. In addition, P7 indicated she was an advisor to a student who did a course by contract, or independent study, with her about queer and trans life. She stated she also attends Pride events on campus.

Participant 8 (P8). P8 identified as approximately 50 years old and teaches at a university in the Midwest. P8 identified her main life as being cisgender heterosexual and had a heterosexual marriage early in life. P8 doesn't label her sexuality as "nothing seems to fit." P8 stated her social identity didn't change much with the people she was close. She detailed she didn't feel like she owed anyone an explanation, but she would tell people and not give them a chance to be critical or disapproving. P8 stated that in the beginning it was difficult when she identified to family and it caused some confusion, but "after everyone calmed down, things were back to normal."

When P8 first began in her position, with administration, she identified as heterosexual. After transitioning, P8 stated she didn't make an announcement. People figured it out by word of mouth. After coming out, P8 stated she was approached about being on the diversity committee, and sometimes felt like a token to the department. With

peers, she stated she identified at first as heterosexual and then with those she was close with, informed them of the transition. With students, P8 stated she feels it's not really important to identify oneself. However, on her syllabi is the Safe Space Triangle. She indicated that in class they discussed what that means, but never makes it a point to say she was a member of that community.

P8 stated that coming out to one's professional community means being visible, making your identity known and quantifying how important it is to you. She stated that it is also important to serve as a resource for other people. P8 has worked on domestic partner benefits before and after marriage equality, formation of a conference for LGBT businesses, helped in hiring of the LGBT director, advocated for the help with LGBT students being at higher risk for academic failure, and advocated for bringing in a transgender activist to speak.

Participant 9 (P9). P9 currently teaches in the east at a comprehensive college which integrates both 2- and 4-year degrees and was hired to teach queer studies. P9 stated he always knew he was gay, but because his family was religious, he didn't feel he could come out and was engaged in a heterosexual relationship for seven years. P9 stated before he came out, he was very private and did not do a lot of socializing. When he came out, he indicated he was always around other LGBT people and friends, so his social identity didn't really change much.

P9 clarified that he does not socialize that much with his family, and they do not know many of his friends. He stated he has introduced them to his current husband. He

indicated he does not see his family very often, therefore, they are not involved in his life or social circle, so they do not discuss his life or identity.

P9 specified he was hired to teach Queer Studies. P9 stated it is important to come out in one's professional community to demonstrate to students one can be an out LGBT professional and get a job that one enjoys. P9 listed he has developed programming, courses, put on events, expanded queer events to other minorities such as students of color and various religions, modeled LGBT professionalism and adulthood, has worked on preferred name changes and provided resources for the gay/straight alliance as well as many other advocacy efforts.

Participant 10 (P10). P10 identified as gender non-conforming and teaches at a women's college in the east. They have taught there since 2005 and was hired to teach LGBT studies. P10 stated they came out as a teenager and has been gender non-conforming since they were a kid. P10 indicated they do not hold fast to labels, such as LGBT. When P10 identified when they came out, people seemed to be more confused by P10's gender rather than P10's sexuality. With friends and concerning social identity, P10 thought that it does not matter what they were called, but that the relationships they had with people were solid and others were accepting and tolerant. P10 stated they do not interact with their family nor discusses their identity.

With colleagues in their professional community, P10 indicated that they have not needed to come out because they just lived their life and never thinks about needing to come out and assumed everyone knows. P10 detailed being involved in campaigns, helped students obtain gender neutral bathrooms, assisted with preferred names on forms

and in the college system, and helped with allowing trans women to use the women's bathroom, helped colleagues understand gender pronouns and discussed LGBTQ+ issues with faculty to help them better understand that population.

Participant 11 (P11). P11 identified as a 45-year-old transmasculine individual. He has been working at a university in the west since 2010 and teaches numerous gender and women's studies courses as a tenured professor. He stated he first came out as a lesbian around the age of 19 and then, around the age of 30, identified as transgender. When P11 identified as a lesbian, he indicated that he had difficulties fitting into gender binary roles and felt restricted. After coming out as trans, P11 specified he was able to express his social identity better and be more fluid in his gender and identification. P11 identified his social identity as having been difficult because some of his family was religious and non-accepting.

When first starting at the college, P11 stated he identified as transmasculine and/or a transman with administration and supervisors. With peers, P11 indicated he would start conversations with faculty about research and depending where the conversation went, he might then talk about his identity. With students, P11 specified he uses being transgender as a teaching tool, so most students knew or learned of his identity.

In relation to coming out to one's professional community, P11 stated being in a predominately white-male profession, it is sometimes difficult to express sexual or gender identities; but he asserted that he often invited other professors and colleagues to ask questions about him or about queer studies so that he could begin to create normal

practices. P11 listed his advocacy experiences to include: readings, discussions in classrooms, changing wording on admission sequences, planning student events, showing up to events, developing courses, speaking at events, and going to Pride parades.

Participant 12 (P12). P12 was a 53-year-old tenured professor who identified as a lesbian. She works at a college in the west and has been there since 2001 and teaches LGBTQ studies. She came out around the age of 19 after going away to college. She stated it was about a year after coming out that she came out to her family. She expressed she was out in her daily life and had many LGBT friends. P12 stated that her social identity did not change with her friends and with her family, it depended on who she was coming out to, affirmed it meant different things. She stated she didn't think her social identity with her family particularly changed her relationship with them.

P12 indicated that her curriculum vitae has information about her LGBTQ research, activism, and political work, and she was hired to teach LGBTQ studies, so it was obvious that she identified as part of the LGBT community. She identified as a Jewish lesbian-feminist. In her classes, P12 asserted that she made it a point to come out in the first week of class.

P12 stated her professional community is queer studies, so coming out or being out in this community is "no big deal." She stated her experiences in advocacy include but are not limited to the following: advocating for services, classes, and recognition, represented sexual diversity and has been a queer voice, been the interim director of ethnic studies, co-founded the college of arts and sciences advisory group, attended lavender graduation and many more.

Participant 13 (P13). P13 identified as non-binary individual in their middle 30s and works at a 4-year institution in the east. They teach in the theater department. P13 came out around the age of 16 or 17, first with friends and then with family. P13 stated that it allowed for more authentic relationships with their friends. P13 shared that with family, coming out has had an impact on their social identity. They stated family has been mostly supporting but doesn't necessarily treat P13 as other family members: i.e., asking "when you are getting married, when will you have kids."

At the college, P13 stated they have identified as queer from the start. In relation to their professional community, P13 stated it was in sync and aligned with the theater field, so coming out was not a problem. However, coming out on the campus, especially since coming out as non-binary, P13 indicated that they feele a little bit more like some marginalization had happened. P13 detailed that they have helped with attaining gender-neutral bathrooms, spoke about LGBT issues, been a voice for students, and been a faculty advisor.

Data Analysis

As described in Chapter 3, I used Riessman's (2008) thematic analysis approach when to explore the interview data. As I reviewed the transcripts, I searched for statements related to coming out, both in the participants social and professional circles, the participants experience with identity and activism at the college or university they are employed, challenges they may have faced with identity and activism, and how the participants possibly overcame those challenges or at least the effect it had on their professional identities and activism level. When I reviewed the transcripts using the

primary questions from the initial interviews, many of these statements were identified. I then summarized each of the interviews which were presented above.

Data Coding

For analyzing the data, I used Saldana's (2016) two-cycle coding method, by using NVivo software and a *Values* coding method. In the first cycle using NVivo, I coded each interview. For each question, I selected words and phrases that seemed to represent the focus or intent of the statement, and then named a "code". The second cycle of coding happened using a *Values* coding method. I utilized the concepts from the theoretical framework, SIT (Tajfel, 1987) and conceptual model of advocacy (London, 2010). I hand-coded the data and identified words and phrases related to the concepts. The concepts used helped to identify words and phrases that reflected participants values, beliefs and attitudes. Then, I identified overlaps from the two cycles and began to identify categories and themes.

Codes and Categories

The process described above produced sixty-two codes in NVivo, and ninety-two codes through hand coding. After overlapped codes were identified, a total of 95 codes emerged. The process of going from codes to categories involved grouping and regrouping codes into collections of shared meaning. The identification of themes occurred through bottom-up processing to themes representing the rich and thick stories as told by the participants. The below table contains the narrative themes, thematic categories, codes for those categories, and one response from a participant for each theme. Discussion of the narrative themes in detail follow the table.

Table 1

Inductively Developed Thematic Themes and Categories

Narrative themes	Thematic categories	Codes	Characteristic responses from participants
Coming Out	Awareness College age Professional community No need	Aware, young age, difference, realize, came out, early	"I knew very early that I was different"
Identity	Closeness Guarded Unchanging Combination Normalization	Relate, authentic, friendship, close, combined, normal, protective, fused	"I think that it allowed for more authentic relationships"
Gender fluidity	Labeling	Resistant, restricted, fluid, doesn't fit	"I felt a lot more comfortable being a little more fluid in my gender"
Stigmatization	Others perceptions, pushback	Marginalize, negative, accuse, intolerant, avoid, stealth	"We are going to let you start this commission you want, but we really have to be stealth about it" "The deans tried to get the student to not do the LGBT presentation because there was a nun on campus"
Campus climate	Positive, uninviting	Welcoming, positive, open, support, friendly, distant, unaccepting, intolerant	"It doesn't feel like a kind and welcoming place" "I feel like on my campus, we get a lot of support"
Blatant prejudice or discrimination	Perceptions of prejudice, actions of discrimination	Embarrassment, viewed, expression, negative, faggot, homophobia	"He said the group of you are going to burn in hell"
LGBT resources	Nonexistent, advocacy for resources	Didn't have, no option, pushing for, nonexistent, exist	"We ended up writing a policy for them anyway because they didn't have a policy"
Advocacy	Support, leadership, having a voice	Empower, support, leadership, heard, voice, challenge, speak	"We have to make our voices as loud or even louder than the voice of hate or oppression"
Responsibility	Obligation, role model, availability	Advocating, being there, envision, responsibility, model	"I have talked openly about the responsibilities we have, about obligations to support"
Positive experiences	Supported experiences, inclusion	Welcomed, good, accepting, included, excited	"I was both warmly welcomed and also have had the chance to spread my wings"

Narrative Themes

      Coming out. All participants described the process of coming out as having multiple various "facets" with unique and personal stories relevant to each participant; and, all participants expressed coming out more than once in their lives. This theme was represented by four categories: knew at a young age, came out in college or around college age, critical to be out in one's professional community, and no need to come out.

      P1, P2, P3, P9, P10, P11, and P13 stated that they knew at a very young age they were LGBTQ+, whether or not they had a name for it or understood what it meant. For example, P2 stated she "knew very early I was different," and P10 stated "I have been this way since I was a kid." Followed by coming out in college or around college age (between 18 and 22), P2, P3, P5, P6, P7, P10, and P12 verified they did at this time. For instance, P5 indicated coming out at "19 or 20," and P7 stated she "came out in college."

      Numerous participants expressed coming out in one's professional community was critical. P1 stated "visibility is really important," followed up by P4 who indicated coming out in his professional community "well, for me, I feel it's important." Furthermore, P8 identified "in my professional community, coming out would mean not being invisible." P3 summed up this category by saying "there is a desire (to come out) and these are the communities that I have been a part of, to sort of seek diversity and people who represent that diversity, being out in public, and a source of both pride and you know, a personal representation of my advocacy and passion."

      Some of the participants specified that coming out was not needed. Three sub-categories were identified: not coming out as it was simply a part of who they were, a

document or job position is the identifier (e.g. resume/CV, job description), and physical appearance. In the first sub-category, P3, P5, P6, and P8, stated that they did not make any announcement about being LGBT. "It was just simply a part of who I was" (P3). Additionally, P5 stated "I don't know that there was ever a moment where I had this like announcement, I am a lesbian!" Furthermore, P6 specified "I never said, oh by the way, I'm a lesbian, because I just talked about my life."

The next sub-category details participants not needing to come out because of their work. P2, P3, P4, P6, P9, P10, P11, and P12 described their non-coming out experience in this way. P3 stated "my resume outted me," or P4 recalled that "my resume, more or less, reflected LGBT concerns during the interview process." In addition, P6 said "some of my work is in queer studies, so just look on my CV and there it is." Moreover, P12 expressed being "specifically hired to work in lesbian studies," and P9 quantified this sub-category by declaring "I was hired to teach as the first assistant professor of queer studies in the English Department."

The final sub-category for not needing to come out is physically looking LGBT and is recorded as a self-reported perception. Six of the 13 participants verbalized that they "look" LGBTQ+. P5 stated "I don't think that there is a big secret when you see me that I am gay." In another example, P10 expressed "because of the way I looked I was asked when I was a graduate student what was the possibility for me to teach queer theory?" Finally, P12 said "I look like a dyke, you know."

Identity. Questions were asked about social identity with friends and family, professional identity within the participants professional community and workplace, and

what that meant to each participant. The theme of identity was passionately expressed by each participant as the expression of oneself. Among both social and professional identity, emerged categories which include closeness, guarded, unchanging, normalization, and combination of identities.

Participants expressed social identity with either family or friends. P2, P3, P4, P5, P8, P9, P10, and P13 conveyed that their social identity lead to closeness with either group. For example, when discussing social identity with friends, P13 stated "it's allowed me to have more authentic relationships." In an example with family, P3 expressed "that has actually lead to some degree of closeness with my family."

Guarded identities were also articulated by the participants with either family, friends, or professional colleagues. P1, P2, P3, P8, P9, P10, and P13 expressed having a guarded identity in some way with one of the three before mentioned groups. For example, with friends, P1 stated "I didn't have any straight friends because I felt like I couldn't relate to them," and with family she stated "I only told my mom and the rest were left to make their own assumptions." Finally, with professional identity, P1 stated "it's a different vibe and I don't think the two mix." Another example includes P9's comments; "my mom was pretty terrible and stopped, we stopped talking for a couple of years."

The next category that appeared was unchanging. P6, P7, P8, and P12 all voiced that either social identity or professional identity did not change once they were out. For instance, related to family, P6 stated "I don't think it really changed the way I treated

them or even really the way they treated me." Likewise, related to friends, P8 mentioned "my social identity didn't change with those that I was close with."

As stated by P5, who said, "I want to identify myself the same way as a straight person would," the category of normalization, or normalizing identity surfaced. P1, P4, P5, and P6 commented on this category. When P1 shared about teaching a new student seminar, she stated she used a power point with LGBTQ+ material in it, and she indicated "it sort of was making it normalized and everyday life." Another example includes P6's comments, "I mean my partner and I have been together for a long, long time, so I think it's just been sort of normalized in the family that she's just another in-law."

The final category with the theme identity is a combination of identities. The category emerged from participants who expressed that their social identity and their professional identity was either combined or one in the same. P4, P5, P6, P9, P11, and P13 commented about the merging of these identities. Such as P6's comment "it feels like it's fairly integrated with my professional life." Another example includes P9 who quantified this category, "I never had to have a division between those two things."

Gender fluidity. In this theme the category of labeling emerged. Several participants mentioned in their experiences about not being able to label themselves and others. P2, P5, P8, P10, and P11 expressed not having the ability to either label themselves or not wanting others to label them. P2 stated "I just really think you can't break down gender and sexuality in terms of lesbians and gays, bisexual, transgender, and all these categories. I just don't think that's how it works anymore." P11 expressed "I was actually resistant of that binary of gender and the way I kind of explain it as a

lesbian, I was very, very masculine and it all seemed really restricted in terms of gender preferences."

Stigmatization. This theme was derived from two categories; how other people view them (the LGBT faculty) and pushback. P1, P2, P3, P4, P5 and P9 expressed experiences about how other people on campus viewed them, which showed how they were stigmatized. P2 shared an experience she had in grad school about advice she received related to research and commented that she was told "I should be very careful about what I chose and that I should avoid queer topics. Queer topics could really make me unemployable." Additionally, P3 mentioned "I have some people who I know to be, feel awkward or unaccepting or intolerant."

The second category in this theme was pushback. P1, P2, P5, P9, and P11 shared when attempting to advocate for LGBT rights, typically administration but sometimes other faculty expressed opposition. When discussing starting an LGBT commission, P1 stated about administration that "they obviously didn't want us to do it, they saw it (the commission) and decided to defund us." When discussing implementing gender neutral bathrooms on campus, P9 explained that "some faculty didn't like that they were not asked, some faculty didn't understand, and some faculties got angry."

Campus climate. Two categories were derived from this theme, positive and uninviting. P3, P5, P8, P9, P10, P12, and P13 expressed the climate on their respective campuses to be positive. For example, P3 expressed "I would say that our campus is generally LGBT positive." As well, P10 stated "the college and students are pretty gay friendly and trans friendly." Conversely, P1, P2, and P7 articulated their campuses were

not so endearing. P1 voiced concerns after discussing working hard on LGBT rights in regards to administration, "they give you something with one hand and then slap you in the face with the other hand." P7 expressed that she "just felt like there weren't a lot of people that I could go to on that campus or even made me feel welcomed."

      Blatant prejudice/discrimination. This theme resulted from the categories of perception of prejudice and actions of discrimination. P1, P2, P3, P4, P9, P11, and P12 were included in these categories. The perception of prejudice was expressed by the participants who viewed a certain action, understood a comment, or perceived behavior of another to be prejudiced. For example, when P1 shared an experience about starting an LGBT commission and administration stated they would allow it, but P1 and others needed to keep quiet about it, P1 stated "so they were telling us, so, stay in the closet basically." Additionally, P2 commented about how she had a director's position and found out she was making less money than other directors, in which she had been there longer than half of them. She stated "I don't know if that was about my sexuality and gender but it was certainly about how the department is viewed, that unit, the gender and sexuality unit."

      From the category of actions of discrimination come comments from P2, P4, P9, P11, and P12. These participants indicated that these actions were directed at other people or at the participant themselves. For instance, P4 told a story of when he first began at the college and was walking across campus; he stated "somebody just yelled faggot across the campus. It was a group of guys." Another example included P11's shared story of being transgender, and during a meeting at the college they stated "one of

my colleagues in sociology, she ended up coming to this meeting, and said to me "what are you?" These examples were directed at the participants themselves. The examples provided now are of discrimination that the participant witnessed happening to other LGBTQ+ people on campus. P2 shared what she witnessed concerning a colleague; "I have seen what has happened every year to a cohort of trans and queerness and of color who wanted programs. I see embarrassment of her over and over again." P9 also shared about discrimination directed towards students; "sometimes it happens with students. There have been occasions where there has been a sort of homophobia coming from certain faculty and administrators."

LGBT resources. The categories of this theme are displayed in all 13 of the participants. The first category was the non-existence of LGBT resources and the second was advocating for those resources. Every participant, as one of the criteria to be included in this study, needed to be active in some way on their campus. No campus was perfect in providing faculty, staff and students with LGBT resources, therefore, a void existed of such services, and as a result, the participants stated that they advocated for those needs. For example, P1 stated "when I first got to this university, there was nothing LGBT, like nothing!" P5 shared a story about first arriving at the university, before same-sex marriage was legal, and inquired about domestic partner benefits in which she said "they didn't have that option for me." Additionally, P9 expressed "we didn't have an LGBT student resource center."

The next category of advocating for those resources through activities, again, was expressed by every participant. All participants described formal and informal events:

programs, committees, and so forth, that they started or participated. For example, P8

mentioned "we advocated for the formation of a conference of LGBT businesses and they

(administration) did that." Another example of activities was from P9, who said "I was

constantly edging on working with student activities and designing programs and hosting

events and doing a lot of service." Here is a list, not all-inclusive, of some of the things

that the participants quantified as having advocated for: campus advisory group, domestic

partner benefits, LGBT centers, non-discrimination policies changed to include sexual

orientation and gender identity, gender neutral bathrooms, adding preferred names to

forms and computer systems, trans and lesbian health care, safe space programs,

sexuality awareness training, teaching of LGBTQ+ pronouns, putting on lavender

graduation, and advocating for queer study courses.

Advocacy. The theme of advocacy was represented through three categories:

support, leadership, and having a voice. P1, P2, P4, P7, P11, and P12 expressed advocacy

meant supporting themselves and other people. Support was defined by the participants

when they articulated the words support and helping. For example, P2 stated that

advocacy meant "supporting all people," as well as P7's explanation that advocacy meant

"helping people." P3, P6, and P12 stated the meaning of advocacy was exuding

leadership on their respective campuses. For instance, when P12 declared that advocacy

meant "institutional advocacy, making campus more diverse," and when P6 stated that

advocacy was "an integrated part of my job." P5, P8, P9, P12, and P13 articulated

advocacy meant having a voice, a need to be heard, to acquire needs for themselves and

others. P13 stated that "special labels tend to speak up." In P5's example, she stated

advocacy meant "making yourself heard to bring about acceptance, compassion, and understanding." P8 expressed advocacy meant "having a voice louder than hate and oppression."

Responsibility. From the theme of responsibility emerged three categories, advocating out of obligation, acting as an LGBT role model for students, and being there for student needs. The respondents in this theme expressed they had a responsibility or obligation to advocate. These participants included P2, P3, P4, and P6, in which P3 shared "I feel like I have a responsibility to go back to people in need and be support focused." Another example includes when P4 stated "for me personally, it's a duty and a responsibility," when he discussed advocating for LGBT issues.

P3, P4, P6, and P9 communicated being out and advocating was critical in being a role model for students. For instance, P6 shared "I felt like it was more important for me to be more assertively out because I was the only one. I felt like it was sort of my obligation with students to be more upfront." When discussing young college students, P9 stated "they don't have a lot of examples of working with people who are gay at work or even as part of their job, to model adulthood that they can sort of think about modeling themselves."

P2 and P8 both stated that LGBTQ+ students were at higher risk for academic failure, dropping out, or were at risk for harming themselves. Thus, the need for faculty to be there for student needs, not only to act as a role model, but to listen to them, exists as explained by the participants. P2, P3, P8, P9, and P11 fall into this category. P3 expressed "I think those students who have those "plus" identities like asexual,

pansexual, and so on, have a harder time coming to terms with faculty and staff who understand and support them and can speak their language and understand them on their own terms." P11 stated that "still to this day I have students come in wanting to talk about their identities and what not. Like if they're interested in something (dealing with identity) or if they need someone to talk to."

Positive experiences. This theme resulted from the questions of "tell me about your experience when you started as a faculty member in your current position," and "tell me about your experiences as being an LGBT faculty on campus." The categories included in this theme were supportive experiences and inclusion. P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P8, P9, P10, P11, P12, and P13 stated they experienced positive involvement or support from colleagues on their respective campuses. P3 shared his experience and voiced "I would say I was both warmly welcomed and also have had that chance to spread my wings." Additionally, P5 shared an experience of being in the public eye news story about same-sex marriage after first starting at the college and said this about her co-workers supporting her and her partner; "about 25 of them were standing there, that I worked with, and they held signs, they spoke on camera in support of us, and they came out for us and they didn't have to." Also, P4 stated about his experience at the college, that "overall it's been a positive experience."

Inclusion resulted with experiences expressed by P1, P3, P4, P5, P6, P9, P11, and P12. P11 exuberantly said "what we do great is our diversity statement, for the first year is now included on all of our jobs whether its faculty or staff." P12 eagerly shared that "the university, while its campus really diverse, has been very supportive of the LGBT

studies work that I do and probably the most supportive of any sort of students of all kinds of queer efforts anywhere." None the less, inclusion doesn't happen at every campus confirmed by some participants. For instance, P1 stated that "in the library, it's known to be like this open space and very welcoming, but that's just not always true." Additionally, P6 when discussing other campus groups and their event advertisements, expressed that "I noticed that none of our events would end up on these posters."

Discrepancies Within Themes

Within the theme of "Coming Out" P9 stated he did not come out until he was 30 years old, and thus did not fit into the category of coming out in college or around college age. Also, within the category of coming out to faculty, staff, and students, P1 stated she would have never come out to supervisors for fear that it might "impact my evaluation of my job performance." Additionally, related to coming out to students, P4 stated "for the most part I do not come out to students because I just haven't found it necessarily appropriate."

The theme of Campus Climate contains the categories of positive and uninviting. Yet there were three participants who mentioned loneliness. Only one of those comments related to the actual campus, told by P1 when she verified "I felt isolated on campus," and this was shared in the story of when she first arrived. The other two participants who mentioned loneliness were P2 when she specified "I think it can be lonely for faculty members who are not out." Finally, P3 discussed "feeling a lack of queer peers and craving just kind of a community."

In the theme of blatant prejudice or discrimination P3 stated they have never experienced blatant attacks. While discussing coming out and social identity, P3 mentioned not having any negative responses to himself. He stated "I have not been the target of or directly experienced any of the expression of that. I guess I have never been attacked or a recipient of that."

Lastly, in the theme of positive experiences, P1 expressed a different story than the other participants. Along with feeling isolated when she first started at the campus, expressed feeling "jaded" and also stated that she "feels sad knowing that my university, when it came down to it, wouldn't stand out for LGBT people or students." P1 also stated that moving forward she feels "hesitate to move forward and do something that's very flashy, or LGBT related, because, again, they are watching."

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Credibility

As stated in Chapter 3, I began by using social identity theory (Tajfel, 1979), and by using London's (2010) concept of advocacy. I further enhanced credibility by using thematic analysis and used a reputable organization for sampling. I created a climate of honesty by instituting a rapport with the participants. I did this by beginning each interview sharing a little about myself and informing the participants that I too am LGBT faculty. I also applied iterative questioning techniques during the interview process. Moreover, I debriefed after the interviews with my academic superior and used an audit trail to reflect on the project. Using these strategies increased both the credibility of this research and the transferability of findings.

Transferability

I used Howe and Eisenhart's (1992) five strategies to ensure transferability by using appropriate inquiry for the research questions, collecting and analyzing the data effectively by aligning my process with a recognized method, using prior published knowledge related to the research, keeping in mind both internal and external limitations, and assessing the understandability of the findings.

Dependability

I ensured that dependability and reliability was achieved by allowing for future repetition of the study and gaining the same results (Shenton, 2004). Using a well-established research design for this study, and detailed data collection, was described in detail above, allowing for this future research, therefore, achieving dependability.

Confirmability

This research recorded and reported the experiences of LGBT faculty as stated in their own words, therefore increasing confirmability. The findings were reported in alignment with the research questions, method, and measurements used, with researcher reporting. Evidence of objectivity, including the use of verbatim transcripts, audit trails, member checking, and peer review.

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Results

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The purpose of this study was to answer the following research question: How do the narratives of LGBT faculty on traditional 4-year university campuses inform the experience of professional identity and activism?"

The following subquestions were also to be answered:

- What does professional identity mean for LGBT faculty?

- What does activism mean for LGBT faculty?

Experiences of Professional Identity and Activism

Professional identity and activism were informed by the experiences of the LGBT faculty interviewed. The experiences of professional identity were shared and by one participant, P1, expressed as having a "dual professional identity," and another participant, P2, mentioned needing "to have a protective stance." P11 shared an experience of going back to graduate school and coming out in their professional community, stating it "became tied to my activist work." P12 shared her experience of coming out to her professional community and stated "if I weren't out professionally it would mean not being successful or lead to accomplishments." P2 shared an experience of activism, saying how people were working diligently to make changes, and when the changes began to happen, "the people who finally make the decision in the end take the credit and erase the advocacy of the students and the faculty and of the LGBT people, or the folks that have been working for that change. I see that erasure of advocacy time and time again."

The Meaning of Professional Identity

The meaning of professional identity was informed by emerging categories of having a voice and having a combined identity as stated in the narrative theme of identity. P3 stated that having his professional identity meant giving "me a voice that other people have struggled to find or associate with or to use in quite the same way. Maybe it's just the cultural dexterity that I have that I have been able to help others to move forward or

move their own practice to a different level by virtue of some of the work that I have been able to do." P4 shared his thoughts about the meaning of professional identity by saying "it's important for administration in higher education to see that there is a diverse faculty across the spectrum of fields who are out as gay or lesbian or trans or bi or whatever it is because I think it's one of those areas where we are so hidden."

The Meaning of Activism

The meaning of activism was expressed differently by every participant and both good and bad implications were revealed. The categories informing the theme of advocacy were support, leadership and having a voice. P2 stated that advocacy means "being an advocate for every, for all people, for all communities." When discussing what it meant to be an advocate for LGBT issues on campus, P5 shared "I want to make sure that people understand there just can't be silence about it. We need to have conversations about it and where it connects to different issues."

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Summary

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Chapter 4 recapped the research questions, explained the setting and demographics of the participants, described the data collection process, highlighted participant summaries, and then explained data analysis. Table I was presented and narrative themes with corresponding categories were displayed. Finally, the research question results were given as well as the results for the sub-questions. These rich experiences of the participants inform all people, especially administration, faculty, and staff on campuses across the United States about professional identity and activism by LGBT faculty. Discussion of these experiences will proceed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to examine the narratives of LGBT faculty on traditional 4-year university campuses and inform the experience of professional identity and activism. Using Riessman's (2008) narrative analysis, 10 themes emerged from interviews with 13 participants who identified as LGBTQ+ faculty working on traditional 4-year college and university campuses: coming out, identity, gender fluidity, stigmatization, campus climate, blatant prejudice/discrimination, LGBT resources, advocacy, responsibility, and positive experiences.

The themes of coming out, identity, gender fluidity, and stigmatization inform the research question about professional identity. The participant interviews revealed (a) how labels can be counter-productive and negative, (b) how negative views make advocacy efforts difficult, and (c) how being free to be oneself feels constrained. Campus climate, blatant prejudice and discrimination, LGBT resources, advocacy, responsibility, and positive experiences all informed the meaning of activism. Participants varied in their ability and ease in engaging in activism, by (a) revealing the negative actions LGBT faculty face on campus, (b) describing what is available and could be improved, (c) showing a need to support and exemplify leadership, and (d) giving voice to their needs and to those of others. The expression of an internal responsibility and obligation is the impetus for giving voice for advocacy and activism, and for being a positive force in the college campus movements to recognize and support LGBTQ+ faculty, students, and staff.

Interpretation of the Findings

Interpretation of Themes

Coming out. As told by the participants, the experience of coming out happens in various ways in their lives. The ways to come out varied by age, who to come out to, and reasons for not coming out. What emerged consistently was (a) the spoken understanding that one comes out several times in their life, (b) that choice to come out was important, and (c) that coming out affects social and professional identities. This is comparable to the findings of qualitative research by Getz and Kirkley (2006), who reported awareness and confidence in one's social identity to serve and support the choice to come out.

Identity. Herek et al. (2015) mentioned that sexual identities were invisible and unacknowledged. This study concentrated on individuals who are already out with many people in their environment. Participants' stories revealed how identity can inform family, friends, colleagues, supervisors, and college administration about being open and what that means for the LGBTQ+ individual. Herek et al. stated that when these individuals reveal their identities, they are seen as abnormal or unnatural, and heterosexist behaviors such as shunning occurs. The category of *guarded* was consistent with Herek et al.'s points. In some instances, the participants were hesitant to identify due to fear of judgement, reprisals, and distancing relationships. P2 confirmed this concept when she discussed social identity with family and she stated that in some ways she got her family back, "but in other ways it made me a stranger." P13 revealed that coming out "had an impact on my social identity with my family and how we interact." P5 had mentioned that with friends, she "quickly found out who would stick by me and who

would not." The results of this study suggest that a positive and healthy social identity can best be formed when fear of being oneself can be ameliorated.

Patridge et al. (2014) commented on professional identity and stated that LGBT faculty experience "professional outness", meaning their sexual and professional identities overlap. In contrast, Juul (1994) observed a struggle to balance identities; both personal and professional identities were a challenge for employees, and Juul found that professional identity is preferred to balance with one's occupation. Patridge et al. found that faculty open identification led to discomfort in their position and the desire to find other employment. This was not the case in this research. Indeed, the participants in this study stated that their sexual, social, and professional identities were one in the same. Interconnected identities were exemplified by P3 who stated, "we have to be who we are, congruent. We cannot compartmentalize that between our work environment and our life environment." The participants stated their desire to continue working towards advocacy in their current positions, and in fact they felt a responsibility and duty to be there for others to further the fulfillment of LGBTQ+ needs.

Research has shown that LGBT people have encountered adverse reactions to their sexual identities (e.g., Doe, 2010; Jones, 2010; Smith, 2010). Normalizing LGBTQ+ in everyday life is a wish, a goal, and a hope for many in this community as indicated by some of the participants. P5 confirmed this aspiration and said "I want to identify myself the same way a straight person would." P6 also discussed "normalizing" when discussing her wife's role in her family. When teaching about LGBTQ+ pronouns and other issues in the community to students, P1 stated "it's sort of making it normalized in every day."

Part of any civil rights movement is the need for people to be treated equally and to be afforded the same habits as others, yet as shown in this study and in prior literature LGBTQ+ people continue to struggle for this normalcy. Although intersectionality of the participants was not discussed, the struggle for equality was still highlighted in the discussions. Heteronormativity prevails, as stated by Ripley et al. (2012), who found that the novelty of using LGBT examples in class and discussing homosexuality as content results in the activation of stereotypes in students who initially identified themselves as open-minded, suggesting that heteronormativity is common despite the positive progress that has been made. Examples of heteronormativity were confirmed when P1 stated that mentioning the word diversity caused others in her department to discuss race and not sexuality. P11 also gave the example that sexuality was not included when discussing diversity or vision statements on their campus. It was not exclusively or openly expressed to any of the participants that heterosexuality was the preferred status of the faculty, but heteronormativity was clearly represented when P4 stated he went up for promotion and blind homophobia was present.

Gender fluidity. McNamara (1997) discussed social identities of students and teachers and stated that these identities are not fixed, but fluid. This was confirmed by the participants. Sexuality is not just straight or gay, and gender is not just male or female, as many of the participants articulated. P8 stated that sexual and gender identity is not only the letters LGBT and what they stand for; sexual and gender identity were much more than that. Labeling oneself or labeling others restricts humans to the point of cognitive dissonance, exploiting their beliefs in contrast with those of the cultural or societal

"norm". P10 confirmed this concept by saying "I have to say that I'm not, even though I was immersed in gay culture and immersed in the identity, I'm not, I don't hold really hard and fast to the labels for gay and sexuality." Identity and gender are fluid, a person loves who they love, and people change and grow as time goes on. Although queer theory was not used for this study, gender fluidity was acknowledged by Jagose (1996) in *Queer Theory: An Introduction*: "Whereas essentialists regard identity as natural, fixed and innate, constructionists assume identity is fluid, the effect of social conditioning and available cultural models for understanding oneself" (p.8).

Stigmatization. To stigmatize someone, a group of people, a belief, a tradition, an attitude is to describe or regard them as worthy of disgrace or great disapproval (Oxford Living Dictionary, 2018). Worthen (2012) stated people can diffuse homophobia and heterosexism by trying to explore and understand attitudes towards the LGBT population. Through this research and an understanding of the told stories of these participants, stigmatization may decrease for the LGBTQ+ community. Stigmatization was substantiated by this evolved theme when P2 shared that she had been cautioned that doing research related to queer topics could make her unemployable. This community, like many, thrives on identification abilities, degrees, career choices, and successes when given the opportunity to remain authentic. The participants, while not articulating stigma from students, expressed the experience of an "invisible stigma" across campus. P1 told of a situation where an LGBT commission was functioning on campus and administration defunded the commission in order for them not to be visible on campus, implying that the visibility of LGBT advocacy was threatening to campus life. Just as other groups,

commissions, and units exist on campus, so should LGBT alliances. This is supported by

Wisneski and Kane (2013), who found that schools' ability to decrease stigma and

victimization coexisted with support of students and faculty.

Campus climate. Many of the participants expressed having a mostly positive

college environment in which to work. Renn (2010) had stated that the campus

environments that neglect to embrace the identity and activism of LGBT individuals

hinder the further progression of an all-inclusive environment. This negligence was

experienced by a few of the participants who stated "it doesn't feel like a kind and

welcoming place" (P2), or who expressed "some people seem approving but they're not"

(P8). This is consistent with Blumenfield et al. (2016), who found that despite positive

progress, discrimination was still experienced on campuses and that educators and

administration need to continue involvement towards inclusion.

Blatant prejudice/discrimination. Several researchers commented that members

of the LGBT community frequently experience stigma, prejudice, discrimination, and

crime as a result of their minority status (Airton, 2009; Kitchen & Bellini, 2012; Sanders,

2012; Woodford et al., 2014), and this was corroborated by several of the participants.

Humans naturally develop beliefs and morals and these attitudes are sometimes put into

action as revealed by a few of the participants, for instance, when P12 told about

receiving a nasty letter from her extended family during the time she came out, or when

P4 described his unfortunate experience on the campus when someone yelled

inappropriate terms at him. The LGBTQ+ participants spoke their stories loudly: "I've

seen embarrassment of her over and over again" (P2) when speaking about a queer

colleague, "somebody just yelled faggot across the campus" (P4), "there has been a sort of homophobia coming from faculty and administrators" (P9), and "other faculty members asking why I was changing sides" (P9). Continued prejudice and discrimination does not incorporate diversity and inclusion in any environment. Woodford et al. (2014) stated that this behavior isolates all people involved. Progress in acceptance and tolerance and the allowance of LGBTQ+ alliances has been made, but as in all stigmatized groups, prejudice and discrimination continue to plague these communities. Continued research, reporting, and commentaries are needed for forward progress as Vaccaro and Mena (2011) specifically stated in order to understand and resolve challenges related to identity discrimination.

LGBT resources. If colleges consider the research of Hardie (2012) who found that the evolution of teacher diversity benefits a campus for advancement, then more campuses might have LGBT resources available to serve the needs of those faculty. Too often, campuses do not provide resources for the populations they serve as confirmed by the participants. P1 stated that when she first began at her campus, there were no LGBT resources.

The faculty stories lack information about how LGBT resources were never established on their respective campuses and therefore no support was found. The need for these resources on campuses can be influenced and supported by Garvey and Drezner (2013), who explored support of LGBTQ resources. They found that LGBTQ alumni students play a critical role in establishing resources. Their results supported the significance of staff to promote LGBTQ philanthropy. This research and others can learn

from the findings of Garvey and Drezner by teaming faculty with LGBTQ+ alumni to establish resources on campus for those in need.

The participants in this research, however, did acknowledge what Sausa (2002) suggested for updating policies and forms with appropriate language, creating safe environments, increasing awareness, educating and establishing resources for positive change. P1 stated that she is setting up an LGBT archive in the library for future students and faculty to increase awareness. P12 mentioned being a resource for people's needs and to educate. P3 clarified that he will "continue to make sure that our processes are welcoming to those students who are LGBTQ+ and that the space is welcoming to faculty and staff who might make our campus their home." Persistent publications about LGBTQ+ resources and how to establish them on the college campus demands attention. If college campuses wish to attract additional diverse student and staff populations, LGBTQ+ resources need to be present, making a more inviting campus climate. Advocacy for these resources may always be needed but having some founded reserves will at least demonstrate readiness.

Advocacy. Instructors, teachers, and professors have the opportunity to be role models, advocates, and to act in issues they endorse as exemplified by many participants. Messinger (2011) discussed the damaging consequences of LGBT faculty activism and stated that LGBT faculty who are out and active can give voice to this marginalized population. P5 expressed needing to "have conversations about it" when discussing advocacy, and P9 stated that LGBTQ+ individuals "have a platform" to be that voice.

To advocate often means to support another, an idea, or a policy. P2 discussed this assistance in saying that advocacy means to support "all people, for all communities." P4 voiced the need for support when he clarified that one needs "to be an advocate for those who are not out." Leadership was conveyed by P1 when she stated her and others advocacy work was "changing things" and they felt "like pioneers." Also included were the comments of P11 when they stated they showed leadership by including LGBT issues "in my course work readings, topics, and how they can get involved in events."

Githens (2012) examined prolific case-studies of LGBTQ activists, stating diversity approaches proven to work, and that efforts were well-respected and effective. These approaches need to be explored further to assist LGBTQ+ faculty in their struggles to provide opportunities for themselves and students. Dutt & Grabe's (2014) research on lifetime activism which examined individuals committed to social change, found that psychological concepts, such as SIT, positive marginality, and *conscientizacion*, can aid in understanding the individuals commitment; this research can be strengthened by the findings of identity and advocacy, specifically the participants' activism efforts and continued research to address social and political inequities is needed. And as indicated in this study, those who are willing to speak out, advocate, and become activists, should continue so that people can learn about the need for gender and sexual preference equality.

Responsibility. Studies have shown the influence of LGBT faculty role models as positive (Blumenfield et al., 2016; Komarraju et al., 2010; Umbach & Wawrzynski,

2005). Hardie (2012) examined the dilemmas of LGBT teachers and found that it was critical for them to act as role models for LGBT students and stated this importance for advancement. This research confirms Hardie's (2012) findings and moves forward the progressive social change needed on college campuses to have LGBTQ+ role models. The LGBTQ+ faculty expressed the need to be there for all students and exclusively for LGBTQ+ students who often have no professional LGBTQ+ role models to guide them. For example, P13 stated in thinking about LGBTQ+ students, they felt a responsibility to guide them. Participants 4 and 9 stated that one of the reasons they advocated was out of obligation to the students, to support them in their needs, and also out of the strong feeling of responsibility to demonstrate the positive ability to be out in one's profession and be successful. The need exists for more out LGBTQ+ professionals in education.

Linley et al. (2016) emphasized the importance of faculty as sources of support for LGBT students, identified roles for faculty, and found that teacher support for students is crucial for student success. P3 stated "when a student sees a faculty member who is happy and open about anything LGBT, then they can envision that life for themselves." Therefore, this research corroborates the need for faculty role models and pledges furtherance to students' achievements. Having out LGBTQ+ faculty supporting students in their endeavors makes for positive experiences.

Positive experiences. Worthen (2012) stated to diffuse homophobia and heterosexism understanding attitudes towards the LGBT population is essential. These opportunities exist in the campuses where many of the participants worked and encountered positive stances. Homophobia and discrimination against the LGBTQ+

community continues as exampled in the discussion of blatant prejudice and

discrimination. However, not all LGBTQ+ individuals experience negativity, and in fact,

all but two of the participants expressed support and inclusion in this area. P13 stated that

they were "very much included, I feel valued." P4 stated "I always felt supported in my

own department." Homophobia and heterosexism may still happen; yet proof exists that it

does not occur in every workplace as told by the participants. These positive experiences

were echoed by Githens (2012) and Garvey & Drezner (2013) when they stated that great

positive changes from LGBTQ+ activists have made the college campus a positive place.

Relevance to Theoretical Framework

SIT describes social identity as knowing one belongs to a social group and that

this knowledge has emotional meaning (Tajfel, 1979). However, in the 1980s, the theory

evolved to not only identifying within a group, but also included factors such as self and

social categorization, identity, and self-esteem (Brown, 2000; Hogg & Abrams, 1988;

Krane et al., 2002; Tajfel, 1978; Turner & Oaks, 1986). Interestingly, the participants in

this study supported the evolved theory by first self-identifying, then realizing their role

within their social circles, followed by becoming emotionally invested once realizing

who would stick by them. When the participants identified, only then could the LGBTQ+

individuals have authentic relationships within their social circles. For example, P5 stated

"I began to understand the meaning of family of choice, the people I surround myself

with are high quality people and I think they feel the same about me." If an LGBTQ+

individual first comes out to self, becomes mostly comfortable, and then comes out to

their social circles, they remain authentic, have positive self-esteem, and indeed chose the

social circles that will have emotional meaning for them. P3 explained it best; "there is a

desire and these are the communities that I have been a part of, to sort of seek diversity

and people who represent that diversity, being out in public, and a source of both pride

and you know, a personal representation of my advocacy and passion."

Cox and Gallious (1996) argued that SIT concerns itself with identity

development and not specific content aspects such as being LGBT, yet the participants

included the aspect of being LGBTQ+ as well as other aspects, such as fields they are

involved and the people they associate with. This illustrated how SIT can be expanded to

address the distinctiveness of this oppressed group as well as the complexity of their

identities.

SIT accounts for a range of individual expression, no matter what social group

one belongs. Erikson (1959) posited that individuals develop through stages during one's

lifetime in which social identity also develops and changes (Ramkumar, 2018). The

participants disclosed various aspects of their identities, such as coming out several times

in their lives and having a combination of identities which are developmental and

supportive of Erikson's theories and SIT.

It was assumed that sexual, social, and professional identities of LGBT faculty

overlapped and that the participants would describe examples from their campus lives.

Professional and social identities are identified as being a part of one another according to

Blin (1997). This was evident when participants shared that aspects of their identities

were "fused" (P3) and "integrated" (P6). One assumes a surplus of roles during one's life.

Social identity occurs across all roles and one's behavior in one domain influences and is

influenced by how one acts with those at home, with friends, and at work, and in the

company of strangers. Sexual, social, and professional identities are indeed integrated.

This is evident not only in the participant's stories, but in the combination of theories by

Tajfel (1978) and Turner et al. (1987) who examined social forces, self-concept,

collective self-esteem and identity development within a group setting.

Krane and Barber (2003) stated that this combination of theories focuses on the

psychosocial phenomena of maintaining positive self-image in relation to group status.

All the participants displayed positive self-images in their work and daily lives. Without

this positive self-image the LGBTQ+ faculty may not have been out or felt confident

engaging in activism. SIT was useful in this research because it informed the relationship

of the faculty to family, friends, supervisors and colleagues and explained the "place"

identity occupied their lives. With the expansion of social identity theory two of the four

key processes (McNamara, 1997) helped to inform this research by identifying the

faculty's formation of professional identity and their interpretation of social

categorization. The formation of the LGBTQ+ faculty's professional identity came from

experiences of coming out with family and friends and other work place colleagues

before attaining the job they are now in, and from the self-confidence in successful

academics and successful navigation of the coming out process.

Activism

It was hoped that other concepts in addition to identity would emerge and expand

the understanding of professional identity experiences related to LGBT activism. It was

also assumed that LGBT faculty who were active on campus were able to provide

accurate descriptions of their experiences, and this was accomplished. I built rapport and

trust with the participants so they were comfortable in sharing their authentic

experiences. These experiences can now inform others about activist and advocacy issues

related to London's (2010) advocacy framework. Both low and high-risk activism were

apparent in the LGBTQ+ faculty experiences and had distinctive meaning for the

participants

     London (2010) defined advocacy as one displaying behavior to support an idea,

need, person, or group. In this research, the term advocacy and activism were used

interchangeably. Some participants referred to themselves as an advocate, a person, while

others noted they were engaged in activism, an act. Low-risk activism was presented by

the participants in activities such as writing letters to legislature (P4), being faculty

advisor for Pride (P7), and helping to put together a conference (P6). High-risk activism

was presented by the participants in activities such as discussions with administration

about domestic partner benefits (P1), the fight to allow trans women to use the women's

bathroom (P10), and establishment of an LGBT business conference on campus (P8).

Participants then voiced the meaning of their advocacy and activism efforts: empowering,

part of my job, being visible, to help, to support, to display leadership, to have a voice,

and to have compassion and understanding. London's (2010) advocacy framework was

useful and relevant for adding to the understanding of the meaning of advocacy as told by

the participants.

Limitations

Using Reissman's (2008) suggestion of bracketing the concepts within the told stories, the theory of SIT and the concept of advocacy bracketed the interview questions which in turn framed the participant responses. Also, as the researcher, I am considered a participant observer in which the possibility of biases influencing the participants with verbal and nonverbal cues existed, however, the interviews took place via telephone so no nonverbal cues occurred and I only asked the questions in the interview guide and kept my responses to a minimum, only asking for clarification when needed. Since this researcher is an LGBT faculty member, biases could have influenced interpretation of the narratives, however, audit trails and member checking were used to minimize bias. All of the participants had the opportunity to check the summaries of their interviews and make corrections, additions, and deletions as needed.

To minimize leading participants, the interview questions were reviewed by content and methodology experts (Shenton, 2006). Open-ended questions were asked. To prevent distortions of data, recorded transcripts of the interviews were transcribed and re-evaluated for quality assurance. Audit trails and in-depth descriptions of the research process were used to increase trustworthiness (Carlson, 2010; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009).

An additional limitation to thematic narrative analysis described by Riesmann (2008) could show that every participant within the interviewed cluster meant the same thing when they described their stories and this could obscure the in-depth meanings in a particular context. However, the participants explained their stories and used various

wording and within the context of subjects this researcher believes assorted meanings, some the same and others diverse were given, so rich, thick, meaningful data was extracted. Accurate transcriptions, peer review, and support of a professional reviewer did keep this limitation at a minimum.

A limitation to this study may be that SIT was used and queer theory was not. Queer theory was not chosen for this study because this theory contests the categorization of gender and sexuality, states identities are not fixed, cannot be categorized or labeled, and consists of various components (Jagose, 1996). Perhaps in replicating this research using queer theory, the results may be different. While queer theory specifically was not mentioned in any of the interviews, several of the participants stated their identities were not fixed but fluid and cannot be labeled in any manner, perhaps suggesting queer theory would be more a useful framework, and this is suggested below in recommendations for future research.

To understand LGBTQ+ faculty, all participants who fit that category were interviewed about their professional identities and involvement with activism no matter what their identity status and levels of activism. This apparent limitation in scope could have constrained the meaning of professional identity by not including LGBTQ+ faculty who have not come out. Activism and student interaction with faculty who are not out is an area that needs to be further researched.

LGBTQ+ faculty of color and of lesser known identities such as transgender, were mentioned by the participants in the category of blatant prejudice and discrimination. A limitation exists in the absence of research surrounding this

demographic. The professional identity of LGBTQ+ faculty of color and of lesser known identities should be explored to reveal their truths concerning identity and activism. In sum, I was successful in the implementation of methodological strategies to manage and stay true to the narrative method, the risk of bias, and the goal of saturation in order enhance the trustworthiness of results that arose from execution of the study.

Recommendations

The results of the study point to several areas where more research is needed. Coming out was described by the participants as occurring more than once in their life, so further research should be done to examine how coming out at different times and to different people affects the participants. This would add to the understanding of this phenomena (coming out) as an expression of mental health and the personal and social challenges LGBTQ+ individuals face.

Identity was conveyed as being combined in terms of social and professional identity in the participant experiences. Further research exploring combined identities in other minority groups (e.g., race, ethnicity, religion, disability) would add to the development of modern identity theories. Specifically, in this study as in much of the cited literature, the identities of LGBTQ+ participants were Caucasian. Future research on social identity of LGBTQ+ persons of color could explore how multiple minority identities shape social and professional identity.

A consistent finding in this study is the continued challenge of how to describe, identify, and support the phenomenon of gender fluidity. Participants in this study self-described their dismay at the heteronormative stereotypes that exist interpersonally and

institutionally. It is suggested that future qualitative research pursue a contemporary understanding of fluidity of LGBTQ+ identities but of heterosexuals as well. Interestingly, identity fluidity may not apply only to LGBTQ+ individuals so identity definition or concepts should be explored in all populations.

Numerous minority populations are stigmatized and the LGBTQ+ community is no exception. The participants experienced verbal stigmatization and "pushback" from administration and colleagues. Researching stigmatization on both sides of the relationship (victim and perpetrator) may reveal reasons for victimization and oppression. Pushback and resistance from any authority or peer can result in oppression which continues the stigmatization cycle. How stigmatizing others is experienced by perpetrators in areas of sexual preference and gender could lead to understanding and more effective awareness training in diversity workshops.

While the participants revealed their campuses were either welcoming or uninviting, there was little elaboration of *why* this was so. Continued research on what makes a campus welcoming or uninviting is needed. For example, further research on identity and activism on campus could be conducted with the inclusion of heterosexual and LGBTQ+ faculty, students, and staff to give a broader insight on what constitutes a campus climate of openness.

The participants reported experiencing blatant prejudice and discrimination. Continued research, reporting, and commentaries are needed for understanding these areas and how to resolve challenges related to identity (Vacaro & Mena, 2011), especially on the college campus. Recommendations for future research include

examining the ways colleges try to reduce prejudice and discrimination through committees, commissions, and programs designed to combat these issues.

Various LGBT resources that were available on campus and started on campus by the participants were revealed. Further research on what the LGBTQ+ population needs on a college campus and how to implement those is needed. Campuses already equipped with successful programs and resources could lead the way for those in need. Survey research on various campus sites could reveal needs and successful programs, to inform scholarly understanding and inspire change.

The advocacy efforts of the participants in this study are commended; obvious inclusion and progress is being made. Furthering Githen's (2012) prolific case-studies of LGBTQ activists will help the efforts of LGBTQ+ faculty be successful. Further research on how to be an advocate and ways that have been proven successful can inform LGBTQ+ activists as well as other activists in any area.

Implications

I plan to share my research with the campus that I am employed as well as share it with other campuses in my community. I plan on sharing this research with faculty that I know and ask them to pass on the research to other faculty and administration as they see fit. I also plan on publishing my research in academic journals and with LGBTQ+ sources such as journals, groups, and LGBTQ+ centers. I plan on making this research available for LGBTQ+ organizations such as the Consortium for Higher Education, LGBT Resource Professionals, Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), and oSTEM (Out in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics).

Positive social change is possible if this research is presented to college administration, peers, and staff on campuses, as education and exposure are the key factors in changing attitudes and beliefs (Bandura, 1977). The exposure of this research to LGBTQ+ faculty who are not out could possibly lead to empowering them to disclose their identity and begin advocating for themselves and others. Exposure to college administration, staff, and faculty could lead to understanding of LGBTQ+ individuals and how those groups might support the LGBTQ+ population better on their college campuses. This research could also lead to development of programs, not only for the faculty but for LGBTQ+ students as well. In addition, this research could lead to implementing more LGBTQ+ resources on college campuses to serve those diverse needs of students and faculty.

Another positive social change that could develop from this research is colleges reaching out to LGBTQ+ organizations within the community and collaborating on resources, programs, and support for the LGBTQ+ population on those campuses. Publication in LGBTQ+ journals as well as academic journals could also influence those to advocate and support the LGBTQ+ populations at various colleges. This awareness for needed support and resources could also influence the college to make policy changes to positively impact the LGBTQ+ faculty and student bodies.

In research used SIT and provided a deeper look into the identity of LGBTQ+ individuals and their social and professional identities. SIT discusses the social identity of others, how they view their role within a group, and what emotional meaning this gives to them (Tajfel, 1979). In this study, the participants voiced their social and professional

identities were one and this provides continued research needs in this area. Because LGBTQ+ individuals, as voiced by these participants, include sexual identity in every aspect of their lives, then SIT might be expanded to include this population.

The levels of activism as explained by London (2010) include low and high risk. The participants corroborated these levels as some were active in supporting LGBTQ+ groups in a behind the scene manner and others engaged in high risk activism, for example, discussing LGBTQ+ needs with administration and deans, marching in Pride, starting LGBT groups. It would be interesting to research activism in LGBTQ+ individuals in other professions.

As voiced by the participants, further LGBTQ+ resources are needed on college campuses. Typically, mental health services are available on the college campus, but are these professionals trained in LGBTQ+ matters? Training and support for these mental health professionals on colleges and universities might be needed in order to support the LGBTQ+ faculty and student populations on campus. The struggles of blatant prejudice and discrimination as described in the themes is an area of needed support for any LGBTQ+ individual. The mental health professional on campus are a resource for the faculty and students and if knowledgeable in LGBTQ+ issues, can provide great support.

Conclusion

The effort that developed this study and the resulting findings represent a message about identity, advocacy, and the experience of unfolding one's authentic identity. As the participants described, "coming out" is not a one-time act. Broadly speaking, it does not matter what sexuality or gender one may identify, all people aspire to be successful

happy and accepted, a desire "to become everything one is capable of becoming" (Maslow, 1987, p. 64). However, this is particularly poignant for groups who do not fit normative standards of behavior, image, or voice.

This research has taught me more than I expected, to hold onto and achieve my goals, to hold true to my beliefs, and to advocate for not only myself, but for others as well. As voiced by the participants, I too may not know who I touch, who I impact, or who I teach by being myself, by being visible, and by advocating for others and being active in what I believe.

Educators as a professional group are underappreciated, underpaid, and overworked. Sharing and advocating for their stories of professional identity could lead to better appreciation, more pay, and a respect they deserve when teaching children and adults. It is hoped that this research also provokes a call to get involved, to listen and support the expression of differences and building of community so all can participate. McEntarfer (2011) stated that LGBT activists demonstrate dedication to the university and have richer connections; and this was echoed by the participants stating they had supportive colleagues, positive experiences, and were dedicated towards advancement for their needs and the needs of LGBTQ+ students. As one of the participants stated, "activism means something different for everyone" (P4). Find your meaning and live it!

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Appendix A: Clarification of Study, Informed Consent, setting Interview Time

- The purpose of this thematic narrative analysis was to better understand the professional identity of LGBT faculty related to activism and the challenges they face on campus.

- The sampling criteria include persons 18 years of age or older who have: (a) identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender; (b) are faculty within a traditional 4-year United States university; (c) have come out on their respective campuses either to administration, staff, students, or all; and (d) who self-report as being active in LGBT issues.

- If the person met the criteria I confirmed a time and manner in which to conduct the interview (in person, skype, or phone) and emailed the Informed Consent Form.

- The informed consent was sent by email and explained the study, how it would be conducted, listed the criteria and explained how data would be shared. If the participants agreed or disagreed, they could confirm this by email.

Appendix B: Invitation to Participate

I invite you to participate in a study of university and college faculty who identify as LGBT and are active in some way with LGBT issues on campus. This study is part of the degree requirement for my dissertation for the doctoral program at Walden University. I would like to interview individuals who are traditional four-year United States university faculty and identify themselves as LGBT and are out with administration, staff, and students; and are active or act as advocates for LGBT on campus. The interview is expected to be 60 to 90 minutes. If you are over 18, identify as LGBT and are out, and active and would like to participate, please contact Kathy XXXX via email at XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

A modification of the script was also distributed to professional colleagues:

Thank you for sharing information about my study of LGBT higher education faculty who are out and active on campus. This is part of the degree requirement for my dissertation for the doctoral program at Walden University. I would like to interview individuals who are university faculty and identify themselves as LGBT and are out with administration, staff, and students; and are active or act as advocates for LGBT on campus. If you know someone who is over 18, identify as LGBT and are out, as well as being active and would like to participate, please forward this information to colleagues outside of your own work place and have them contact Kathy XXXX via email at XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX or by phone at XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

Appendix C: Participant Screening Guide

The following questions will be used to determine if an applicant is eligible to be a participant.

- Are you a faculty member of a higher education facility in the United States?

- Do you consider yourself a member of the LGBT community?

- Have you self-identified as an LGBT community member on campus to students, faculty, staff and administration?

- Do you consider yourself to be active on campus concerning LGBT issues?