Exploring Educational Equity for GLBT Students and Teachers

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Purpose
In this paper the authors hope to share GLBT experiences through a dialog approach. A dialog is used to open a meaningful exchange to encourage educators to be more thoughtful toward GLBT groups and issues. Finally the authors present a discussion about homophobia, heterosexism, and avoidance of GLBT issues in schools and curricula.

The Article
The authors utilize a classroom dialog to address GLBT issues in teacher education; not only issues for students but educators as well. Equity, treating people fairly and based upon the value they bring forward is important; instead of equality or considering all people as the same. Heterosexism regards heterosexuality at normal or typical. Bullying arises in schools and students who are thought of as gay tend to be most affected by bullying; although homosexual-bullying is not addressed in school handbooks. The authors address an idea of silencing GLBT issues. The educators are reluctant to discuss same-sex relationship with parents, students, or colleagues further ostracizing GLBT individuals in education.

Implications and Recommendations
GLBT students face being overlooked, bullied, and sexually harassed more often than students who are perceived to be heterosexual or heteronormative. This impacts learning and feelings about school, and in turn students experience more drug and alcohol use, dropout more often, and suffer from lower grade point averages. Educators can develop dialog sessions in which in-service/pre-service educators can discuss GLBT issues rather than talking at one another. Teachers can gently bring up GLBT issues through the use of readings (Heather has Two Mommies) or how to address letters to parents (Dear Mom and Dad or Dear Dad and Dad). Educators should evaluate their own feelings about same-sex relationships and heterosexism, reflect and move toward gentle, positive implementation.

Citation

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