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1 de 1

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NEIVA - HUILA

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TÍTULO COMPLETO DEL TRABAJO: THE WORKPLACE AS A BATTLEFIELD: CURRICULAR, IDEOLOGICAL, AND INTERACTIONAL DYNAMICS AROUND LGBTIQ+ IDENTITIES

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PARA OPTAR AL TÍTULO DE: MAGÍSTER EN DIDÁCTICA DEL INGLÉS

FACULTAD: EDUCACIÓN

PROGRAMA O POSGRADO: MAESTRÍA EN DIDÁCTICA DEL INGLÉS

CIUDAD: NEIVA

AÑO DE PRESENTACIÓN: 2022

NÚMERO DE PÁGINAS: 155

TIPO DE ILUSTRACIONES (Marcar con una X):

Diagramas\_\_\_Fotografías\_\_\_Grabaciones en discos\_\_\_Ilustraciones en general\_\_\_Grabados\_\_\_  
Láminas\_\_\_Litografías\_\_\_Mapas\_\_\_Música impresa\_\_\_ Planos\_\_\_Retratos\_\_\_ Sin ilustraciones\_\_\_Tablas  
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**SOFTWARE** requerido y/o especializado para la lectura del documento: Word

**MATERIAL ANEXO:**

**PREMIO O DISTINCIÓN:** Meritoria

**PALABRAS CLAVES EN ESPAÑOL E INGLÉS:**

<u>Español</u>	<u>Inglés</u>
1. <u>Identidades LGBTQ+</u>	<u>LGBTIQ+ identities</u>
2. <u>Docentes</u>	<u>Teachers</u>
3. <u>Percepciones</u>	<u>Perceptions</u>
4. <u>Experiencias</u>	<u>Experiences</u>
5. <u>Entorno laboral</u>	<u>Workplace environment</u>

**RESUMEN DEL CONTENIDO:** (Máximo 250 palabras)

En Colombia, las identidades LGBTQ+ en el ámbito educativo aún se perciben como tabú, por lo que siguen siendo poco estudiadas. El presente proyecto de investigación tuvo como objetivo describir las percepciones y experiencias de un grupo de docentes heterosexuales y LGBTQ+ sobre la aceptación de la diversidad sexual y de género en su lugar de trabajo, y establecer la forma en que esta población apoya u obstruye la aceptación de estas realidades. A través de un diseño fenomenológico y la aplicación de un cuestionario demográfico, narraciones, entrevistas a profundidad y grupos focales se recolectó la información de once participantes de diferentes regiones del país. Los relatos de los participantes revelaron que el lugar de trabajo es percibido como un lugar donde la diversidad sexual y de género es pasada por alto a nivel ideológico y curricular, pero a nivel práctico estas realidades son confrontadas o apoyadas con base en la filiación religiosa personal e institucional, la naturaleza de la institución, las cosmovisiones de los miembros de la comunidad educativa, la influencia de los padres de familia, entre otros factores. Además, se evidenció que este grupo de participantes buscaba abogar explícita o implícitamente por la sexualidad y la diversidad de género; sin embargo, algunas de sus acciones y actitudes develaron posturas heteronormativas que perjudicaron la aceptación y reconocimiento de esta comunidad porque perpetuaron el estigma y la discriminación. Estos hallazgos llenan un vacío en la literatura e indican la necesidad de fortalecer las políticas de protección a estas comunidades.



**ABSTRACT:** (Máximo 250 palabras)

In Colombia, LGBTIQ+ identities in the educational field are still perceived as taboo; thus, they remain understudied, especially since educators' perspectives have been disregarded. The current research study aimed to describe the perceptions and experiences of a group of heterosexual and LGBTIQ+ English teachers about the acceptance of sexual and gender diversity in their workplace and determine the way this group of educators supports or hinders the acceptance of these realities within these workspaces. Through a phenomenological design and the implementation of a demographic questionnaire, narratives, in-depth interviews, and focus groups, the data from eleven participants was collected. The participants' stories, from different regions in the country, unveiled that the workplace is perceived as a place where sexual and gender diversity is disregarded at the ideological and curricular level, yet at the experiential level, these realities are confronted or supported. The latter situation responded to issues related to personal and institutional religious affiliation, the institution's nature, stakeholders' worldviews, parents' influence within the institution, and other factors that configure the participants' experiences within their workplaces. Furthermore, the data yielded that this group of participants sought to advocate explicitly or implicitly for sexuality and gender diversity; however, some of their actions and attitudes unveiled heteronormative stances detrimental to the acceptance and recognition of this community because they perpetuated stigma and discrimination. These findings fill a gap in the literature and indicate the need for strengthening the policies to grant safe spaces for this community.

**APROBACIÓN DE LA TESIS**

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**The Workplace as a Battlefield:  
Curricular, Ideological, and Interactional Dynamics around LGBTIQ+ Identities**

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2022

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### **Abstract**

In Colombia, LGBTIQ+ identities in the educational field are still perceived as taboo; thus, they remain understudied, especially since educators' perspectives have been disregarded. The current research study aimed to describe the perceptions and experiences of a group of heterosexual and LGBTIQ+ English teachers about the acceptance of sexual and gender diversity in their workplace and determine the way this group of educators supports or hinders the acceptance of these realities within these workspaces. Through a phenomenological design and the implementation of a demographic questionnaire, narratives, in-depth interviews, and focus groups, the data from eleven participants was collected. The participants' stories, from different regions in the country, unveiled that the workplace is perceived as a place where sexual and gender diversity is disregarded at the ideological and curricular level, yet at the experiential level, these realities are confronted or supported. The latter situation responded to issues related to personal and institutional religious affiliation, the institution's nature, stakeholders' worldviews, parents' influence within the institution, and other factors that configure the participants' experiences within their workplaces. Furthermore, the data yielded that this group of participants sought to advocate explicitly or implicitly for sexuality and gender diversity; however, some of their actions and attitudes unveiled heteronormative stances detrimental to the acceptance and recognition of this community because they perpetuated stigma and discrimination. These findings fill a gap in the literature by unveiling the situation for LGBTIQ+ individuals at the workplace from the educators' perspective and also indicate the need for strengthening the policies and assisting administrators, educators themselves, and other stakeholders on how to grant safe spaces for this community.

*Keywords:* LGBTIQ+ identities, teachers, perceptions, experiences, workplace environment

### Resumen

En Colombia, las identidades LGBTIQ+ en el ámbito educativo aún se perciben como tabú, por lo que siguen siendo poco estudiadas, principalmente porque se ha ignorado la perspectiva de los educadores. El presente proyecto de investigación tuvo como objetivo describir las percepciones y experiencias de un grupo de docentes de inglés heterosexuales y LGBTIQ+ sobre la aceptación de la diversidad sexual y de género en su lugar de trabajo y determinar la forma en que este grupo de educadores apoya u osbruye la aceptación de estas realidades dentro de estos espacios de trabajo. A través de un diseño fenomenológico y la aplicación de un cuestionario demográfico, narraciones, entrevistas a profundidad y grupos focales se recolectó la información de once participantes de diferentes regiones del país. Los relatos de los participantes revelaron que el lugar de trabajo es percibido como un lugar donde la diversidad sexual y de género es pasada por alto a nivel ideológico y curricular, pero a nivel práctico estas realidades son confrontadas o apoyadas. Esta última situación responde a cuestiones relacionadas con la filiación religiosa personal e institucional, la naturaleza de la institución, las cosmovisiones de los miembros de la comunidad educativa, la influencia de los padres dentro de la institución, entre otros factores; que configuran las experiencias de los participantes dentro de sus lugares de trabajo. Además, los datos arrojaron que este grupo de participantes buscaba abogar explícita o implícitamente por la sexualidad y la diversidad de género; sin embargo, algunas de sus acciones y actitudes develaron posturas heteronormativas que perjudicaron la aceptación y reconocimiento de esta comunidad porque perpetuaron el estigma y la discriminación. Estos hallazgos llenan un vacío en la literatura al revelar la situación de las personas LGBTIQ+ desde la perspectiva de los educadores y también indican la necesidad de fortalecer las políticas y ayudar a los



administradores, a los mismos docentes y otras partes implicadas sobre cómo otorgar espacios seguros para esta comunidad.

*Palabras clave:* Identidades LGBTIQ+, docentes, percepciones, experiencias, entorno laboral

### **Acknowledgments**

The completion of my dissertation would not have been possible without the selfless support and commitment of my participants. I would like to express my most sincere appreciation to you. I was fortunate to have worked with you. Thank you for sharing your stories and allowing me to portray them on these pages. I hope your stories inspire others as they have inspired me.

Likewise, I would like to thank my advisor. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to work under your guidance. It would have been impossible to develop this study without all your support and knowledge. Your dedication and honest feedback throughout the study enabled me to go beyond what I believed I was capable of doing. Thank you for inspiring me and inspiring others to live freely.

Finally, thank you to all the professors, colleagues, friends, and family members who have been there to support me directly or indirectly in the achievement of this new academic goal.

### **Dedication**

To all the LGBTIQ+ and heterosexual teachers who explicitly or implicitly advocate for the recognition and acceptance of sexual and gender diversity within their workplace, no matter how oppressive they are.

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## Introduction

The lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, questioning or queer, and any other sexual and gender diverse individual, in short, the LGBTIQ+ community is a group that has been overlooked and marginalized over the years. However, in the last decades, more research including this group's voices has been conducted which has raised more awareness on the need for and importance of understanding this community's experiences and perceptions since these accounts unveil grounded information on the way sexuality and gender labels influence societal dynamics (Gray et al., 2016; Ng & Rumens, 2017; van Eeden-Moorefield et al., 2018). In spite of the socio-political and cultural advancements in the recognition of LGBTIQ+ rights in multiple countries around the world, this community still faces multiple challenges in the workplace that hinder the achievement of equality (Aslinger, 2018). The educational field is no exception since LGBTIQ+ educators encounter numerous barriers as a result of oppressive heteronormative discourses and environments.

Research has shown that LGBTIQ+ educators face homophobia and discrimination in the workplace because of heteronormativity (Carpenter & Lee, 2010; Toomey et al., 2012; van der Toorn et al., 2020). This heteronormative scheme that privileges heterosexuality is deliberately or invertedly accentuated, resulting in an unsafe and unpleasant workplace climate for LGBTIQ+ educators. Unfortunately, studies on LGBTIQ+ acceptance at school from the teachers' perspectives are scarce since the literature has focused mainly on the students' perceptions (e.g., Jacob, 2013; Palmer et al., 2012; Pizmony-Levy & Kosciw, 2016). Likewise, in Colombia, scholars have mostly focused on the LGBTIQ+ students' perceptions (e.g., Colombia Diversa & Sentiido, 2016; Hoyos-Botero, 2017; Rivera & Arias, 2020), hence educators' perspectives and experiences remain understudied.

Given the little research in Colombia about LGBTIQ+ acceptance in the workplace from the teachers' standpoint, it is necessary to highlight that the studies conducted in foreign countries unveiled that this community still perceives their workplace climate as troubling, unsafe, and unsupportive (Becker, 2014; Gray et al., 2016; Wright & Smith, 2015). Thereupon, it is crucial that teachers are granted safe workplaces where identity development is encouraged because they empower educators to freely disclose their sexuality or gender identity without the fear of losing their job. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that this sense of safety and support should also be granted to LGBTIQ+ teachers in their ELT programs in order to foster their identity construction and to ease their transition from pre-service to in-service teachers who are embedded in real working contexts (Vásquez-Guarnizo & Álvarez-Contreras, 2021).

Being part of conducive work environments allow sexual and gender-diverse teachers to feel more comfortable so as to serve as role models for LGBTIQ+ youth, and to fight against marginalizing and discriminating practices that could emerge due to heteronormative and conservative worldviews. Naturally, the workplace environment is an essential element of job satisfaction (Wright & Davis, 2003), and research has shown that LGBTIQ+ teachers who feel accepted have a higher level of professional efficacy, contributing to increasing students' achievement (Gray et al., 2016; Leithwood & McAdie, 2007).

Bearing, the previous arguments, the present study sought to determine a group of LGBTIQ+ and heterosexual educators' perspectives and experiences of the workplace in regards to sexual and gender-diverse individuals and the way these educators contributed to the acceptance or rejection of these realities within their workspaces. Furthermore, determining the way both groups of educators perceive the workplace environment might lead to new understandings of the realities sexual and gender diverse individuals face due to their identity.



Establishing a detailed picture of the phenomenon under study could also inform future educators about the way the different dynamics that take place in the educational contexts have an effect on the perceived workplace safety for LGBTIQ+ stakeholders.

This study did not focus merely on the general educators' perspectives since it was framed in relation to LGBTIQ+ realities within these workspaces. Therefore, to better understand the phenomenon of LGBTIQ+ acceptance in the workplace, both heterosexual and LGBTIQ+ teachers' standpoints were considered owing to the fact that in reality, both groups of individuals not only coexist within the school setting but they might experience the phenomenon differently which could lead to a thorough understanding of the issue under study. Given the importance of diverse accounts to comprehend the nuances of the phenomenon, a total of eleven teachers from different regions in Colombia were part of the study. The sample of participants was almost even with a total of six self-identified LGBTIQ+ individuals and five heterosexual participants whose experiences reported the situation in particular regions of departments like Huila, Valle del Cauca, Risaralda, Putumayo, Boyacá, Santander, and Cundinamarca.

This phenomenological qualitative study relied on the use of two narratives, each one focusing on a research question; three in-depth interviews following Seidman's (2013) model, and two focus groups to clarify and expand on certain issues that emerged from the previous instruments. The construct of workplace environment and the frameworks of Gay and Lesbian Studies and Queer theory were considered so as to inform the study.

In the following sections, more details regarding the study will be provided. Starting with chapter one, in which the problem statement, the research question and objectives are specified, followed by the rationale. Then, in chapter two, the different constructs that informed the study and related research concerning these concepts are presented. Regarding chapter three, the

different elements of the research design, including the research paradigm and design, the context, the population, the researchers' positionality, the ethical considerations, and the different data collection instruments and the data explication process are described.

Subsequently, chapter four delves into the findings of the study under three main themes, each one with two corresponding subthemes. Finally, chapter five closes the document by presenting the conclusions and implications of the study and some recommendations for future research considering the limitations of the current study.

## Chapter I. Research Problem

Living in a heteronormative society where heterosexuality is the assumed sexuality by default might seem insignificant for some, yet for the people who do not identify as such, it is instead a complex issue. In spite of the recent and extensive socio-political changes in the lives of LGBTIQ+ people in multiple countries around the world (Langlois, 2018), heteronormativity continues to be dominant, disregarding the perspectives of the members of the LGBTIQ+ community. Unfortunately, heteronormative environments are pervasive (Carpenter & Lee, 2010; Toomey et al., 2012; van der Toorn et al., 2020) inside and outside school settings due to the internalization of societal discourses in which LGBTIQ+ realities are either ignored or rejected. In other words, this perspective that assumes heterosexuality as the norm leads to the discrimination and marginalization of minorities in the school context.

Heteronormative societies and the lack of social recognition affects the capacity of sexual and gender-diverse individuals to fully access and claim all their fundamental rights as citizens, especially because they are regarded as deviant (Subhrajit, 2014). Sadly, LGBTIQ+ individuals face multiple challenges in different areas of their lives which include issues such as marginalization and social exclusion, problems of homophobia, psychological distress, poor economic condition, and discrimination in the workplace, among others (Subhrajit, 2014).

Although LGBTIQ+ acceptance in the workplace is an essential element of a positive work climate, research studies at the international level have found that this community is discriminated against and excluded within workspaces in different countries around the world (e.g., Gray et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2008; Suzuki & Ikegami 2020; Yoshinaka et al., 2015). For instance, a study conducted by Ozeren (2014) unveiled that LGBTIQ+ people face exclusion when seeking to enter the workplace and experience harassment and fewer opportunities for

advancement. The latter aspect may be justified by the poor level of tolerance that managers have towards this community (Yoshinaka et al, 2015), hampering and shaping the experiences of LGBTIQ+ individuals who are not provided with a friendly atmosphere due to their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

In addition, research studies developed in foreign countries have reported that LGBTIQ+ educators experience job safety differently compared to their heterosexual colleagues (Wright, 2019) due to unsafe and unsupported environments. LGBTIQ+ educators who are part of unsafe and unsupported school environments experience dissonance (Lee, 2019; Smith et al., 2008), and their professional efficacy decreases in comparison to their heterosexual counterparts (Gray et al., 2016; Leithwood & McAdie, 2007). Thereupon, educators whose sexual orientation and/or gender identities are 'non-normative' need to feel protected so as to be supportive and serve as role models for LGBTIQ+ youth (Wright & Smith, 2013). Interestingly, LGBTIQ+ acceptance among educators at school is an issue that has not been considerably explored since research has focused on the students' perspectives (Harris & Jones, 2014).

As for the national context, Colombia has reached a significant milestone in terms of policies and representation. The Constitutional Court has legalized same-sex marriage, extended property and inheritance rights to same-sex couples, penalized discrimination based on sexual orientation, legitimated people's decision to change their gender on the civil registry records, among some others ruling that have been issued. In regard to employment, the situation is rather complex. For instance, despite the fact that Law 1752 of 2015 criminally sanctions discrimination against people on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, political ideologies, sexual orientation, or disabilities; sentence C-593 of 2014 addresses the importance of fair treatment and working conditions for everybody, and Decree 762 of 2018 establishes a group of

governmental bodies to monitor the rights of LGBT people in public and private organizations, these legislations have not been enough for social change to take place, especially because only some regions such as Bogotá, Medellín, and Valle del Cauca have worked for the application and maintenance of these policies that strive for equality and equity (Mintrabajo, 2017). The aforementioned situation indicates that the LGBTIQ+ community is protected in particular places of Colombia thanks to their public policies, but not at the national level.

Unfortunately, although Colombia has become more accepting of sexual and gender-diverse individuals by reinforcing and passing certain laws that grant the rights, recognition, and inclusion of this community; discrimination and exclusionary spaces for this community are still being registered by the news, national and international reports, and some local research studies. Acosta-Alba et al (2019) identified that LGBTIQ+ individuals still endure marginalization and stigma in the workplace forcing them to conceal part of their identity. The concealment of one's sexuality responds to social norms that establish what is politically correct in the workplace (Medina & Osorio, 2008). Moreover, individuals who hide this information seek to avoid being singled out as different so as to have better job opportunities while escaping from the social homophobia (Pérez-Álvarez et al., 2013), particularly when working with underaged individuals, like students.

In Colombia, the issue of sexual and gender realities in the educational field requires to be explored more in-depth, namely, to determine the particular problems that LGBTIQ+ educators may experience in the workplace due to their 'non-normative' identity. Even though some national studies regarding LGBTIQ+ diversity and inclusion in the workplace have been conducted determining that this issue is rather complex (Choi et al., 2020; Cárdenas et al., 2017; Jiménez et al., 2017), in the educational field still little is known regarding this aspect,

considering that only until 1998 the Constitutional Court, in its Judgment C-481/98, declared that homosexuality was not a disciplinary offense in the teaching exercise as it was previously conceived by the Decree-Law 2277 of 1979, in which this sexual orientation was considered a cause of misconduct that gave rise to sanctions and punishments of the teaching staff (Ibero-American LGBTI Education Network, n.d.).

In our country, a few studies have been conducted about the school environment in relation to the LGBTIQ+ students' perceptions (e.g., Colombia Diversa & Sentiido, 2016; Hoyos-Botero, 2017; Rivera & Arias, 2020). Nevertheless, the educators' perspectives and experiences within the workplace concerning sexual and gender realities have been neglected. Colombian LGBTIQ+ teachers' circumstances about their non-normative sexual and gender identities in their working environment remain somewhat unknown due to the scarce research in this field. Hence, research on LGBTIQ+ acceptance considering local realities seems imperative (Castañeda-Peña, 2019). Considering the discussion in the prior paragraphs, the next questions and objectives synthesize the problem underlying this study.

### **1.1 Research questions**

In fulfilling the purpose of unveiling the way LGBTIQ+ realities are lived in the educational setting according to educators' experiences, two interrelated questions guided the inquiry process:

- How does a group of Colombian heterosexual and LGBTIQ+ English teachers of private and public educational institutions experience and perceive their workplace environment regarding non-normative sexual and gender identities?
- How do these teachers contribute to promoting acceptance or rejection of LGBTIQ+ realities in their workplace?

## **1.2 Research Objectives**

To describe the heterosexual and LGBTIQ+ English teachers' experiences and perceptions about the acceptance of LGBTIQ+ realities in their workplace environment.

To determine the ways heterosexual and LGBTIQ+ English teachers support or hinder the acceptance of LGBTIQ+ individuals in the workplace.

## **1.3 Rationale**

The International Labour Organization (2015) emphasizes the importance of equality and non-discrimination at work by increasing the promotion of diversity and the LGBTIQ+ individuals' entitlement to the right of performing in a discriminatory free workspace. Every individual needs to feel protected at work despite their sexuality and gender identity; therefore, employers are in charge of ruling and implementing inclusion and diversity strategies that grant safe spaces to all individuals. As the International Labour Organization continues aiming at the promotion of social justice and the recognition of internationally human and labor rights, employers are obliged to create and maintain decent work conditions, which include a work environment that is free of discrimination, stigma, harassment, and violence.

In Colombia, advancements regarding LGBTIQ+ rights have been made. These advancements have permeated different arenas as the educational, the professional, the health care, and the socio-political. The decriminalization of sexual and gender diverse identities; the granting of pension, social security, and property rights equality for heterosexual couples; the recognition of same-sex marriage; and anti-discrimination laws in areas such as employment, school, goods, and services are some of the advancements in Colombia in terms of LGBTIQ+ identities as reported on Equaldex (a collaborative knowledge base crowdsourcing for LGBTIQ+ rights by country and region). Additionally, Colombia's Constitution of 1991 grants and protects

the rights of sexual and gender-diverse individuals. For instance, article 13 of the Colombian Constitution highlights that all individuals are born free and equal before the law and that they should receive equal protection and treatment from the authorities and enjoy the same rights, freedoms, and opportunities without any discrimination. As it is evidenced, the Colombian State is in charge of ensuring the protection of every Colombian citizen, which includes LGBTIQ+ individuals. Moreover, the same article addresses that the government has to foster the effectiveness of equality by promoting and adopting the required conditions and measures against discrimination and marginalization. These conditions and measures also need to be reflected in the workplace to dignify the experiences of LGBTIQ+ employees.

Sadly, despite international and national policies demanding equal work conditions and safe working environments, a significant number of cases of discrimination and violence are still being reported. Research has shown that the workplace environment is fundamental in job satisfaction because it encourages individuals to portray their capabilities and attain their full potential (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015). The working environment is characterized by the number of working hours, feelings of safety and security, the relationships developed with co-workers, esteem needs, and top management; elements that determine employees' levels of job satisfaction and productivity.

As acknowledged above, there is a lack of research addressing educators' experiences in regard to LGBTIQ+ identities within their work environment. This lack of knowledge constitutes a problem because ignorance leads to stakeholders making uninformed decisions that could directly or indirectly damage any 'non-normative' individual within the school context. By drawing on the experiences of a group of LGBTIQ+ and heterosexual teachers from public and private schools in Colombia, this study can contribute to filling a gap in the literature by



revealing the situation of LGBTIQ+ acceptance among educators on a small scale. Moreover, the inclusion of participants from different regions provides valuable information that can enrich this rather unexplored field in our country. Therefore, documenting these experiences and perspectives can enrich the literature from local standpoints and inform about the problems LGBTIQ+ individuals face in the workplace, and in this way, solutions could be explored by policymakers, employers, government institutions, and any other party involved in the educational arena.

Besides, determining the level of acceptance of LGBTIQ+ realities among English teachers in some regions of Colombia could serve as a baseline for future research that aims to monitor the situation for LGBTIQ+ educators in these regions or research that seeks to learn about the conditions for LGBTIQ+ educators on a national level. The largest and most comprehensive study conducted on LGBTIQ+ individuals in Colombia (Choi et al., 2020) concluded that LGBTIQ+ people who live across the country and who come from different social strata experience high levels of discrimination and violence. However, particularizing this data based on different variables, including occupation, could better inform the conditions for this community which may lead to new perspectives and more well-grounded and easily monitored evidence. Moreover, this information could enable pre-service teachers, policymakers, and stakeholders to identify and ameliorate the risks LGBTIQ+ educators usually encounter at school due to their sexual orientation or gender identities.

Finally, this research study could directly and promptly contribute to the professional development of the participants while they engage in the study. Through the integration of Queer theory, the participants are provided with the opportunity to question normalizing discourses and power imbalances. Considering that participants are provided with the opportunity to reconstruct

their lived experiences when sharing their anecdotes, to introspect and examine their own attitudes, and to deliberate during the interviews, they could be empowered to challenge the heteronormative perspectives and possibly suppress marginalizing discourses that are rather predominant in multiple school settings. Hence, a better understanding of the actions or behaviors that guarantee or undermine their working environments for LGBTIQ+ coworkers can lead to the (re)construction of a safer school climate that allows them to interact in a positive, non-threatening manner while fostering positive relationships and personal growth (Bucher & Manning, 2005). In the next chapter, I will deepen into the different constructs that guide the study and I will provide a revision of the related studies that have been developed.

## Chapter II. Literature review

In this section, I describe the main constructs guiding the present study and include a review of related research studies that have been conducted at the international and national level in relation to LGBTIQ+ identities in the workplace. This chapter begins with the definition and discussion of the concept of the workplace environment, followed by the epistemological frameworks of the study, which are Queer theory and Gay studies. Finally, the review of research is presented under the subheading *Workplace and LGBTIQ+ identities*.

### 2.1 Workplace environment

Workplace environment or work environment has been defined by several authors who have claimed that it encompasses multiple dimensions. Opperman (2002) defined this concept as the composite of three major sub-environments: the technical environment, the human environment, and the organizational environment. The first sub-environment refers to all the tools, equipment, technological infrastructure, and other physical or technical elements that are part of the workspaces granting the development of employees' duties. The second sub-environment refers to peers, team, and workgroups, others with whom employees relate, interactional issues, the leadership, and management. The third sub-environment includes systems, procedures, practices, values, and philosophies.

Similarly, Briner (2000) described this construct as a very broad category that encompasses the physical setting, characteristics of the job itself, organizational features, and aspects of the extra organizational setting. On the other hand, Raziq and Maulabakhsh (2015) and Skalli et al. (2008) delineated it as the result of two dimensions. The former highlighted that this construct results from the work dimension, which includes all the different characteristics of the job itself and the context dimension that comprises the physical working conditions and the

social working conditions. The latter acknowledged that the physical and the social condition are the dimensions that make up the work environment.

In the educational field, the work environment is closely linked to school climate, which is “an over-arching description of the climate in the school as organisation” (Vos et al., 2012, p. 57). Therefore, the school climate refers to the way educators, learners, administrators, and other stakeholders experience the working and learning environment, that is, the school atmosphere inside and outside the classroom (Mentz, 2007). On the other hand, the work environment comprises merely educators’ experiences regarding the quality of the different elements that are part of the workspace. As highlighted by Van der Westhuizen and Mentz (2007), these elements can be grouped into two main categories: the systemic which encompasses organizational culture and organizational health, and the personal or individual which includes job motivation, job satisfaction, work stress, and work performance.

The work environment is a key factor that affects employees’ satisfaction and commitment toward an organization. It is necessary that institutions grant an appropriate work atmosphere that increases the level of employees’ commitment and motivation so as to obtain favorable outcomes (Hanaysha, 2016). Commitment and motivation have a strong association with employees’ behavior and performance (Azeem, 2010) and in the educational field can be affected by factors such as work overload, managerial issues, and low levels of feedback, among others (Winter & Sarros, 2002).

All the definitions already presented entail that the workplace environment is a multidimensional construct determined by the interplay of setting, relationships, and conditions under which people work. In Oludeyi’s (2015) words, the working environment is “the sum of the interrelationship that exists among the employees and the employers and the environment in

which the employees work which includes the technical, the human, and the organisational environment” (p. 33). This last definition was considered in the current study since it offers a clear pathway of elements to analyze to establish either positive or negative working environments in the school settings.

## **2.2 From Gay and Lesbian Studies to Queer theory**

The interest in studying sexual and gender-diverse individuals is not new. In the 70s, enthusiasm for black and women’s studies characterized research, as well as an interest in understanding the issue of sexual and gender diversity was witnessed during this period (Minton, 1993). Gay and Lesbian studies initially emerged as a contestation to disrupt the pathology paradigm and to wrest these divergent identities from “the monopoly of the social-control professions” (Adam, 2002, p. 16). Most of the early research concerning sexuality and gender identity came from psychology, anthropology, or sociology. Nevertheless, the scope of Gay and Lesbian studies broadened including other disciplines or areas like the educational field.

Under the Gay and Lesbian studies lens, sexuality and the knowledge about sexuality exist within regulatory regimes; therefore, there is a quest for liberation that can shape and provide new meanings (Adam, 2002). Interestingly, this approach to sexuality and gender diversity has somewhat disregarded the experiences of bisexual and transgender individuals and excluded or ignored topics related to race, which intersects with sexuality (Beemyn & Eliason, 1996). As a result, and to move from the liberation perspective to a transgression perspective Queer theory emerged, stepping back from the study of homosexuality so as to deepen into the regulatory regimes that classified sexualities and subjectivities into valued and devalued categories (Adam, 2002).

The emergence of Queer theory during the early 1990s offered scholars the opportunity to interrogate normativity and explore the existent power imbalance within organizational systems. Spargo (1999) claimed that Queer theory could not be understood merely as a singular or systematic conceptual or methodological framework since it offers a collection of intellectual engagements with the relations between sex, gender, and sexual desire. Therefore, defining Queer theory is rather a complex and limiting issue, an idea that coincides with Dilley (1999), who argues that Queer Theory is still an elusive subject that cannot be bounded since its essence is questioning boundaries. However, through the lens of Queer theory, we can challenge and interrupt the silent assumptions that accompany heterosexuality as the norm and disrupt normalizing discourses that have traditionally been used to control people at all levels of education (Dykes & Delpont, 2018).

Queer theory cannot be interpreted as a synonym of gay and lesbian studies because as stated by Piontek (2006) the formula “gay and lesbian studies + queer theory = queer studies” (p. 1) is inappropriate considering that the relationship between these two is not as simple and it may reduce queer’s potential for critical innovation. In fact, some of the definitions of Queer theory have questioned some of the foundations of Gay and Lesbian studies. Therefore, Queer theory is perceived as much broader and more disruptive since it encompasses exploring beyond the identities and experiences of gay and lesbian individuals. Meyer (2007) states that Queer theory “questions taken-for-granted assumptions about relationships, identity, gender, and sexual orientation. It seeks to explore rigid normalizing categories into possibilities that exist beyond binaries” (p. 15). As evidenced, Queer theory is a contestation to heteronormativity that tends to limit realities by interpreting them based on arbitrary binary distinctions. Besides providing people with the necessary analytical tools to deconstruct issues of sexuality in society by giving

voice to the insider (Dilley, 1999), Queer theory challenges the basic tropes used to organize society.

In the educational arena, Queer theory offers teachers the opportunity to transform the school reality by raising awareness of the importance of addressing and recognizing other identities and by challenging heteronormative discourses that can be intentional or inadvertent offensive and oppressive. Meyer (2007) argues that Queer theory enables teachers to “reduce and eventually remove all forms of gendered harassment and other forms of related discrimination from schools and, consequently, from most realms of society (p. 28). Therefore, the inclusion of Queer theory offers LGBTIQ+ teachers the opportunity to transform their experiences into productive and valuable resources and assets for classroom discussion examining how heteronormativity at school and in society marginalizes and stigmatizes sexual minorities systematically.

In the current study, the epistemological perspectives of Gay and Lesbian Studies and Queer theory were considered. The former is evidenced in the liberation stance, which comprises how the participants are accommodated or not in their work environments and the assimilation issue of their sexuality as something that is either rejected or accepted. The latter is evidenced in the open perspective to identities brought into the study and the intersectionality issue discussed later in this report, elements that match the framework basis on postmodern and poststructural epistemologies.

### ***2.2.1 Identity***

The construct of identity has been explored in multiple fields, yet a consensus on a comprehensive and conclusive definition has not been reached. Nevertheless, as Torres-Cepeda and Ramos-Holguín (2019) argued, different authors have agreed upon the fact that it refers to a

continuous, changing, subjective and conflicting process that is part of the construction and (re)construction of oneself on the basis of experiences, principles, ideologies and imagined representations in society; which are influenced by the individual's positionality in the different settings where he is embedded to. Therefore, identity cannot be merely conceived as one's race, sex, or sexual orientation since this understanding is restrictive and flawed. Considering the above, identity should not be accepted at face value; instead, this construct should be subverted by questioning "how identities were created, what political ends they serve, what erasures have made them possible, and how they are able to present themselves as real, natural, and universal" (Butler cited in Wilchins, 2004, p. 124).

In Danielewicz's (2001) book, the construct of identity is addressed as the understanding of oneself and the other on the basis of similarities and differences. This definition suggests that we can understand ourselves better by understanding others and vice versa considering our commonalities and divergences: the aspects we share, such as race, religion, nationality, and the ones that distinguish us from each other like worldviews and personality. From birth, human beings are intrinsically ascribed to groups or communities in which they play different roles. As a result, identities cannot be considered utterly innate or genetically determined; because they are also socially produced (Weedon, 1997). For instance, one can be a father, a husband, a friend, an employee simultaneously; roles that entail different functions and ways of being, which influence one's behavior and shape one's definition of self. Taking into account the prior mentioned views, identifying oneself as a teacher implies more than assuming that role and filling a vacancy at a school district. Being an educator entails the interplay of multiple, conflicting identities that exist inside individuals and that are constantly changing (Danielewicz, 2001).



In the teaching field, the construct of identity has been continuously addressed in different ways and, as Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) stated, these explorations can be grouped in terms of the constant ‘reinventing’ of themselves that teachers undergo, the narratives that teachers create to explain themselves and their teaching lives and the variety of discourses teachers participate in and produce, the metaphors that may guide or result from a teacher’s understanding of the role, and the influence of a wide range of contextual factors on teachers and their practice. However, more recently, the construct of identity has been approached as the result of two interconnected dimensions: teacher’s knowledge which includes beliefs, motivation, or emotions; and teaching practices that relate to social recognition, that is, community membership (Fajardo Castañeda, 2014).

In general, teacher identity is still perceived as “multiple, contradictory, and dynamic, changing across historical time and social space” (Norton, 2011, p. 172) given the intricacies and tensions that might be endured. For instance, the development of an individual’s teacher identity could be subjected or influenced by the tensions encountered as the result of first-hand experiences or previous interactions with family and other educators. This complexity indicates that identity development is fostered or hindered by intrinsic and extrinsic variables, which in the case of LGBTIQ+ educators can be considered a more complicated process due to the role their sexual orientation or gender identity may play in the educational arena.

Because of the emergence of Queer theory, rooted in postmodern and poststructuralist views, identity was understood as a “constellation of multiple and unstable positions” (Jagose, 1997, p. 3) which led to the debunking of stable sexes, genders, and sexualities. As the aforementioned scholar highlights, sexual and gender identity is generally better explained in terms of negotiation between the essentialist and the constructionist positions, in which the

former position regards identity as natural, fixed, and innate; while the latter assumes it as fluid, the effect of social conditioning and available cultural models for understanding oneself.

Barkhuizen's (2016) definition of teacher identity will be considered the basis for this study. This author sees teacher identity as "core and peripheral, personal and professional, dynamic, multiple, and hybrid" (p. 4), reinforcing the idea that identities are not unified and fixed; on the contrary, they are continuously being constructed, deconstructed, and reconstructed. Although one can identify oneself as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community, it does not mean this is a static identity construction process since the journey of accepting one's sexuality and coming to terms with it varies from individual to individual. Furthermore, this self-definition is affected by diverse variables, especially within school communities where teachers have to decide on what aspects of their LGBTIQ+ identity can be shared depending on the context, person, and purpose. As a result, aspects of self might be erased for the adoption of normative behaviors or ways of being.

The integration of personal and professional aspects, as stated by Barkhuizen (2016), is also part of one's identity; nonetheless, for members of the LGBTIQ+ community, this might not be as simple since sharing aspects of their gender identity and/or sexuality in the workplace involves a constant assessment of the situations so as to establish threatening or non-threatening conditions. A significant part of LGBTIQ+ identity negotiation involves decisions regarding whether to speak openly about one's non-normative orientation in the workplace, that is, deciding upon how, when, why, and with whom to share LGBTIQ+ status (Palkki, 2015). Unfortunately, heterosexual people do not have to deal with this kind of situation; therefore, they can easily dovetail their personal and professional lives without fear of offending others (Ward &

Winstanley, 2005), yet members of the LGBTIQ+ community are often prevented from doing it to avoid adverse reactions from the rest of the school community.

Regardless of the discomfort that unveiling one's sexuality can cause, LGBTIQ+ teachers must address this aspect of their identity since avoiding these discussions invites students to ascribe normative, heterosexual, and cisgender status to teachers (McWilliams & Penuel, 2016), hindering the teaching and learning process as mentioned above. According to Nelson (1999), sexuality can be tackled and explored at school by problematizing all sexual identities, not just that of sexual minorities. Moreover, it allows the analysis of how discursive and cultural practices and acts in our day-to-day interaction construct what is perceived as normal and natural, that is, heteronormative perspectives.

### ***2.2.2 Heteronormativity***

Heteronormativity can be understood as the structures of understanding and practical orientations in which heterosexuality is emphasized as natural, prescriptive, and privileged, disregarding all the other expressions of sexuality (Berlant & Warner, 1998). Likewise, Evripidou (2018) acknowledges that heteronormativity refers to “a system whose structures, institutions, relations, and actions promote and produce only heterosexuality as self-evident, desirable, privileged, and necessary, while all other sexualities are contested and marginalized” (p. 2). These definitions indicate that heteronormativity can shape the way people conceive sexuality since it permeates to the core the community behaviors, relationships, and standpoints; hence it promotes the stigmatization of people who do not self-identify with this prescriptive sexuality.

Furthermore, heteronormativity leads to a binary conception of realities (Rosenfeld, 2009). This hetero/homo outlook fails to acknowledge the different identities that are part of the

community; in other words, this minoritizing view does not recognize bisexuals, transgender, queers, and all the people across the spectrum of sexuality (Sedgwick cited in Evripidou, 2018).

In the educational field, heteronormativity hinders educators' engagement with teaching practices. The disconnection between the school atmosphere and their identity inhibits educators from establishing real connections with colleagues and students since they are forced to hide part of their individuality (Gray et al., 2016; Leithwood & McAdie, 2007). LGBTIQ+ educators regularly experience negative consequences when they are sincere about their sexuality, such as threats of job loss, pay discrimination, and reassignment by administrators (Wright & Smith, 2015). As consequence, teachers avoid unveiling their sexuality since there are not enough guarantees to protect them from this infringement. Thereupon is fundamental to integrate Queer theory so LGBTIQ+ teachers' identities are respected and accepted by their peers and students to guarantee a healthier school environment where educators do not feel at risk.

### **2.3 Workplace and LGBTIQ+ identities**

Studies on LGBTIQ+ teachers are relatively scarce since the literature has focused mainly on the LGBTIQ+ students' perceptions of the classroom or school atmosphere (e.g., Jacob, 2013; Palmer et al., 2012; Pizmony-Levy & Kosciw, 2016), disregarding the teachers' standpoints. Interestingly, the few research studies available concerning LGBTIQ+ educators have been conducted mainly in foreign countries such as the United States, England, Australia, and Canada, and have reported that this community still perceives their workplace climate as troubling, unsafe, and unsupportive (Becker, 2014; Gray et al., 2016; Wright & Smith, 2015).

Both quantitative and qualitative research studies conducted abroad have shown that LGBTIQ+ educators face homophobia and dismissal due to their sexual orientation and gender identities (Becker, 2014; Lawrence & Nagashima 2020; Wright & Smith, 2015). For instance,

the quantitative research study conducted by Smith et al. during 2007 reported that the 514 participants perceived their workplace as homophobic, racist, sexist, and transphobic. The follow-up study called the National Survey of Educators' Perceptions of School Climate in 2011 revealed a decrease in the use of homophobic remarks by colleagues and an increase in policies addressing incidents of the use of homophobic language compared to the results of 2007. Although policymaking strengthened in 2011, it was evident that there was still a lack of reinforcement in this regard. Furthermore, homophobia was still demonstrated by the different members of the school community. Likewise, the qualitative study conducted by Gray et al. (2016) reported that despite the policies that protect LGBTIQ+ teachers, this group still deals with spaces of exclusion in school that are mainly reinforced by heteronormative discourses.

The study developed by Ferfolja and Stavrou (2015), in the Australian context with 160 lesbian- and gay-identified teachers, revealed that although legislation exists, states departments of education and schools need to make greater efforts to include site-based sexual diversity policy. Moreover, the study showed that sexual diversity policy varied by state, but not by school type; that is, both Catholic or religious-independent schools and public or secular-independent schools' sexuality policy reinforcement was rather similar. Nonetheless, lesbian and gay teachers felt more comfortable disclosing their sexuality and discussing LGBTIQ+ issues in public schools which may be a reflection of the impact of broader legislation in these contexts as described by the authors.

In Colombia, some researchers have addressed the topic of LGBTIQ+ diversity and inclusion in the workplace (e.g., Choi et al., 2020; Cárdenas et al., 2017; Jiménez et al., 2017), and their findings indicate that this issue is rather complex since it is context-related and varies among individuals according to their sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

For instance, Choi et al. (2020) found that 25% of a sample of 4,867 LGBT people reported being fired from or denied a job due to their sexual orientation or gender orientation, especially transgender individuals whose chances of finding a job or being promoted were even more reduced. Furthermore, Jiménez et al. (2017) reported that LGBTIQ+ individuals face discrimination and exclusion in the workplace, which becomes evident when assigning roles and duties due to the fact that perceptions of masculinity and femininity come to play. Unfortunately, the literature regarding LGBTIQ+ employees in the educational field is still limited. Most of the research studies that have been developed in the school settings have mainly considered the LGBTIQ+ students' perceptions (e.g., Colombia Diversa & Sentiido, 2016; Hoyos-Botero, 2017; Rivera & Arias, 2020); thus, LGBTIQ+ educators' perspectives and experiences have been disregarded.

One of the articles addressing the LGBTIQ+ educators' perspectives in Colombia is that of Lander (2018) who aimed to explore “the links between language teacher identity and queer identity in English language teachers working in Colombia” (p. 89) through narrative research. With the aim of doing so, Lander (2018) conducted semi-structured interviews with the three male participants who were openly gay as indicated by the researcher. The thematic analysis of the data collected led to the emergence of three main themes: participants' language learning history, participants' reasons for becoming a language teacher, and being a gay language teacher in the Colombian context. The most predominant theme was the latter and it was found that the participants somehow struggled in regards to sexuality disclosure in their professional lives. Nevertheless, the three participants' experiences were complex and differed according to their immediate professional context. This research apart from enriching the scarce literature on LGBTIQ+ teachers in Colombia supports the findings of previous research studies in foreign

countries. Notwithstanding, generalizations cannot be made due to the nature of the study and the small sample.

Similarly, Salazar-Gutiérrez and García-Nossa's (2014) research explored the experiences of an EFL teacher through an autobiographic narrative design. The purpose of the study was to describe and classify the participant's experiences as an LGBTIQ+ person throughout his life. Three semi-structured interviews were conducted in order to delve into the participant's life regarding his childhood and adolescence, university studies, and job experience. The data collected in relation to the latter category showed that the participant experienced the acceptance of his sexuality differently according to the setting. As the narratives indicated, the school and the university level provided the educator with different experiences regarding his sexuality. In the former, the participant faced discrimination from both students and teachers and a lack of support from administrators, and in the latter, he felt accepted and reached better working conditions. This study is important since it sheds some light on how an educator's non-normative sexuality is perceived in both the secondary and university level school settings.

Recently, another research study that has focused on LGBTIQ+ teachers in Colombia is the one of Ubaque-Casallas and Castañeda-Peña (2021), titled *I'm Here and I Am Queer.* "Queer Teacher Identities in ELT. A Colombian Study. In this study, the authors sought to "document how the queer identities and pedagogies of two teachers of English resist colonial notions of being and doing within the English Language Teaching (ELT) setting" (p. 92). To do that, a narrative inquiry methodology was implanted so as to deepen into the participants' constructions of gender and gendering discourses about queer identities and pedagogies. The data construction process was developed through interviews and it revealed that the professional setting influenced the

participants' construction and negotiation of their identities and that the participants' performativities in the classroom shaped their epistemologies and teaching practices.

In general terms, Colombian LGBTIQ+ teachers' conditions about their non-normative sexual and gender identities in their working environment remain rather unknown due to the scarce literature in this regard. However, the few studies addressing this topic suggest that LGBTIQ+ acceptance in the workplace environment is a diverse issue, especially in the educational field because it varies according to the context. Since not enough research studies regarding LGBTIQ+ acceptance in the workplace from the educational perspective have been conducted, this study can enrich the literature and provide novel insights, considering that the issue is tackled from diverse local experiences.

Considering all of the above, it is necessary to highlight that some researchers have made efforts to eradicate the misconceptions about the LGBTIQ+ community in the educational arena. For instance, Cabezas et al. (2012) and Castañeda-Peña (2008a, 2008b, 2009) delved into gender positioning and learners' identities among students in EFL contexts, identifying that students' discourses and actions are permeated by power positions that marginalize girls and femininity and favor boys and masculinity. Conversely, Vásquez-Guarnizo et al.'s (2020) research study results with a group of EFL students unveiled that the standpoints of this group of learners are more favorable since they do not tend to perpetuate gender stereotypes. On the other hand, Durán (2006) and Mojica and Castañeda-Peña (2017) explored the construct of gender identity among teachers. The former identified that teachers reinforce stereotypes through their conceptions about gender and that they consciously or unconsciously tend to favor boys over girls. As for the latter, the authors' study revealed the importance of delving into the gender category in the frame of English language programs since it provides teachers with broader perspectives. Evidently,



Colombian scholars have sought to challenge heteronormative perspectives and discourses that favor particular gender(s) and position others as inferior or faulty. Nonetheless, conducting more studies and implementing more disruptive practices that seek to resist and suppress the stereotypes that surround LGBTIQ+ realities are imperative, mainly in the educational field where these identities and topics are taboo.

### **Chapter III. Research Design**

This section introduces the procedure and technical aspects of the study. I start with the description of the research paradigm and method selected so as to gain access to the lived experiences of the participants in relationship with the way LGBTIQ+ realities co-existed in their workplaces. Then, I present the context where the study took place and the population that was involved in the process, followed by the ethical considerations and the researcher's positionality. Finally, I present the data collection instruments and the process employed to approach the data that was collected.

#### **3.1 Research paradigm and approach**

Given that the present study aims to delve into the experiences of a group of educators in regard to a complex issue such as LGBTIQ+ realities in the workplace, a qualitative approach seems beneficial since it allows the elicitation of experiential knowledge and subjective understandings and interpretations (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). A qualitative paradigm enables researchers to have a broader picture and understanding of the issue being studied since it requires them to detail the interplay of how different intricate elements interact in a particular situation instead of focusing on cause-effect relationships (Creswell & Poth, 2018). That is, this type of paradigm allowed me to have a more holistic account of the phenomenon under study because of the multiple perspectives of the same issue that were gathered and the identification of the myriad of factors that are part thereof.

Considering that quantitative studies entail a statistical analysis based on measurable variables and numerical representativity, the researcher opted for a qualitative approach since it did not affect the understanding of the phenomenon by limiting it through operational variables (Queirós et al., 2017) and due to the small sample of participants as well. Furthermore, the

qualitative paradigm was the most befitting given that the study privileged the participants' lived experiences framed within various working environments; hence, complying with this context-sensitivity was a priority because as Marshall and Rossman (2016) stated, "the social and physical setting—schedules, space, pay, and rewards—and internalized notions of norms, traditions, roles, and values are crucial aspects of an environment. Thus, for qualitative studies, context matters" (p. 206). Because human understanding and behavior are affected by the setting in which they occur, I sought to unveil the phenomenon by contemplating the influence of the contexts in the participants' frames of reference.

Moreover, considering the importance of lived experiences in the current study, a phenomenological approach was chosen as an appropriate approach to delve into a group of educators' realities and unveil the way the phenomenon is lived, that is, to establish "how they perceive it, describe it, feel about it, judge it, remember it, make sense of it, and talk about it with others" (Patton, 2002, p. 104). As stated by Creswell and Poth (2018), phenomenology describes what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon. Hence, the researcher is in charge of gathering information that leads to as accurate as possible interpretations of the phenomenon based on what the participants have experienced and how they have experienced it (Moustakas, 1994 cited in Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Phenomenological research was established on phenomenological philosophy tenets. Some of the most influential phenomenological philosophers are Husserl with his transcendental phenomenological philosophy and Heidegger with his hermeneutic phenomenological philosophy. Considering Heidegger's perspective, this study acknowledges that the central premise of phenomenology is that "we live in the world unaware of its effects on our thinking and doing, and that the development of awareness requires that we turn toward this relationality"

(Freeman, 2021, p. 276). Therefore, being conscious of how our realities and worldviews are shaped by daily life experiences and our embeddedness in society is essential.

Phenomenology as a research method has been addressed in diverse ways. Some authors have drawn inspiration from the work developed by Husserl and Heidegger. In the current study, the phenomenological design proposed by van Manen (2016) was selected because it incorporates aspects of the objectivist hermeneutic circle (part-whole) and the alethic hermeneutic circle (pre-understanding) acknowledging the experience of a phenomenon and the researcher's role in the research process. Although van Manen's approach resists "a priori steps and structures in the name of precision, exactness, and rigor" (Vagle, 2018, p. 108), the design encompasses six research activities which are: (1) turning to a phenomenon that seriously interests us and commits us to the world, (2) investigating experience as we live it rather than as we conceptualize it, (3) reflecting on the essential themes which characterize the phenomenon, (4) describing the phenomenon through the art of writing and rewriting, (5) maintaining a strong and oriented pedagogical relation to the phenomenon, and (6) balancing the research context by considering parts and whole. The aforementioned activities enable the researcher to have a thorough understanding of the phenomenon; however, as the author highlighted these are not fixed since it depends "on interpretive sensitivity, inventive thoughtfulness, scholarly tact, and writing talent of the human science researcher" (van Manen, 2016, p. 34).

Considering that the current phenomenological study unveiled the issue of LGBTIQ+ identities in the workplace, using a queer interpretative lens seems relevant. As Creswell and Creswell (2018) highlight, research should be intertwined with a political agenda that seeks to reform the lives of the participants, the institutions in which they live and work, and even the researchers' lives by granting a voice to the participants in order to confront social

oppression. Thus, Queer theory is the most beneficial interpretative framework to do so because it leads to a better understanding of the participants' realities linked to the existing power imbalances within their organizational systems due to sexual or gender categories. As Watson (2005) acknowledged, Queer theory is an important lens because it enables the analysis of the role of sexual identities, in conjunction with other facets of identity, in terms of how power relations work within groups and how identities may be shaped in the light of those relations.

### **3.2 Context**

The present research gathered the experiences of various English teachers from different cities in Colombia. Both public and private schools were considered since diverse contexts could account for varying perspectives and experiences. It is important to highlight that the settings were determined by the participants' willingness to take part in this research.

In regards to public schools, these institutions represented 30% of the settings in which some of the participants' stories took place. This sample comprised mainly secondary schools located in Pereira, Tunja, Cali, and two municipalities in Putumayo. The students who were part of these public institutions usually came from the lower social strata such as 1, 2, and 3. Although these institutions were not completely secular, religion was not a preponderant aspect since religiosity did not permeate the institutional philosophies and policies; however, it was reflected in the worldviews of certain school community members.

On the other hand, private institutions represented 64% of the sample where the participants' experiences developed and it comprised all the educational levels, mainly primary and secondary education. These institutions were located in Neiva, Pereira, Tunja, Cali, Duitama, Barbosa, Valledupar, Buenaventura, and Mocoa. Given that these institutions were private, the students who were enrolled belonged to the middle and upper social class; nonetheless, within

these schools, few cases of lower-class stratification are also evidenced. Interestingly, religion was a preponderant element in these settings, which was not only reflected in the stakeholders' worldviews but also in the ideological and political aspects of the institutions. Catholicism and Christianity were the most common religions in these contexts.

The remaining 5% of the institutions consisted of other types of educational establishments such as language institutes. These places were located in Bogotá and Pereira and offered language education to people from all the different social classes. These institutes were characterized for being rather secular; therefore, their organizational structure was not permeated by religion.

### **3.3 Population**

LGBTIQ+ and heterosexual teachers comprised the population of the study. In order to have access to the experiences and perspectives of LGBTIQ+ and heterosexual individuals, a purposeful sampling procedure was chosen so as to recruit an even number of participants who could inform about their workplace environment from the heterosexual and the LGBTIQ+ standpoint. As Patton (2002) highlighted, purposeful sampling is considered "information-rich" and helps to find participants with the experiences specific to the study. Furthermore, the snowball sampling technique (Miles & Huberman, 1994) was also implemented to enable participants to refer to other individuals that fit the study and who were willing to participate. Regarding the LGBTIQ+ participants, they were not required to have disclosed their sexuality at school to participate, considering the socio-politically conservative society in which we live.

Regarding the sexually and gender diverse group, it consisted of three male teachers who identified as gay, one female teacher who identified as lesbian, one female teacher who identified

as bisexual, and one non-binary teacher who identified as homosexual (Table 1). On the other hand, the heterosexual sample comprised three female teachers and two male teachers. (Table 2).

**Table 1**

*LGBTIQ+ participants' profiles*

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Sexual orientation	Origin	Regions worked	# Years working	# Institutions worked	Educational levels Taught
Ícaro	22	Cisgender man	Homosexual	Huila	Neiva	2-3	3	Primary and upper secondary school
Gemini	26	Cisgender man	Homosexual	Santander	Barbosa / Bogotá	2-3	2	Secondary school and undergraduate level.
Juan Jiménez	26	Cisgender man	Homosexual	Huila	Neiva / Valledupar / Orito y La Hormiga (Putumayo)	4-5	5+	Primary and secondary school
Emily	25	Cisgender woman	Bisexual	Valle del Cauca	Buenaventura / Cali	5+	4	All levels
Rouge	31	Cisgender woman	Homosexual	Boyacá	Duitama / Tunja	5+	5+	All levels
Teresa Ramos	26	Non-binary	Homosexual	Risaralda	Pereira	0-1	1	Lower secondary school
<b>Total: 6</b> Men (3) / Women (2)/ Non-binary (1)								

**Table 2***Heterosexual participants' profiles*

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Sexual orientation	Origin	Regions worked	# Years working	# Institutions worked	Educational levels Taught
Xiomara	23	Cisgender woman	Heterosexual	Valle del Cauca	Cali	4-5	4	All levels
Camilo	23	Cisgender man	Heterosexual	Risaralda	Pereira	2-3	2	Primary and lower secondary school
Colombia	25	Cisgender man	Heterosexual	Putumayo	Mocoa	0-1	1	Preschool and primary school
Participante P	26	Cisgender woman	Heterosexual	Risaralda	Pereira	5+	3	Preschool, primary, and secondary school
Jane	23	Cisgender woman	Heterosexual	Huila	Neiva	4-5	1	Preschool, primary and secondary school
<b>Total: 5</b> Men (2) / Women (3)								

As evidenced the LGBTIQ+ participants of the study consisted of a sample of young teachers, mainly in their 20s. Most of the participants identified as cisgender which means that their sense of personal identity and gender corresponded with their birth sex. Additionally, their sexual orientation was mainly homosexual, that is, gay and lesbian. However, some of the participants during the data collection process claimed not to feel comfortable labeling themselves with this particular criterion. Most of the participants came from different regions and their professional experience consisted of more than two years as educators. Lastly, this group of teachers has worked in more than two institutions in all the educational levels except preschool.



In regards to the heterosexual sample, this one consisted of young teachers as well, all of them in their 20s. Evidently, all of the participants in this group were cisgender and came from diverse regions. Interestingly, the people in this group have taught in the same department where they were born. As in the previous group, most of the participants in this sample have been teaching for more than two years in different institutions. Finally, concerning the school levels taught by this group, they have performed in the different educational stages, including preschool. However, most of them have focused on preschool, primary and secondary school.

### **3.4 Ethical considerations and researcher's positionality**

Given the sensitivity of the issue addressed in this study and due to ethical issues relating to the participants' protection, their identities, and the institutions' names were not revealed to preserve their anonymity. As Wiles et al. (2006) highlight, confidentiality in research includes two main aspects: not discussing information provided by an individual with others and ensuring individuals cannot be identified, mainly through anonymization. Thus, as a researcher, I am responsible for both informing the participants and protecting them from any possible consequences linked to participation in this study. Likewise, in case of psychological discomfort, the participants are able to decline to answer any question or withdraw from the study at any time. Participants were required to fill out an informed consent form (see a sample of the format employed in Appendix A) in which the purpose of the research, the expected duration of the subject's participation, and a description of the procedures to be followed were detailed.

In qualitative studies, the researcher's different characteristics and worldviews might influence the research process since these aspects impact how access is gained, the language used, the questions asked, the analysis of the results, and how the results are presented (Mason-Bish, 2019). In the case of phenomenology, as stated by Hopkins et al., (2016), all researchers'

assumptions and beliefs about the world, the phenomenon understudied, and the meaningful representation of what that phenomenon looks like; orient the study.

It must be pinpointed that I am an educator who identifies as part of the LGBTIQ+ community; therefore, I have first-hand experience in the issue of acceptance of LGBTIQ+ realities in the workplace. Nevertheless, I attempted to bracket to some extent my experience to mitigate the potentially deleterious effects of unacknowledged preconceptions related to the research and thereby increase the rigor of the study (Tufford & Newman, 2012). However, considering the nature of the study and the phenomenological approach selected for this study, there was not an utter bracketing process because disregarding completely one's knowledge in regards to the phenomenon is not only utopic but could lead to inadvertent worldviews emerging during the data explicitation process affecting the quality of the findings.

Finally, it is important to address that I assumed the role of a non-participant observer (Hammersley, 2007). This role implies not being involved in the setting where the participants work or playing a participant role in the events being studied in each setting. Thus, all the information presented here accounts for the participants' experiences with the phenomenon and the way they interpreted the different situations related to LGBTIQ+ issues within their workplaces.

### **3.5 Data Collection Instruments**

The use of multiple data collection instruments was necessary to obtain a clear understanding of the participants' experiences and perceptions. The data collection instruments in this study included a demographic questionnaire, narratives, individual in-depth interviews, and focus groups. These instruments were implemented in different moments (from June to December 2021) based on the participants' availability and their response time as evidenced in

Table 3. The table shows the date when each instrument was completed by every participant so as to reflect the way the data collection process is influenced by participants' personal duties and responsibilities. It is clear that some participants took more time to respond and the time span between the completion of one instrument and the other increased or decreased on the basis of their professional, academic, or personal responsibilities.

**Table 3***Data collection instruments implementation timetable*

Participant	Demographic questionnaire	Narrative 1		Narrative 2		In-depth interview 1	In-depth interview 2	In-depth interview 3	Focus group
		<i>Sent</i>	<i>Received</i>	<i>Sent</i>	<i>Received</i>				
Camilo	Jul 03	Jul 19	Aug 02	Sep 25	Oct 09	24 Aug	Nov 16	Nov 16	Dec 08
Colombia	Jun 15	Jul 19	Jul 25	Sep 11	Sep 19	10 Aug	Oct 16	Nov 10	Dec 11
Emily	Jul 03	Jul 19	Sep 03	Sep 25	Oct 12	13 Sep	Nov 17	Nov 17	Dec 11
Gemini	Jun 15	Jun 26	Jul 11	Sep 25	Oct 11	Sep 06	Oct 22	Nov 25	Dec 11
Ícaro	Jun 15	Jul 19	Jul 21	Sep 11	Sep 17	Aug 24	Oct 19	Nov 10	Dec 08
Jane	Jun 26	Jun 26	Jun 30	Sep 25	Oct 10	Aug 07	Oct 21	Nov 26	Dec 11
Juan Jiménez	Jun 21	Jul 19	Aug 06	Sep 25	Sep 19	Sep 02	Nov 12	Nov 12	Dec 11
Participante P	Jul 16	Jul 16	Jul 24	Sep 25	Oct 24	Sep 11	Nov 13	Nov 13	Dec 08
Rouge	Jun 19	Jul 19	Jul 23	Sep 25	Oct 10	Aug 29	Nov 14	Nov 14	Dec 08
Teresa Ramos	Jun 15	Jul 19	Sep 06	Sep 29	Oct 15	Sep 09	Dec 04	Dec 04	Dec 08
Xiomara	Jun 15	Jul 19	Jul 23	Sep 25	Oct 10	Aug 08	Oct 19	Nov 25	Dec 11

### ***3.5.1 Demographic questionnaire***

Questionnaires enable researchers to gather factual or demographic aspects, behaviors, and attitudes (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2009), which could be achieved through open-ended and closed-ended items (Burns, 2010). In the current study, a demographic questionnaire with both types of items was implemented to gain background information of the participants in relation to their experiences with LGBTIQ+ realities within their workplaces (see Appendix B). The questionnaire was web-based and delivered at the beginning of the research process through Google forms. For the closed-ended items, participants were asked to answer questions related to their age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, education, professional experience, and in the case of the LGBTIQ+ participants, they were also inquired about their level of disclosure within the workplace. As for the open-ended items, participants were asked about their name, preferred pseudonym, origin, and some items that prompted participants to deepen into the answer provided to a closed-ended item.

The demographic questionnaire consisted of 16 items for heterosexual participants and 24 items for LGBTIQ+ participants, plus an optional section in which participants were able to refer other colleagues who could have been interested in participating in the study. The items presented throughout this data collection instrument were grouped under 5 sections for heterosexual participants and 6 sections for LGBTIQ+ participants. In order to increase the usability and effectiveness of the tool, I considered the way it was structured since the sequence of questions and how the questions are grouped together, may help respondents to contextualize the items presented (Adams & Cox, 2008). A total of 26 individuals answered the questionnaire, however, only eleven participants completed the entire research process. In general, the

demographic information obtained from the instrument enabled me as a researcher to better understand certain background characteristics of my participants and to establish a general profile of who my participants were.

### *3.5.2 Narratives*

The use of narratives allows the researcher to deepen into the participants' lives since they are set in human stories. In Webster and Mertova's words (2007), narrative inquiry "provides researchers with a rich framework through which they can investigate the ways humans experience the world depicted through their stories" (p. 3). The aforementioned idea entails that narratives enable researchers to gather and present those experiences holistically as complex and rich as they are.

In the current study, two narratives were implemented. Participants were provided with the option of choosing whether they wanted to describe their stories either orally or in written form. The first narrative addressed the issue of the workplace environment and its three dimensions (physical, human, and organizational). This instrument sought to gather the information that could enable the researcher to answer the first research question. As for the second narrative, it focused on the participants' actions that implicitly or explicitly had an influence on the way LGBTIQ+ realities are perceived and treated in the workplace. In each narrative, participants were presented with the objective of the instrument, a series of instructions to consider in order to write or record an effective narrative, and a prompt or a series of guiding ideas that sought to spark participants' stories and framed their answers (see Appendix C).

The narratives in this study were administered at different moments in the research process. The first narrative was shared after participants had finished completing the demographic questionnaires. They were granted a time of two or three weeks to return the first

narrative. The second narrative was administered after the completion of the first in-depth interview. As for the previous narrative, participants were granted a period of two or three weeks to return the completed instrument. A total of 22 narratives were received, on average, the written narratives were three to four-page long, and the oral narratives were over 15 minutes. All of this data was stored on my personal computer and each file was renamed using the participants' chosen pseudonyms. These files were organized into independent folders for each participant. In order to secure the information, the folders were also uploaded to Google Drive so as to avoid losing the information in case the computer broke down or was stolen.

### ***3.5.3 In-depth interview***

Since first-person accounts are prioritized in this phenomenological study so as to gain access to lived phenomena through a self-understanding that is also world-understanding (Freeman, 2021), this research relied primarily on the use of in-depth interviews (see in-depth interviews protocol and questions in Appendix D). The justification for this decision relies on the fact that this data collection instrument allows the researcher to deeply explore the respondent's feelings and perspectives on a subject through open-ended questions that elicit rich background information (Guion et al., 2011). As Polkinghorne (cited in Creswell & Poth, 2018) suggests, researchers should interview from 5 to 25 individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon through in-depth interviews to gather a structural description of the experiences, which will lead to an understanding of participants' shared experiences.

Considering the phenomenological nature of the study, the in-depth interviews developed followed Seidman's (2013) model for phenomenological interviewing. This model comprises a series of three interviews, each one focusing on different aspects of the participants' lives. The first interview sought to establish the context of the participants' experiences by inquiring about

their previous experiences with the phenomenon throughout their academic and professional life. The second interview aimed to delve into the participants' latest experiences with the phenomenon within their current workspace. Finally, the third interview focused on encouraging participants' reflection on the way their previous and current experiences shaped their understanding of the phenomenon and the future thereof.

The three in-depth interviews were developed at different moments during the research process. The first interview was conducted after the participants had sent the first narrative and a total of eleven interviews were developed. Likewise, the second in-depth interview was completed after the participants had submitted the second narrative. The reasoning behind this decision relies on the fact that through the interviews, aspects of the narratives were clarified or studied more in-depth so as to have a more comprehensive and detailed understanding of the story shared by the participant in the narrative. As for this interview, a total of seven interviews were fully done. The remaining participants completed a modified version of the interview, a decision made due to time constraints and participants' unavailability. Hence, the questions of the second and third interview were merged and slightly summarized into one instrument (see Appendix E). The last interview of the three-way series was developed after having gone over the data collected up to that point so as to find issues that needed to be studied more carefully and to frame the questions in such a way that enabled participants to reflect on the way their past and present experiences influenced their understanding of the issue being studied. In total, seven interviews of this type were held.

Each in-depth interview instrument consisted of two parts: the first part was general questions regarding the phenomenon that all the participants were asked, and the second part was questions particular to each participant that sought to deepen into certain aspects that were

addressed in the narratives but were not fully covered. All the interviews were limited to 45-60 minutes and were held via Google Meet and audio-recorded to then be transcribed. The interviews were held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the distance of some participants. As for the narratives, the recordings of the interviews were saved on my computer and on Google Drive in the participant's corresponding folder.

#### ***3.5.4 Focus group***

This instrument is useful for gathering original data about people's experiences, attitudes, opinions, and awareness of events since it allows interaction and sharing of viewpoints on specific topics and themes among a group of individuals (Morgan, 1997). Additionally, as acknowledged by Burns (2010), in focus groups, ideas and thoughts can be triggered based on what the others mention, which leads to introspection and reflexivity. In this study, two focus groups interviews were conducted after the third interview was developed. These focus groups aimed to deepen into the participants' experiences after revising the information provided in the previous research instruments, and to foster discussion among the group considering the myriad of experiences they have had in their particular settings and regions.

For the focus groups to be scheduled, participants received a form via WhatsApp in which they were asked to share estimated dates and times in which they were free to be part of the discussion. After analyzing the participants' responses the group was divided into two groups based on their availability. In the first focus group a total of five participants were part of the discussion and in the second one, a total of six participants engaged in the discussion. The instrument developed for the focus group (see Appendix F) consisted of a semistructured interview with twelve questions, which ensured flexibility and adaptations according to the participants' comments and interventions throughout the discussion. The questions participants



were asked inquired about issues that arose during the individual interviews such as the influence of religion and regional factors in their workplace and their role as bystanders or agents of change. The focus groups lasted around 90 to 120 minutes and the meetings were developed at the end of the research process after all the previous instruments had been completed. The focus groups took place via Google Meet and, as for the interviews, they were recorded, and the recordings were kept on my personal computer and on my Google Drive account. All the data gathered with the instruments previously described enabled me as a researcher to have access to a myriad of stories and experiences, which were approached through a series of steps described in the following section.

### **3.6 Data explication**

Qualitative research entails analyzing and synthesizing data (Stake, 2010). However, in phenomenology, the heading data ‘analysis’ is avoided since this entails breaking into parts disregarding the whole in context, which leads to a loss of the phenomenon since contextual clues are unavoidable to inform and uncover the essence of the phenomenon (Hycner, 1999 as cited in Groenewald, 2004). Therefore, the term ‘explication’ is used in phenomenology because it refers to the exploration of the components while utterly keeping the phenomenon in context to uncover the essence of the experience staying as close to the truth as reported by the participant (Koopman, 2018, p. 22).

Given that narratives were an important part of this research, some principles were considered to interpret and understand the data gathered through this instrument. As Kim (2015) asserts, interpretation has a significant role because researchers are in charge of trying to interpret meanings by considering “an analysis of plotlines, thematic structures, and social and cultural referents” (p. 190). However, these interpretations need to be supported by evidence

without being too descriptive and without falling into overinterpreting what was said by the participant.

In order to interpret the stories depicted by the participants in their narratives, the researcher needs to approach them with caution, namely in research that seeks to challenge the status quo or focuses on social justice (Kim, 2015). In this research, the stories of the participants were understood at face value, yet they were closely inspected so as to identify possible inconsistencies or untold stories or parts of them that the participant decided to omit. This middle-ground approach between the interpretation of faith and the interpretation of suspicion enabled me as a researcher to go deeper into the recognition of hidden narrative meanings, that is, I moved from a surface interpretation to a more informed and inquisitive one.

In order to make the research rigorous and trustworthy, aspects such as triangulation were considered. In this study, the design and use of narratives, in-depth interviews, and the focus group entailed methodological triangulation, which refers to the use of multiple methods of data collection (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). This methodological triangulation helped me corroborate findings because what appeared in one instrument was also found in others.

A second means for triangulation was using multiple sources of data, which refers to combining and comparing “data drawn from different sources and at different times, in different places or from different people” (Flick, 2004). In this research, data triangulation was considered since not only multiple participants with different sexualities were inquired about the same phenomenon, but they were also part of different regions from Colombia which yielded a more comprehensive picture of the phenomenon of LGBTIQ+ acceptance in the workplace from the teachers' perspectives. Additionally, the three-interview series data collection instrument entailed

triangulation too because as a researcher I was able to delve into the past, present, and future of the phenomenon as experienced and perceived by the participants.

In the present phenomenological study, Hycner's (1985) data explicitation process was considered. The explicitation of data guidelines proposed by the author comprises fifteen steps some more self-evident than others. Nonetheless, as the author highlights, a method cannot be arbitrarily imposed on a phenomenon because that could disrupt the understanding thereof. Yet the steps suggested could enable researchers like myself who have not had enough experience conducting phenomenological studies to stay true to the phenomenon.

Once all the data was gathered, I transcribed all the audio-recorded material to meet Hycner's first data explicitation step. The transcription approach was the denaturalized approach, which comprises removing stutters, pauses, involuntary vocalizations, and other non-verbal cues (Oliver et al., 2005). This decision was made given that this study does not focus on speech patterns. In order to have a sense of each participant's experience in their particular context(s), I examined each participant's data individually and in chronological order, they were gathered. During this process, I went through every line so as to identify words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs that could unveil the essence of the meaning expressed in relation to their worldviews and experiences regarding LGBTIQ+ identities in the workplace. According to Hycner (1985), this step is called *delineating units of meaning* and it encompasses, first, an open and general identification of the units of meaning and a later a delimitation of units of meaning that are actually relevant to the research question, that is, microthemes were established. This last step led to the reduction of information by eliminating redundancies or information that did not contribute to understanding the phenomenon of LGBTIQ+ realities in the workplace.

After the microthemes were established, I sought to organize them into clusters by reading and analyzing for relevant meanings that could be grouped naturally into themes based on commonalities or the essence that could unify those initially independent units of meaning. The themes that arose were analyzed across all the participants' experiences so as to determine common themes to all or most of the participants and themes that are unique to a single participant or to a minority of them.

The process described above was developed using the program, Atlas.ti., which is a software employed to qualitatively analyze textual, graphical, audio, and video data. As a result of the whole explication process, the data yielded the following themes and subthemes which will be presented as a metaphor:

**Table 4**

*Themes and subthemes that answer each research question*

Research question	Themes	Sub-themes
How does a group of Colombian heterosexual and LGBTIQ+ English teachers of private and public educational institutions experience and perceive their workplace environment regarding non-normative sexual and gender identities?	Theme 1: War specifications: Latent or flouted LGBTIQ+ realities within the institutional philosophies and curricula	War protocol: The underrepresentation and resistance against LGBTIQ+ identities in the institutional philosophies
		War plan: The curricularly enacted noncompliance of LGBTIQ+ inclusion
	Theme 2: The affinity battlefield: The establishment of understanding or clashing relationships with school stakeholders	Teachers' workplace: A minefield for LGBTIQ+ realities
		A demilitarized zone for LGBTIQ+ realities: The quest for humanism and the bestowment of inclusion
How do these teachers contribute to promoting acceptance or rejection of LGBTIQ+ realities in their workplace?	Theme 3: Troops' actions: Overt and covert advocacy of LGBTIQ+ realities and the benighted and heteronormative stance	Stakeholders as Blue helmets: Addressing or hinting LGBTIQ+ identities
		Acting as Berzerkers: The inadvertent attack against LGBTIQ+ identities and the perpetuation of heteronormativity

## Chapter IV. Findings

In this section, I will be discussing the findings that the data elicitation yielded. The results are presented through a metaphor that alludes to the workplace environment in terms of a war. The metaphor was selected because the data yielded that participants experienced their work environments as places where an ongoing confrontation for recognition and normalization of sexual and gender diversities is held. The metaphor here consists of three levels, the first one being the ideological stances behind the war and the way these ideologies are recorded in the school plans, the second level addresses the way the war is perceived and experienced once it is taken to the field of the everyday relationships established within the workplace, and the last level refers to the actors' implicit and explicit actions which configure certain strategic moves that contribute or hinder the way LGBTIQ+ realities are perceived and treated within the battlefield.

### **4.1 Theme 1: War specifications: Latent or flouted LGBTIQ+ realities within the institutional philosophies and curricula**

The first theme portrays the participants' subjective and objective experiences and perceptions concerning the institutional educational project (henceforth PEI) and any other document that discusses institutional philosophies and curriculum. This theme explores what was officially stated in these different documents and what was actually enacted in relation to LGBTIQ+ realities, that is, the lived reality within the school regarding 'non-normative' identities.

The *war specifications* metaphor was selected because both LGBTIQ+ and heterosexual participants regarded that what was officially stated in the institutional documents and what was curricularly enacted drew a 'road map' to be followed by stakeholders, which mainly invisibilized

sexual and gender-diverse identities and informed acceptable and unacceptable ways of being and acting within these educational settings to disregard these realities. The participants' stories yielded that the school's ideological stances, on the one hand, informed the policies and rules established within these settings and, on the other hand, shaped the educational component determining what could and could not be taught at school making sexuality and gender diversity invisible.

In war, before the battle is held, the opposing military units make a set of decisions about how to fight against the opponent. These established tactics or combat operations are portrayed in an official document that everyone should adhere to in order to defeat the enemy. However, sometimes these tactics are not recorded in documents because they do not want people to know about them, yet they exist, and some people are aware of them. That is, some beliefs and principles reflect the institution's hidden curriculum. Therefore, this metaphor delves into the ideological field that informs the war and the way these ideologies are promulgated or unannounced in the school documents.

In this theme, the institutional philosophies and the official and hidden curricula are addressed since as the participants' experiences yielded; these two components play a meaningful role in the way LGBTIQ+ realities are perceived and treated. Throughout the data collection process, participants referred to curricular and ideological issues of the institutions where their stories were framed. Considering the aforementioned, it was necessary to deepen into what they knew about how specific documents in the institution might reveal or show the way LGBTIQ+ identities are perceived within these workplaces. As a result, two emerging aspects in the data were analyzed, including the participants' direct knowledge of the different institutional documents such as the PEI (school principals, purpose, policies, values, and the pedagogical

components that guide individuals within these contexts) and the participants' subjective and experiential knowledge within these workplaces (the enactment of school ideologies).

Considering what was described above, this theme is divided into two subthemes. The first subtheme *War protocol: The underrepresentation and resistance against LGBTIQ+ identities in the institutional philosophies* addresses the way school ideologies are portrayed in the official documents according to the participants' objective and subjective experiences. The second subtheme *War plan: The curricularly enacted noncompliance of LGBTIQ+ inclusion* relates to the enactment of school ideologies going beyond what is written on paper. It is important to emphasize that these two subthemes are interconnected since the former informs the latter and the latter accounts for the way the former is understood and established by the commanders (school administrators) and other influential military individuals so as to shape ways of being and acting within these diverse settings. Interestingly, the latter subtheme may contradict or concur with the guiding philosophical principles of the institution when the military forces, namely teachers, execute it. In the following lines, these subthemes are explored more in-depth.

#### ***4.1.1 War protocol: The underrepresentation and resistance against LGBTIQ+ identities in the institutional philosophies.***

Throughout military confrontations, the parties involved are subjected to an ideological system reflected on a document that, for humanitarian reasons, seeks to protect people within armed conflicts by limiting the effects of war and determining appropriate ways of acting. Thus, it shapes the conflicting forces' attitudes and acts since they must abide by the rules to respect civilians' rights in times of war. Indeed, in this report, the *war protocol* refers to the PEI or any similar documents in any elementary, secondary, or tertiary education level institution. These

types of documents in educational settings specify the institution's principles and purposes, the educational resources available and necessary, the pedagogical methodology, the regulations for stakeholders, and the management system; in other words, they guide and frame all the processes that occur within the establishment.

In this study, participants' stories accounted for their objective and subjective understandings and experiences with different aspects of the institutional official documents considering that occasionally as teachers, we might be unaware of what is stated therein. Hence, the experiences portrayed in this subtheme considered the participants' official knowledge of these documents and the knowledge acquired from being embedded in the contexts. Bearing in mind that the PEI or related and similar documents characterize and describe each institution distinguishing it from others, the workplace's ideologies, values, systems, and their operationalization at the curricular level were considered.

Both LGBTIQ+ and heterosexual participants perceived the official school protocols as unfavorable, conflictive, and contrary to LGBTIQ+ realities within public and private institutions. These *war protocols* are used to design and shape the type of thinking of the school community, that if not openly aggressive towards LGBTIQ+ identities, is put into place to stop their flourishing and to prevent its advancement. The protocols are put into place to stop the advancement of the "enemy" that is the LGBTIQ+ force. Although these documents are not full of restrictions to persecute sexual and gender-diverse people, they are designed in a way that LGBTIQ+ identities are underrepresented and that is a way to exercise violence against this community.

The following excerpt shows a participant's experience concerning the way issues related to sexuality and gender identity are overlooked in the PEI: I think that is not mentioned



[acceptance of LGBTIQ+ individuals]. It focuses more on academic excellence and the spiritual part. Those are the only things that are mentioned<sup>1</sup> (Jane / I1 / Aug 07, 2021).<sup>2</sup>

The participant who has worked mainly in a primary school in Neiva and who became the school's academic coordinator asserted sexual and gender-diverse individuals are not included either in the school mission, vision, or in any institutional principle. This invisibility perpetuates violence or microaggressions toward this community since visibility, and safe spaces are not granted. Additionally, LGBTIQ+ invisibility exacerbates the problem for the sexually diverse youth since educators are not provided with the necessary resources to understand and tackle the situation within their contexts.

Furthermore, not only invisibility in the mission, vision, and school principles were reported. The data collected yielded that school policies also disregarded LGBTIQ+ identities shaping attitudes and behaviors within these settings. The following excerpt depicts a participant's experience who, throughout her professional life as an English teacher in Valle del Cauca, has never evidenced inclusionary policies for sexual and gender diversity.

Emily: Educational institutions generally or 99% are heteronormative. They establish and take for granted that both their students and the educational staff are usually hetero, so they do not have or do not establish any policy or training. It is simply an issue that is not addressed and not handled as if I do not see it, it does not exist, and that's it. (I2 / Nov 17, 2021)

The participant has never been embedded in a school where LGBTIQ+ diversity and inclusion are granted. She explains this situation because of a heteronormative culture that

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<sup>1</sup> The excerpts presented throughout the document were originally in Spanish since the data gathering process was conducted in the participants' native language so as to overcome any language barrier that could emerge when addressing terminology related to the issue of sexual and gender realities in the workplace.

<sup>2</sup> Henceforth every excerpt will be followed by an abbreviation that refers to the instrument from where the information was taken and the date when the data was gathered. The letter 'N' stands for narrative and the number next to it refers to whether it was narrative one or two. Letter 'I' refers to the in-depth interview and the digit refers to the number of the interview. Finally, 'FG' refers to the focus group and the digit represents whether it was focus group one or two.

assumes that everyone is cisgender and heterosexual. Evidently, this narrowed conception is problematic since it perpetuates reductive conceptions of identity through silencing, erasure, and marginalization (Buchanan-Plaisance, 2014).

On the other hand, school policies have a meaningful influence on the work atmosphere as expressed by both LGBTIQ+ and heterosexual participants. As it is evidenced in the following excerpt, participants agreed on the fact that school policies shape their experiences in the workspace:

Participant P: If the educational establishment itself becomes so reluctant, so ignorant of this issue [LGBTIQ+ diversity], it greatly affects the workplace environment (...) for me, the school philosophy determines a lot the way these communities are perceived. (I2 / Sep 11, 2021)

The excerpt accounted for the participant's experience in Risaralda, where she witnessed harassment against a trans student without opposing it because of fear and lack of support and mechanisms to assist these cases. The context where the story developed, as described by the participant, was a 'slum'; thus, she felt at risk since she witnessed the way a teacher was threatened for trying to defend this student. Additionally, she felt powerless and hopeless because the institution tried to ignore the student's situation and disregard this reality. Evidently, school policies or the lack of them hindered both teachers' experiences, which led to marginalization since LGBTIQ+ realities could not be addressed inside or outside the classroom.

Interestingly, in general, the data yielded institutional disinterestedness toward adopting LGBTIQ+ inclusive policies within private and public schools. Nonetheless, a participant reported that in two language institutes where he worked, he evidenced the opposite; that is, his experiences in these settings were marked by official policies that fostered the inclusion of sexual and gender diversity:

Gemini: The two institutions had policies on diversity, so I think that is an important factor, and many companies are now taking that into account. In a certain way, I think that this affects how people behave

[...]. What I remember in general was 'in this institution we respect all forms of being, identities'; those types of words are what I remember. (I2 / Oct 22, 2021)

Evidently, language institutes seemed more open and unrestricted about sexual and gender diversity. The previous excerpt accounted for the participant's experience in Bogotá, where he felt valued and witnessed respect towards his sexual orientation and towards all the rest of LGBTIQ+ individuals because of the inclusive policies established in these settings. As the participant highlighted, the inclusion of these policies had a positive impact on these workspaces because a meaningful number of sexual and gender-diverse teachers were able to work there without having to hide, and students or any other individual who was part of these settings was encouraged to recognize and respect these individuals' differences. Research studies regarding LGBTIQ+ diversity and inclusion policy within the workplace have shown that inclusive workspaces contribute to improving the mental well-being of sexual and gender diverse individuals (Badgett et al., 2013; Huffman et al., 2008) and to encouraging fair treatment of LGBTIQ+ people by their heterosexual coworkers (Pichler et al., 2017).

Although numerous countries have been adopting laws that seek to prohibit discrimination based on sexual or gender discrimination as reported by the International Labour Organization (2012), the participants' stories unveiled that at the educational level in Colombia, both private and public schools still overlook these policies on the basis of heterosexism and religious perspectives. Namely private institutions' policies and philosophies were regarded as more restrictive and opposing to LGBTIQ+ identities throughout all the educational levels. In regards to public schools, the participants regarded their policies and philosophies as more flexible and a little more accepting of sexual and gender diversity, mainly at the university level as the participants experienced as students and some of them as teachers.

The protocol was also influenced by the school's religious affiliation. This issue is very relevant since the theocentric orientations of the school and the people embedded in it determine the workplace environment. As O'Brien (2004) highlights, religion reflects personal, family, organizational, and cultural ideologies persistently in tension with marginalized groups and individuals. Both LGBTIQ+ and heterosexual participants perceived as uncondusive highly religious institutions. Namely, private schools were reported as having stricter and more restricting school philosophies since they were founded on religious and conservative ideologies concerning sexual and gender diversity.

The Republic of Colombia since its constitution has been deeply influenced by the dominant role of Catholicism, which has permeated the educational and other societal spheres (Ravagli-Cardona, 2022). Consequently, Christian morality has laid the foundation for how diverse sexualities and gender identities are understood in society. These religious understandings conceive LGBTIQ+ realities as a sin and something to be condemned.

In the study, religion arose recurrently throughout the narratives and interviews. Both LGBTIQ+ and heterosexual teachers addressed this particularity as one of the most dominating challenges to developing LGBTIQ+ acceptance in school. The following excerpt unveils a participant's experience within a catholic institution where the religious affiliation determined the way LGBTIQ+ individuals should be handled:

Rouge: All the administrators of that institution believed faithfully that students who could turn out to be gay had to be reported to counseling, and that this could be 'cured' as if it were part of a moral deviation. The same way students were treated, they did to the teachers as well. Basically, I felt like I was in a jail where I couldn't be myself. (I1 / Aug 28, 2021)

According to the interviewee, this school was managed by nuns; therefore, their religious ideas reflected how the school's organizational environment was determined. These people's worldviews affected both teachers and students. The former could not disclose their

sexual orientation because they would lose their job, and the latter's personal growth was hampered. The participant felt unsafe at this school, which did not allow her to serve as a positive role model to students. As Wright and Smith (2013) suggested, educators whose sexual and/or gender identities are "non-normative" need to feel protected in order to be supportive and serve as role models for LGBTIQ+ youth; unfortunately, that was not the case for this participant. This lack of protection prevents educators from assuming transformative roles since they are not able to affirm their own or others' LGBTIQ+ identities, which results in the perpetuation of stigma and gender violence (Vásquez-Guarnizo & Álvarez-Contreras, 2021). A significant number of participants mentioned the school's religious perspectives as a factor that hinder the acceptance of LGBTIQ+ realities within these settings. Research has proved that attitudes towards LGBTIQ+ issues are closely connected to religion and how it is practiced (Corrales & Sagarzazu, 2019). This situation is not exclusive to Colombia since it is a widespread tendency across the globe (e.g. Corrales, 2015; Dion & Díez, 2017, McGee, 2016).

Religious schools are discriminatory and potentially very divisive (Mason, 2005), which was evidenced in the current study where the considerably religious schools made the LGBTIQ+ individuals' experiences less pleasant since they were pointed out as abnormal. Although these extreme ramifications in religious beliefs probably were not part of the official documents considering that it would go against national and international laws that frame and regulate schools, it is plausible that the school included therein some notions about being a Catholic institution. Nonetheless, the conception that being an LGBTIQ+ individual can be cured could not be part of these official school documents but emerged from the historical involvement of medical sciences in trying to rule over LGBTIQ+ identities. It is important to highlight that in the past, homosexuality was considered a disease until the World Health Organization removed it

from the International Classification of Diseases on May 07th in 1990. In consequence, some stakeholders might reflect a symbiosis of religious faith with ideologies from the medical field leading to an attack against LGBTIQ+ individuals within these environments as evidenced in the previous excerpt. Even though these ideologies that condemn sexual and gender diversity were not in the institutional documents, they were part of the hidden curriculum, which will be explored in the following subtheme.

#### ***4.1.2 War plan: The curricularly enacted noncompliance of LGBTIQ+ inclusion***

This subtheme portrays the way the school philosophies concerning LGBTIQ+ individuals were enacted at the curricular level. In such a way, it deals with the curriculum at a practical or experiential level concerning the way ‘non-normative’ realities were actually endured within the workplaces where participants were embedded. At war, international philosophical systems must be abided to; therefore, a set of decisions considering strategies and tactics to achieve the goal of overpowering the enemy while still ensuring compliance with these framing ideologies must be made. Hence, in this report, the *war plan* reflects how the school philosophies are translated into a more practical realm: the enacted curriculum.

The *war plan* here involves aspects of the organizational and technical sub-environment. The former being the procedural systems and practices in regard to sexual and gender diversity, and the latter referring to the ways the infrastructure and other elements of the physical component of the school reflected these LGBTIQ+ realities. Unfortunately, the data gathered yielded that the war plan within the participants’ workplaces did not meet these international requirements of LGBTIQ+ inclusion. On the contrary, sexuality and gender diversity were contested or made invisible in the curriculum, leading to overt and covert discriminatory attitudes and practices.

It is essential to highlight that in this research, the formal curriculum was understood as a guide to educators with the totality of learning experiences expected to be provided to students; hence, it included the lessons and academic content taught at school. At the official level, participants agreed on the fact that LGBTIQ+ realities were disregarded from the design of the school curriculum. The following excerpt by one participant who has been working as a teacher for more than five years in multiple settings at different educational levels sums up the common experience that participants shared regarding the way no inclusion was evidenced at the curricular level.

Rouge: When you observe in detail how the institutions PEI work. For example, there is not an institution that includes in its mission or vision that it is aware of the different gender identities. That is, it does not involve, in one way or another, the planning of the curricula, how the transversality works, that there are differences, and that we have to understand and respect these differences. (I2 / Nov 14, 2021)

As Moreno (1999) cited in Torres-Chirinos and Fernández-Sánchez (2015) highlights, transversality seeks to reconstruct education in a comprehensive learning process that links the school with life and the most appropriate values and attitudes to live better in coexistence with others. Unfortunately, as evidenced, noncompliance with LGBTIQ+ inclusion was not surprising for the participants considering that the school's autonomy enabled most of the institutions in this study to avoid their social responsibility and political pressure from outside to include and safeguard these realities at the curricular level.

Furthermore, participants' stories revealed that the inclusion of sexual and gender diversity was not prominent since educators did not find or recall seeing evidence of LGBTIQ+ realities being addressed at school. From the eleven participants, only one mentioned having witnessed the inclusion of LGBTIQ+ realities in the sexuality project, which is a national requirement for schools. In an institution mentioned by the participant from Valle del Cauca, students had to make a series of presentations about sexuality. This excerpt portrays what the

participant evidenced during one of the presentations made by students, in which a relatively shallow inclusion of LGBTIQ+ realities was made.

Xiomara: The sexuality project. It was mentioned, but it did not delve much into the subject. They said, for example, there are different sexual orientations, but they did not specify the cases. They were very superficial on those issues. (N1, Jul 23, 2021)

The aforementioned situation can be explained by the fact that the schools do not prioritize a holistic sexuality project because of the taboo that surrounds the topic of sexual and gender diversity within educational settings, especially with young learners. As stated by García-Suárez (2007), in Colombia the pedagogical approach taken at schools about the topic of sexuality “has been limited to the anatomical-physiological description of the female and male reproductive systems, and to the moral prescription of behaviors based on an ideal constitution of an adult heterosexual couple established for procreative purposes” (p. 14, own translation). Despite having projects like the one previously mentioned, LGBTIQ+ realities are still overlooked thoroughly or insufficiently addressed, undermining the workplace environment for sexually diverse individuals who continue being perceived as faulty and who might feel restricted from acting or speaking up about this topic.

Interestingly, invisibility in the formal curriculum is also characterized by the pedagogical materials employed at school. Textbooks and other educational materials were perceived as lacking evidence of LGBTIQ+ representation, which aligns with Núñez-Pardo’ (2018a) conclusion who asserted that “the enormous human diversity and complexity is ignored, marginalised, silenced, or invisibilised [in the English textbooks]” (p. 247). Consequently, teachers should be encouraged to design their own material so as to fulfill their role as agents of change since these practices increase students’ engagement and provide the opportunity to advocate for more inclusive education (Núñez & Téllez, 2009; Ramos & Aguirre, 2014).



Sadly, the issue of invisibilization in ELT materials is complex since it responds to economic benefits. According to Gray (2013), this problem is mainly associated with the need for publishing houses to maximize their profits by appealing to all the markets, including those countries highly conservative and homophobic. The reluctance to include LGBTIQ+ representation in textbooks is justified for commercial reasons; therefore, heteronormativity becomes the default position when profits are at stake. As evidenced in this study, textbooks from private publishing houses such as Richmond and Oxford and even those designed for the government to be used in public schools like *English, Please!* and *Way to Go* did not include sexual and gender diverse representation. Thus, these materials could be considered unresponsive to the complexity of changing realities of students (Núñez-Pardo, 2018b). Unfortunately, the literature regarding LGBTIQ+ identities in ELT textbooks issue is still scarce (Van-Dyck, 2019), and the research studies available suggest that LGBTIQ+ erasure in ELT materials is a persistent problem.

As for the materialization of the hidden curriculum, the data gathered yielded that within educational settings, stakeholders, namely students, revealed certain attitudes or worldviews through written or artistic depictions at certain places of the school. From the eleven participants who were part of the study, only two found evidence of imagery that addressed LGBTIQ+ realities at school. Both of these participants shared that the evidence they found was within public institutions and was proposed by students. In Juan's case, this evidence was part of the English classroom, and in Emily's case, the evidence was a mural located in a common area within the school where she was working. The following excerpts reveal what these teachers found in their workplace environment:

Juan J: There is an LGBT flag in my classroom, and those who proposed this were the students. There is also a message that mentions the importance of gender equality and the vision of men toward women. (12 / Sep 25, 2021)

Emily: I was at a public school working as an English teacher, and there, there were some messages about Afro culture, the processes this group had gone through, and the importance of recognition and inclusion. The inclusion, the respect for sexual identities, and the importance of talking about sexuality with students were also addressed there. [...] The mural was in charge of the student representative and those who were part of the school community council (I1 / Sep 13, 2021)

These two excerpts reveal that students fostered respect for LGBTIQ+ inclusion through artistic representations in the classroom and in common areas where stakeholders coexist.

Interestingly, the excerpts revealed that not only respect and inclusion for sexual and gender diversities was encouraged within these contexts, but students were also sympathetic to other causes such as Afro communities and gender equality. Apparently, students within public school settings felt safer expressing themselves or their sense of agency made them feel more committed to advocating for these diversities and social causes, considering that agency is seen as the driving force of students' engagement (Goulart & Roth, 2010), which has the potential to influence large-scale social change as stated by Basu (2008).

As for the rest of the study participants, they mentioned not having witnessed any explicit LGBTIQ+ visibility in their workplace, neither in institutions with a very marked religious affiliation, nor in more secular ones. Participants' stories unveiled that no evidence of LGBTIQ+ realities was found on posters inside and outside of school, on messages on students' desks, bathrooms, not even the school website or social media profiles. The following excerpt reveals the experience of a teacher who experienced this lack of visibility in her workplace: "I never got to listen to anything on the school radio or see anything on the school's social networks, or on the school billboards. Nothing like that [evidence of LGBTQ realities]" (Xiomara / I1 / Aug 27, 2021).

It is essential to highlight that most participants mentioned having seen some messages or graffiti on the school walls, especially in the bathrooms and on the desks when they were

students or were developing their teaching practices. The vast majority of participants developed their practicum at public institutions, where at some point, they were able to identify messages regarding LGBTIQ+ realities. The excerpt presented here depicts the participant's stance on what is usually found in public schools after having studied her entire academic life in these types of institutions. Therefore, this excerpt accounts for a comprehensive experience since the participant has been embedded within this particular context both as a student and as a student-teacher.

Jane: I studied primary, secondary, and university in public institutions. Regarding primary and secondary school, there was not much that was delved into that topic [LGBTIQ + realities]. When it was done, it was always from the subjects of religion and ethics, and there was a certain rejection to those who are "different" for Colombian education. I didn't know much about it [LGBTIQ+ realities], it was at the university that I was able to realize specific differences that exist in society [...] In the main courtyard or in the basketball court, I saw graffiti made by students with paint or pencil with messages such as "This person is a fairy," and they drew male private parts as it is normally seen in a public school. (I3 / Nov 26, 2021)

As evidenced in the last part of the excerpt, the participant noticed messages that alluded to LGBTIQ+ realities. These messages were negative and reflected a hostile perspective regarding this community. Considering that school walls are also a battleground in which claims for power and identity are confronted (Staiger, 2005). LGBTIQ+ realities are a target for discrimination or a means to confront restricted worldviews through messages or graffiti. In the battle that takes place on the school walls, two main actors can be identified. On the one hand, students use the school walls to express and share messages and to claim their spaces, identities, and power. On the other hand, school administration reclaims these spaces by painting over these unsolicited messages to regain control. This battle between these two main agents is constant and mutually reinforced through contestation, painting, and graffitiing.

Nonetheless, as the participants addressed, in private institutions, this type of imagery may not be as common since, in general, they are equipped with more material means for

surveillance because more resources are allocated to pay for closed-circuit television systems, which enable teachers and administrators to supervise more what students do as suggested by one of the participants of the study "Private institutions have the best watchman, the best security cameras, and totally neat bathrooms" (Rouge, I1 / Aug 28, 2021), who has worked in both contexts at different school levels. Moreover, administrators are more invested in showing an ideal image of their institution in order to attract more possible families interested in enrolling their children in the institution. Therefore, for these commercial reasons, administrators invest in gadgets that contribute to endorsing that ideal image so as to gain more clients.

It is necessary to address that even though some participants did not regard certain messages as hate speech against the entire community, they can lead to stigmatization since LGBTIQ+ realities are seen as deficient and used as an insult. These depictions unveil certain negative attitudes or worldviews toward LGBTIQ+ identities, which are expressed on the school bathroom walls, on students' desks, or in places that teachers or coordinators do not strictly supervise. These visual expressions were not frequent or prominent in the participants' stories since this group of educators did not find or recall seeing evidence of LGBTIQ+ realities being portrayed in their workspaces constantly.

Although the participants regarded that LGBTIQ+ visibility in the official curriculum was almost nonexistent, the data yielded that at the hidden curriculum level, these realities were observed either in a favorable or unfavorable way. Of course, this favorability existed to a lesser extent if compared to the unfavorable stances that most of the participants' stories unveiled regarding their workplaces. In the following theme titled: *The affinity battlefield: The establishment of understanding or clashing relationships* the aspect of the relations established

within the work environment is addressed. That is, the war is taken from the ideological systems reflected in the plans and procedures that were covered in this theme to the battleground.

#### **4.2 Theme 2: The affinity battlefield: The establishment of understanding or clashing relationships with school stakeholders**

The second identified theme reflects the participants' experiences concerning the relationships established with the different members of the school community and the exercised influence of these relations in their workplace perception. The *affinity battlefield* metaphor was chosen because, according to the participants' experiences, the workplace can be understood as a place where the war for recognition and acceptance is fought, as it can be evidenced here "Sometimes for these transformations to be generated in the workplace, one has to talk about it. However, there are certain workspaces that are not prepared to open discussions that allow [LGBTIQ+] teachers to be recognized as professionals" (Teresa Ramos / FG1 / Dec 08, 2021). The term *affinity* in this metaphor involves the social dimension, that is, the relationships built with the different stakeholders, which could be characterized by feelings of closeness, understanding, and embracement of LGBTIQ+ realities or, on the contrary, distance and hostility towards sexual and gender diverse identities.

The second part of the metaphor *battlefield* refers to the fact that these relationships are constantly being challenged and in dispute due to the interplay of attitudes, worldviews, behaviors, and feelings that people overtly and covertly display in relation to the way 'non-normative' identities are understood and projected within the workplace. Hence, the work environment is seen as a place of strife towards LGBTIQ+ identities where stakeholders' stances about these 'non-normative' identities either benefit or hinder how the work climate is perceived and experienced.

It is essential to highlight that sexual and gender diversity is not entirely accepted or rejected within these battlefields since some of the relationships established with stakeholders are based on different levels of safety, support, and trust. In other words, these myriads of relationships co-exist within a given setting. The varied experiences throughout the participants' professional life yielded rich information because they offered multiple accounts based on the diversity of relationships established within the contexts where they have performed professionally.

As Chadsey and Beyer (2001) asserted,

Relationships formed in and around the workplace are dependent not only on the cultural context and the balance of opportunities for work and nonwork social interaction, but also on the social abilities, experience, and interests of the people in the workplace (p. 129).

Bearing the previous in mind, this theme describes the relational aspect that participants' stories unveiled as fundamental throughout the battle for fair and equal treatment and work conditions. Favorable and unfavorable relationships are found within the same workplace, and aspects such as support, trust, damaging discourses, conflicting worldviews, and power positions shape or influence how these relationships are built. The current theme was subdivided into two main groups titled: *Teachers' workplace: A minefield for LGBTIQ+ realities* and *A demilitarized zone for LGBTIQ+ realities: The quest for humanism and the bestowment of inclusion*; names that were given to continue with the war metaphor and represent the somewhat ambivalence relationships among stakeholders.

#### ***4.2.1 Teachers' workplace: A minefield for LGBTIQ+ realities***

During armed conflicts, the clashing bands employ diverse tactics to stop or annihilate the enemy. One of the war tactics is to fill the land with mines to prevent the enemy from advancing and gaining ground that could make them feel that they own the territory. The spaces planted with mines pose a threat creating a sense of danger, which inhibits the target enemy from advancing. Of course, the enemy refers to LGBTIQ+ employees who try to "own" their workplaces and feel at home, so they can thrive in what they do.

Therefore, a *minefield for LGBTIQ+ realities* represents the workplace as an area that appears to be safe for sexual and gender diverse stakeholders. However, it contains 'bombs', which have been planted to keep them camouflaged, making people assume they are "safe" zones. Unfortunately, these "safe" workplaces jeopardize sexuality and gender issues because these realities are perceived as a sensitive topic, which is stigmatized and discriminated against by the stakeholders who hid these war artifacts. The *bombs* here are understood as damaging relationships among stakeholders based on harmful attitudes, actions, and worldviews that create a toxic and disadvantageous work environment.

Within the work environments, the 'bombs' pose a danger for those who either identify as LGBTIQ+ or who are supportive of these realities because these troubling, unsafe, and unsupportive interactions lead to LGBTIQ+ educators experiencing dissonance and discrimination (Lee, 2019; Smith et al., 2008). Unfortunately, these bombs hamper LGBTIQ+ educators and configure the way they behave in the workplace in order to align with what is perceived as acceptable by these discrepant stakeholders.

Both LGBTIQ+ and heterosexual participants experienced or witnessed homophobic diatribes within their workplaces. During interactions with stakeholders, some administrators,

teachers, and students directly attacked LGBTIQ+ realities. However, certain attitudes seemed more hostile than others. The following two excerpts reveal two different forms of discrimination through a speech by co-workers and students.

Rouge: Co-workers questioned why I didn't have a boyfriend. I tried to avoid them by saying that I didn't have time because of my master's studies and work. Although several times they mentioned that friends close to them had turned out to be lesbians and that was "a disgusting thing!" It was complex to refer to the subject in that work environment, knowing about their homophobic reactions. Additionally, at that time, my partner, who was living in another city, called me, and if I was at work, I did not answer to avoid questions. (N1 / Jul 23, 2021)

Gemini: Three students, maybe seventh-graders, who were on the stairs of building A, called me a fagot, also using the expression "pártete galleta" which is well known in schools to make fun of kids who express themselves in a more subtle or delicate way. (N1/Jul 11, 2021)

Both participants experienced forms of discrimination despite being embedded in different school settings in different regions. Rouge who self-identifies as lesbian, yet still feels this label does not fully reflect what she feels, has worked in diverse institutions of diverse nature. The second participant identifies as homosexual and his working experience has been less numerous, but meaningful still. Evidently, in the first excerpt, the participant was indirectly discriminated against because her colleagues were not aware of her sexuality, yet their comments reflected negative conceptions towards people with 'non-normative' sexual or gender identities. Additionally, this type of speech led the participant not to feel comfortable in her workplace forcing her to hide the fact that she had a partner so as to avoid negative comments. The second excerpt uncovers students' homophobic and discriminatory diatribes towards LGBTIQ+ identities. Furthermore, stigma is also evidenced, considering that the participant had never seen or taught these students before; therefore, they assumed his sexuality based on his gender expression.

These findings coincide with Wright and Smith's (2015) study in which the authors identified that almost all sexually diverse educators in the United States heard homophobic comments and demeaning language about their identities. In these authors' research, the highest



percentage of verbal aggression towards educators' identities was expressed by students.

However, in the current research, the data yielded that most of the students' negative discourses were directed at their classmates, given that LGBTIQ+ teachers tended not to openly address their sexuality with students (an issue that will be explored more in-depth in the next subtheme). This situation also affected the workplace by making it less conducive to LGBTIQ+ individuals since discriminatory behaviors emerged even though teachers were not the main target of these attacks.

Another bomb related to the different relationships among stakeholders was the influence of conservative and religious perspectives regarding LGBTIQ+ identities that arose during daily interactions. The participants' stories unmasked that when stakeholders' worldviews are linked to religion or conservative ways of understanding the world, the type of relationship established with school community members and how LGBTIQ+ realities are experienced in the workplace is affected. The following excerpt presents a story in which an LGBTIQ+ participant from Cali perceived religion as a burden when trying to connect with her peers whose religious worldviews disapprove of sexual and gender identities.

Emily: There are people who believe in God and live and follow God's rules. I don't interact much with those people. I try to keep my distance [people who have a marked religious affiliation within the workplace] because typically negative comments will be expressed and that will make me feel uncomfortable, and I'm the typical teacher who won't remain silent. (I1 / Sep 09, 2021)

Stakeholders' religious worldviews influence the way LGBTIQ+ individuals may interact with these people as evidenced above. Therefore, as the excerpt revealed, there is a certain predisposition towards establishing bonds with school community members to avoid being discriminated against and to preserve a healthy workplace environment. Due to the norms of certain religious groups, people develop individual prejudices that do not approve of the existence of LGBTIQ+ identities (Hopwood & Connors, 2002). Sadly, some participants' stories

showed that due to their colleagues' religious and traditional worldviews, they have been discriminated against or witnessed discriminatory situations. Unfortunately, religious and conservative influence and stigmatization is a persistent difficulty in accepting and respecting LGBTIQ+ realities as Francis and Reygan's (2016) study proved. The researchers found that participants disapproved of homosexuality because of religious condemnation, which was commonly associated with alcohol, drug consumption, and orgies. As the researchers addressed and as it was evidenced in the current research, religious individuals perceive LGBTIQ+ realities as anomalous and immoral, undermining the workplace environment.

Within rural or highly conservative and chauvinistic regions, discrimination against LGBTIQ+ realities is persistent due to institutional and social homophobia (Lamontagne et al., 2018) as found in this research. Institutional homophobia hinders LGBTIQ+ participants because it fosters discrimination by the inclusion of rules or the lack of them that lead to an approval or at least no penalization of homophobic attitudes, as evidenced in the previous theme. Social homophobia occurs when societal norms are based on moral, religious, and cultural conduct and ideologies translated into the diversity of settings where individuals interact, as shown in the relationships established by the participants with the different stakeholders.

Another issue that participants' experiences accounted as a 'bomb' within the workplace is the distant relationships with administrators and the disregard exercised by them despite their power positions. In other words, the participants' stories unveiled not being able to establish strong bonds with these power figures due to the distance they kept with subordinates and the negligence and carelessness they showed when LGBTIQ+ discrimination arose. The participants reported that administrators either directly attacked LGBTIQ+ individuals verbally and showed disapproving attitudes towards them or made these realities invisible and did not intervene when

hostility from other stakeholders manifested. The following excerpt reveals a participant's concern regarding his school directors' lack of intervention to preserve a conducive workplace climate when two coworkers started arguing. As described by the participant, one of those involved used derogatory terms that allude to his coworker's lack of 'manhood' as a consequence of his sexual orientation according to the aggressor.

Camilo: What worries me the most is that there was no reprimand, at least in a general way, by any of the directors [for a confrontation between two teachers via the WhatsApp group]. I know that from the tacit point of view, the fact that all directors are made up of women is a very strong message towards the empowerment that today more than ever needs the role of femininity, but I think that not wanting to say that one thing has to do with the other but saying that it was not right that any of the directors asked either party to apologize for affecting the work environment. I see an omission there. It is tacit, the negative message that is given is that disrespect for otherness is allowed. (N1 / Aug. 08, 2021)

As evidenced, directors' passivity and idleness affected the participant's perception of his workplace. Unfortunately, this omission could have also affected students and teachers since no direct intervention against discriminatory practices might have resulted in other school community members understanding that these actions and attitudes are acceptable and permitted within the institution. As Phoenix et al. (2006) and Wright and Smith's (2013) studies showed, school principals did not discuss LGBTIQ+ issues, and their attitudes and behaviors caused LGBTIQ+ educators to feel at risk because this lack of visibility and intervention could send a message that victimizing behaviors were tolerated.

Finally, the power relations exercised within the workplace also comprise the parents and their influence at school. Sometimes, this group defies the acceptance of LGBTIQ+ realities in the work settings, mainly within private institutions because these schools depend on the monthly installment that is charged for students' education. Both LGBTIQ+ and heterosexual participants pinpointed that parents' traditional perspectives about LGBTIQ+ realities limited the acceptance of diverse sexualities and gender identities. The following excerpt reveals one

parent's perspective as narrated by Jane, the coordinator, in regard to addressing LGBTIQ+ issues in a classroom where there is a student who identifies as transsexual.

Jane: I have noticed that when these topics are discussed with the students, there are reactions from the parents like "that's not the children's business, they should not discuss it. God created man and woman, and that's it". I have perceived such comments. (12 / Oct 21, 2021)

The excerpt above proves that parents' reactions towards LGBTIQ+ realities seek to bury sexual and gender-diverse realities. Alas, schools tend to adopt these invisibilizing parents' demands because, as some participants expressed, sometimes parents have issues with their children being educated by LGBTIQ+ teachers.

Evidently, participants experienced their workplace as a minefield where LGBTIQ+ identities were at risk because of different bombs that responded to heteronormative, religious, and conservative worldviews. Nevertheless, the data yielded that some workplaces were perceived as more conducive to these 'non-normative' identities. In the following subtheme, these spaces are addressed and the interplay of different elements that contribute to this rather positive perspective of the workplace is described.

#### ***4.2.2 A demilitarized zone for LGBTIQ+ realities: The quest for humanism and the bestowment of inclusion***

During an armed conflict, the parties in dispute battle against each other to prove their superiority, take control over terrain, or defend their ideologies during transition periods. These battles occur in particular areas where the conflicting forces fight against one another. Nonetheless, there are specific spaces where violence is not allowed; therefore, they are free of war threats. These spaces or areas are known as *demilitarized zones*.

In this metaphor, the term *demilitarized zone* for LGBTIQ+ realities refers to the workplace environments where the relationships established with stakeholders do not portray

negative attitudes, conservative and heteronormative worldviews, and acts of hostility against LGBTIQ+ realities. Instead, the demilitarized zones are characterized by relationships founded on more progressive worldviews, supportive and trusting connections, the search for humaneness, and the ‘gift’ of inclusion. The latter element was perceived by the straight participants as something that was given instead of something that was deserved. As in real-life armed conflicts, these demilitarized zones are scarcer; for that reason, LGBTIQ+ people are more commonly embedded within hostile workspaces, a topic discussed in the previous section.

The following excerpt reveals a harmonious relationship established by a participant whose professional life in Neiva has been varied and rich in spite of the short time he has been working as a teacher. Within the three institutions where the participant has worked, various understandings of LGBTIQ+ realities and relationships have been witnessed and experienced; however, this excerpt attests to a supportive relationship developed with a school administrator.

Ícaro: I always seemed to like her very much. There was always that closeness with her. I told her about it [sexuality] one day when we went out to a party with the other teachers. I told her about it and she reacted super normal. I feel that she did change, but for the better, she opened up a little more with me. She shared with me some things about her love life. It was kind of cool. (I1 / Aug 28, 2021)

As evidenced, the administrator did not have any problem with this aspect of the participant's life and made him feel safe and supported, leading to a friendly relationship inside and outside the school setting. As Chadsey and Beyer (2001) asserted, close social relationships are linked to positive outcomes such as happiness and less stress, which could be the product of, namely, non-work-related interactions because they solidify social relationships or friendships with coworkers on the basis of discovering common interests and sharing intimate details, as it was reflected in the first excerpt.

It is essential to highlight that the types of relationships established by the heterosexual and LGBTIQ+ participants with sexual and gender diverse individuals were shaped by the

influence of sexuality and gender identity labels within their workspaces. Interestingly, the relationships developed by heterosexual participants with stakeholders differed from those described by LGBTIQ+ participants, given that heterosexuality is not a sexual orientation that is subjected to prejudices rooted in beliefs and traditions of society (Subhrajit, 2014). Bearing this in mind, the heterosexuals' experiences were not permeated by what identifying as a sexually diverse individual entails, that is, being seen as a minority group whose attitudes and behaviors may be shaped to fit in rigid heteronormative school environments so as to thrive in them.

On the one hand, the LGBTIQ+ participants' stories yielded that the relationships this group built at work were characterized by a sense of freedom, affinity and trust, and protection of their 'non-normative' identities. All the previous elements revealed that sexually diverse participants in the workplace were in search of stakeholders' openness to LGBTIQ+ spaces and perspectives that could lead to humaneness towards these realities. The aforementioned quest was perceived as the fundamental component, which relies on the basis of human welfare that every individual should be conceded.

The first feature of the quest for humanism is the freedom to be their authentic self throughout the interactions and relations established by LGBTIQ+ participants with the rest of the school community members. Interestingly, in this research, the workplaces that allowed participants to enjoy this sense of freedom were mainly public schools and language institutes that enforced in their policies the inclusion and respect towards members of any minority. The situation above described can be evidenced in the following excerpt by Gemini, a self-identified homosexual participant who claimed to have worked in different language institutes where he felt respected and recognized as a valuable member whose professional life was prioritized over sexuality labels.

In my job, during the training process, it was mentioned that people were accepted regardless of their gender identities, their sexual orientation, and their race. And in practice, it is like that. Beyond your sexual orientation or gender identity, the most important thing is that you fulfill your role as a teacher, so I have felt respected, and I have not had to hide in any way. (FG2 / Dec 11, 2021)

The sense of freedom described by the participant enabled him to base on and solidify his relationships with colleagues as more honest and conducive since sexuality and gender diversity were embraced from the beginning and it was not trivialized or overemphasized by stakeholders who coexisted within the workplace. Furthermore, the interactions perceived or experienced by the participant proved to be stigma-free because they were characterized by keeping respectful and tolerant attitudes and accepting worldviews regarding LGBTIQ+ identities and other aspects such as racial features. It is necessary to highlight that this sense of freedom was not common across all sexual diverse individuals and contexts where participants worked due to the schools' nature. In private institutions, this sense of freedom was not particular because more restrictions inhibit LGBTIQ+ individuals from being their authentic selves, which unveils that institutional policies not only inform the educational processes that occur within the institution, as addressed in the first theme, but the way people behave and the type of relationships they manage to establish with stakeholders. Finding that coincides with the research developed by Ferfolja and Stavrou (2015), who found that in Australia, LGBTIQ+ visibility was more prevalent in public schools and less restrictive in comparison to private ones. The excerpt above reflects the story of a participant within a language institute, a place more likely to be perceived as a demilitarized zone followed by public schools.

The second and third features of these no militarized zones from the LGBTIQ+ participants' perspectives were the aspects of affinity and trust and the search for protection. The data gathered yielded those sexual and gender diverse individuals established deeper connections with school community members whose worldviews were more progressive, whom they could

trust and feel protected by. The following excerpt unveils the way a participant felt protected from the beginning enabling them to trust an administrator who showed a respectful and supportive attitude.

Teresa Ramos: The vice-principal hired me, and I felt very good with her at that moment. To be honest, I felt that somehow, she was like my defender while she worked there. I remember something she told me during the interview: "I see that you are, and if you allow me, very feminine with your gestures, and I have no problem with that, but I would like to know how you would deal with this situation? because we know that we are in a private school where some parents can complain about that." (I1 /Sep 09, 2021)

The administrator's openness towards the participant's sexuality encouraged the development of a trusting relationship that validated the participant's sexuality within the workplace and safeguarded their existence therein. Interestingly, LGBTIQ+ educators may feel it is imperative to develop cautious and strained relationships with administrators, colleagues, students, and students' parents in order to avoid being discriminated against or even losing their job (Bizjak, 2017; Ford 2016). Nonetheless, as the experience revealed, fear of disclosing sexual orientation can be overcome as soon as LGBTIQ+ individuals are able to recognize those stakeholders whose standpoints and attitudes about 'non-normative' sexual and gender identities are accepting and respectful. Additionally, the available literature highlights that administrative support and protection are often exalted as fundamental aspects towards the recognition of LGBTIQ+ sexualities within educational contexts (Wright et al., 2015).

On the other hand, the heterosexual participants' experiences were characterized by a feeling of conferring inclusion to LGBTIQ+ individuals; that is, the relations and connections unveiled a sense of acceptance for LGBTIQ+ individuals as something offered as a gift. Although the gift of inclusion provided by heterosexual people to sexual and gender diverse individuals may reflect a narrower understanding of LGBTIQ+ identities, the participants seemed not to be aware of this structure of understanding that conceives sexual and gender-



diverse individuals as deviant who needed to be included instead of individuals who had the right to be part and experience the work environment as any other stakeholder.

Despite the fact that this conceded inclusion and acceptance may be permeated by somewhat harmful understandings, it may be a price that some LGBTIQ+ individuals are willing to accept in order to feel supported and recognized within the workspaces. The bestowed features that heterosexual participants' stories unveiled were grouped into respect and tolerance, and camaraderie, which sought to make the workplace a space free of war threats for LGBTIQ+ individuals. The following excerpt depicts how these elements are portrayed in the relationship established by a participant and her homosexual colleague who initially felt the need to hide his sexuality considering the school's religious affiliation.

Jane: Two months later Juan approaches me, but in a friendly way because Juan and I had created a kind of friendship beyond the work environment, then Juan tells me that he is a homosexual person, that he has a partner, and that this partner is not precisely a woman [...] So I told him that he was not going to receive any type of rejection from me because he is a person totally free to feel, to be, to identify himself as he wants. (N1 / June 30, 2021)

This excerpt reveals that granting amicable relationships with LGBTIQ+ individuals and respecting and tolerating their identity enables them to feel more comfortable within the workplace. During the two months, the heterosexual participant must have displayed a positive attitude and behavior towards this minority, encouraging the homosexual colleague to disclose his sexuality overcoming an initial burden built due to distrust. As Ford's (2016) research proved, honesty is a significant component in dismantling systems of oppression and discrimination.

Nevertheless, the data also yielded that individuals' performance determined the way stakeholders perceived teachers; thus, respect and tolerance were granted to LGBTIQ+ educators as long as they performed accordingly to what was expected by the school administration. Hence, the existing tolerance in some of the participants' contexts could be described as Røthing (2008) claimed 'homotolerance', which means that heterosexual people understand LGBTIQ+

identities as almost "normal" or close to it. Of course, accepting a person based on how straight he or she acts does not assure LGBTIQ+ acceptance since an important part of the individual is being discounted; thus, all the richness of what LGBTIQ+ identities can provide to the workplace is not wanted either granted. In the following section, participants' actions are assessed and grouped into two subthemes that describe supportive and hindering behaviors.

#### **4.3 Troops' actions: Overt and covert advocacy of LGBTIQ+ realities and the benighted and heteronormative stance**

Winning an armed conflict implies more than recognizing the ideological stances behind the war, the influence of these ideologies on the war plan, and recognizing the battleground where this conflict takes place. It is also necessary to understand the actors and their actions framed in their contexts and in relation to the other groups that participate in the battle. The metaphor of *troops' actions* was chosen to continue alluding to the different elements of an armed conflict as a powerful simile to discuss findings.

In armed conflicts, a troop is a group of military personnel or military subunit of an armed force subordinated to a squadron, whose mission is to deploy, fight and win wars. In this research report, troops referred to the two factions to which the participants belonged; that is, the band of supporters and advocates of sexual and gender diversity, and the band of opponents whose actions and attitudes hamper the recognition and acceptance of LGBTIQ+ individuals within the work environment. As Huffman et al. (2008) highlighted, sexual and gender diverse individuals encounter unique work situations due to their identity, such as social rejection and isolation, which can be mitigated by the actions of others who support and accept these realities. Hence, stakeholders can act as agents of change who contribute to stopping the reproduction of heterosexism and homophobia, which are usually the dominant worldviews that are mirrored and

reproduced in the educational settings (Bedford, 2002). Nevertheless, it is worth highlighting that in the current study the participants adopted one role or the other depending on the battlefield they were in. Thus, the current theme reflects the participants' experiences concerning how they acted and the attitudes they adopted in their particular workplaces regarding LGBTIQ+ issues.

The *troops* in this study were grouped based on the supportive and opposing behaviors shown regarding sexual and gender-diverse individuals. These behaviors were classified into overt and covert inclusive behaviors and benighted and heteronormative behaviors. Therefore, the former related to the participants' explicit and implicit ways of advocating and promoting respect and inclusion for LGBTIQ+ individuals, and the latter referred to the acts that promoted stigma and the perpetuation of heteronormativity that ended up protecting the institution's terrain and worldviews from the 'invasion' of LGBTIQ+ realities.

The participants' stories unveiled their distinct ways of acting in relation to LGBTIQ+ realities within the workplace. As a result, two subthemes emerged, and they were labeled as follows: *Stakeholders as Blue helmets: Addressing or hinting LGBTIQ+ identities* and *Acting as Berzerkers: The inadvertent attack against LGBTIQ+ identities and the perpetuation of heteronormativity*. Interestingly, within these subthemes, the experiences gathered showed that both groups of participants acted in particular ways based on their sexual orientation and the contexts in which they were embedded. Thus, the actions of these two groups of participants will be addressed within each subtheme.

#### ***4.3.1 Stakeholders as Blue helmets: Addressing or hinting LGBTIQ+ identities***

During military confrontations, various parties are directly or indirectly tied to the armed conflict being held. One of the parties involved in war is *Blue helmets*, which are United Nations military personnel in charge of safeguarding people injured during combat. This group seeks to

protect individuals' fundamental rights during armed conflicts by promoting stability, security, and peace processes. In this report, the metaphor *blue helmets* was selected to represent those participants whose actions inside and outside the classroom aim to protect LGBTIQ+ individuals and promote respect and the inclusion of these diverse identities within the workplace environment.

The second part of the metaphor *addressing or hinting* relates to the participants' overt and covert actions regarding LGBTIQ+ realities within the workplace. Addressing here is understood as participants' openness to include and discuss the issue of LGBTIQ+ realities within the school environment and with the different stakeholders that are part of it. Explicit behaviors and discourses that tackled sexual and gender diversity were grouped under this heading. Conversely, hinting refers to the participants' apprehension to explicitly include the topic of LGBTIQ+ realities in class or outside the classroom during daily interactions with school community members.

Concerning the overt actions, they allude to the explicit and open efforts undertaken by both groups of participants to command respect and foster the recognition of LGBTIQ+ realities, referring directly to the community within their classroom practices and interactions outside the class. The data yielded that LGBTIQ+ participants had a more active role in implementing projects, opening spaces for artistic expression, and fostering dialogue; acts that dovetailed their academic and personal agendas about the LGBTIQ+ community. The following excerpt describes how a participant who identifies as homosexual encouraged the inclusion and acceptance of sexual and gender diverse individuals inside the classroom at a public secondary school through a series of workshops that focused on discrimination, identity, and diversity.

Gemini: Along with the classes, I was also working on a project to talk about heteronormativity, that is, how to deconstruct heteronormativity in the classroom, specifically in English, and well, I did that through workshops that had different purposes. There were three specific purposes, the first was to talk about

discrimination, the second was to talk about identity, and the third was to talk about diversity. (N1 / Jul 07, 2021)

As evidenced, the participant's personal agenda regarding gender roles and sexualities merged into the academic field, leading to a project that sought to raise students' awareness on the topic of heteronormativity and how to deconstruct it while fostering dialogue and discussion in the classroom. Sexual and gender diverse teachers can use their own identities and experiences to contribute to classroom discussion, and the project works being implemented, however, fear of including sexuality and gender diversity issues is still reported because this group does not want to be perceived as advancing a personal agenda (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009). The participant's advocacy described above was not an institutional initiative since it emerged from the participant's own decision to tackle this reality, especially considering that, during his undergraduate program, he had received formal instruction on the topic of social justice which relates to sexual and gender diversity and other minority groups that are victims of oppression and inequality. Therefore, apart from framing the project on LGBTIQ+ realities, issues related to the role of women in society and aspects related to gender constructs were also included; fundamental aspects to shape students' restrictive sexual and gender role conceptions by acknowledging the full range of identities and relationships that heteronormativity fails to consider since it only positions heterosexuality as natural and acceptable (Thompson, 2017).

When inquired about the impact of the project that the participant decided to implement, he addressed that due to the short time he was there he was not able to witness great change in the institution. However, the participant felt like at least he opened the door to start discussing in the classroom sexual and gender issues and topics related to minorities that are usually overlooked. As asserted by the participants and as research has proved, educational experiences that advocate for sexuality and gender identities raise awareness and may foster acceptance and

inclusion of this minority by enabling students to disrupt negative perceptions and to (re)construct new understandings of the issue of LGBTIQ+ realities (Ayala-Bonilla & Barón-Gómez, 2019; Helmer, 2016). Moreover, approving and endorsing discussion and artistic expressions on classroom walls about sexual and gender diversity realities, becomes a “means for political mobilization” (Turner, 1990 as cited in Staiger 2005, p. 559), given the capacity to make realities visible and the capacity to express multiple identifications, worldviews, and political agendas within these spaces.

Interestingly, heterosexual participants in the study did not explicitly advocate for sexual and gender diversities through classroom projects or activities as much as the LGBTIQ+ participants did. This tendency is evidenced in the next excerpt of a participant from Risaralda who, despite not working in a highly religious or somewhat restrictive institution, felt he was falling short in addressing the issue of LGBTIQ+ realities.

Camilo: Within my role as a teacher, I almost always try to put a social touch in my classes, and lately, the social touches have been given based on the 17 objectives of the United Nations. One of the objectives is gender equality, and that is where the list of gender recognition also begins, so, from that part, I could be a little more active, but I do recognize myself as a person who could do more. (12 / Sep 03, 2021)

As evidenced, this group of participants also attempted to open up spaces for dialogue, however, these spaces were less common even though they were aware of the importance and impact of these initiatives on the general school environment. As asserted by Brooks and Edwards (2009), heterosexual allies play a meaningful role in the workplace and they are highly valued by their LGBTIQ+ colleagues given that the former group not only provides interpersonal support to sexual and gender-diverse colleagues, but they advocate for this minority by confronting discrimination through social action, subtle organizational maneuvering, and speaking out against prejudiced language and behaviors. Speaking out against prejudice was an initiative that arose among the heterosexual sample of the study, nevertheless, this initiative

focused more on their colleagues, as can be evidenced in the following excerpt, which depicts the way one heterosexual participant who, from her position of power as the academic coordinator, invited teachers to address sexual and gender diversity in the classroom instead of avoiding these realities.

Jane: From my position, I mentioned to the teachers that the solution is not avoiding these topics [LGBTIQ+ identities in the classroom] because these are topics that are being seen in the real world; thus, they are part of our reality. These topics are the reality of some students. However, we have to be impartial both for students who already have a construct of what identity or sexual orientation is and for students who are perhaps discovering it (I3 /Nov 26, 2021)

During the interview, this participant, who initially worked as an English teacher and then became the academic coordinator, addressed that in her initial position, she never felt secure enough to advocate for LGBTIQ+ realities and speak up against conservative worldviews that were common within the school. However, after becoming the academic coordinator and getting more involved in the diverse administrative processes in the institution she felt able to manifest against the conservative and stigmatizing worldviews regarding sexual and gender-diverse people, which were constantly being reinforced in the religious ceremonies, meetings, or speeches at school. The previously described anecdote proves that being in an administrative position becomes a high responsibility and provides more leverage to start advocating more openly for personal agendas. A situation that was also reflected in Hancock et al.'s (2006) study, which unveiled that teachers aiming at an administrative role are motivated by their desire to make a difference and their ability to initiate change, that is, their altruism. Nonetheless, despite the overt advocacy of the participant prompting her colleagues to be more open to these realities in the classroom, she also suggested taking careful and somewhat covert actions so as to avoid having problems with the religious parents, proving once again that religiosity can hamper the decisions to take an equity-minded approach to support LGBTQ students (Marshall & Hernandez, 2013).

Another important aspect related to overt actions that LGBTIQ+ and heterosexual participants shared was their willingness to confront individuals with exclusionary and discriminatory stances. The data unveiled that sometimes participants protested against physical, verbal aggression when LGBTIQ+ realities were targeted. However, these contestations did not occur when the attacks came from power figures such as administrators and parents. The following excerpt portrays how a participant confronted a student whose reaction to a homosexual couple at school unsettled the rest of the group and was inadvertently encouraging his classmates to react in the same way.

Participant P: Last week, a first-grade boy who is around seven years old saw a high school couple, two men showing affection, not kissing, but they are actually a couple. [...] the boy came to the classroom scared, telling the teachers and his classmates, "guys, those two guys over there are gay. When I tell my parents, they are going to be astonished". The Math teacher and we talked to him. We asked him, "what does gay mean to you?" and explained that there was nothing bad about being gay. (I2 / Nov 13, 2021)

Evidently, heterosexual teachers can also advocate for LGBTIQ+ realities by raising awareness and trying to challenge homophobic thoughts that students learned at home or in their immediate contexts. Despite some of the participants mentioning not feeling sufficiently prepared to address LGBTIQ+ issues, which aligns with the findings reported by Allan et al. (2008) and DePalma and Atkinson (2009), in this case, the participant did not remain silent against the discriminatory discourse of the student despite his young age. Students' age proved to be a complex issue in this research considering that most of the participants addressed that discussing this type of topic with younger learners is complex and somehow inappropriate given that at this age, students have not developed their mental capacity to comprehend the issue of their own and others' sexual and gender identity.

Sadly, discriminatory attitudes targeting LGBTIQ+ individuals have also been reported in different countries (DePalma & Jennett, 2019; Shin, 2019). Although some societies may be perceived as more accepting of sexual and gender minorities, studies like the one conducted by



Shin (2019) have proved that this acceptance relies upon a superficial level, which means that negative attitudes are still experienced. Therefore, it is clear that teachers who attempt to advocate for LGBTIQ+ realities within the workplace, face challenges because of societal ignorance, fear, stigma, and the power exercised by other high-ranking individuals at school.

On the other hand, throughout the study, both LGBTIQ+ and heterosexual participants' stories unveiled covert actions that sought to advocate for sexual and gender diversity in the workplace. That is, covert actions allude to those hidden or implicit acts that the two groups of participants undertook so as to promote respect and acceptance of sexual and gender minorities without directly referencing the community. To do so, the participants' teaching practices fostered conducive spaces for every student who may differentiate from the rest of the class due to physical and psychological features or ideological stances or worldviews. The following excerpt portrays how an LGBTIQ+ participant sought to grant safe spaces for students inside her classes. The participant's story depicts her perception of the educational material she designed or adapted, which implicitly promoted accepting and inclusive practices among students.

Rouge: I sometimes tell them, "Well, we are going to be global citizens. We need empathy" from there, I tackle my class. I like to take things that can resignify us as human beings, and the advantage is that the material I use sends little 'subliminal' messages. (I2 / Nov 14, 2021)

Evidently, the material can implicitly encourage diversity, shaping students' perspectives about LGBTIQ+ realities since ELT materials, especially contextualized materials, have the power to transform the educational experience by fostering spaces of social construction, as highlighted by Núñez and Téllez (2018) and Vásquez-Guarnizo (2020). The data yielded that those participants who advocated for LGBTIQ+ individuals through their educational material were embedded in less restrictive institutions such as public schools or universities, which enabled them to feel safer advocating for LGBTIQ+ realities. Nevertheless, it was found that participants remained watchful of exhibiting biased personal agendas that over-favor LGBTIQ+

identities or unfounded and adverse notions of sexual and gender diversity that could be detrimental to the workplace environment, which was the case of the participant above.

Conversely, participants were mainly embedded in restrictive institutions that tacitly promoted respect for sexual and gender diversity through their discourse. The participants asserted that these discourses were framed within teachable moments, that is, “situations where an opportunity was presented that related to a socially just or unjust circumstance they felt needed to be explicitly addressed” (Walton-Fisette & Sutherland, 2018, p. 503).

Furthermore, some participants highlighted promoting respect for sexual and gender-diverse individuals during their interactions with colleagues and not only in the classroom. In the case of the LGBTIQ+ participants, although at times they did not feel safe within their workplace environments, their comments during specific conversations informed the interlocutors of their positionality without actually having to address their own sexuality, as evidenced in this excerpt:

Emily: If I am in an academic space with colleagues and the topic of diversity is addressed, even if I do not say "I am sexually diverse", my position is very telling and makes it very clear the comments I agree or disagree on. So, if someone was going to say an inappropriate comment or an improper position, they immediately save their comment because my position is very firm. (12 / Nov 17, 2021)

Overt advocacy for LGBTIQ+ identities during interactions with colleagues was displayed. In spite of not being able to discuss her sexuality, Emily still encouraged respect for sexual and gender diversity. Nevertheless, this advocacy was vigilant since tackling issues related to sexuality and gender identity "may position teachers in tension with expectations of teacher neutrality" (Conrad, 2020, p. 212). In other words, educators are expected not to say or do anything that would encourage or support any of the worldviews in the argument or war of sexuality and gender diversity in the workplace.

In the case of heterosexual participants, they also addressed advocating for LGBTIQ+ individuals within their workplace during their interactions with colleagues. However, in this

case, their covert actions did not emphasize or discuss their colleagues' sexuality during their conversations. Instead, they focused on topics related to the professional field or sharing aspects such as likes and dislikes. The following excerpt depicts the situation described above.

Colombia: I think my attitude was positive, I mean treating the gay person, in this case, Andrés, normally, without emphasizing their sexual orientation. For example, when we meet a gay person, sometimes the first thing we ask is why he is gay, and it kind of surprises us. I think this helps to stigmatize. If, on the contrary, I talk to him about issues that include both of us as professionals within a job, without emphasizing his orientation but rather other issues, I think it is a way to start making the other person feel good, that we are not going to go directly to his sexual orientation, but to share with him in a very normal way as we would with a straight person. (I3 / Nov 10, 2021)

As described before, the participants' experiences accounted for two different conceptions, understandings, and ways of treating these realities. Overt and covert actions advocating for sexual and gender diversity were discussed. In the case of LGBTIQ+ participants, they were more proactive in this regard inside and outside of the classroom during interactions with students and teachers, and heterosexual participants' advocacy was more passive and implicit. In the following subtheme, those participants' actions that proved to be detrimental to the school environment in regards to LGBTIQ+ identities are explored.

#### ***4.3.2 Acting as Berserkers: The inadvertent attack against LGBTIQ+ identities and the perpetuation of heteronormativity***

The metaphor *berserker* was chosen to represent those participants' actions that may not have contributed to fostering the acceptance and inclusion of sexual and gender-diverse individuals in their workplaces. The term *berserker* comes from the Old Norse and refers to a group of warriors who fought in a trance-like fury. In the current research report, the *trance-like fury* relates to the state of being so deeply absorbed in thought about something as to be unaware of anything else. Therefore, some of the participants' ways of acting and worldviews regarding LGBTIQ+ realities were connected to the nescience of the fact that by growing up in a

heteronormative society, multiple notions are learned unconsciously. That is, multiple ways of conceiving or understanding the world have been acquired as a result of interactions and observation processes that are established as the norm or correct by heteronormative standards.

Although in Old Norse *berserkers* are described as furiously violent, the data yielded that participants never provoked or took part in extreme barbarous physical or verbal aggression in the current study. Thus, the metaphor was chosen so as to refer to the participants who, due to the trance state, showed or encouraged unfavorable attitudes and behaviors towards LGBTIQ+ individuals. The worldviews and actions that the participants portrayed represented the second part of the metaphor related to the *inadvertent attacks* and the *perpetuation of heteronormativity* that were a consequence of growing up or being embedded in a conservative country with traditional ways of understanding the ‘non-normative’ identities.

The following excerpts depict the way a female and a male heterosexual teacher discriminated against LGBTIQ+ stakeholders within their working contexts. The first excerpt reflects how the female teacher during one of her classes teaching pronouns disregarded the sexuality of an alleged gender nonconforming student as addressed by another student. The second excerpt portrays how the male teacher tended to joke about one of the teacher’s sexuality during interactions with his colleagues after an incident during a teacher’s activity, in which the homosexual teacher presumably got drunk and flirted with a teacher’s husband.

Xiomara: Once, we were studying personal pronouns, and a student said, "teacher, she's making noise," and I replied, "what do you mean by 'she'? It's not 'she', he is a 'he'", and the student said, "no, teacher. He recognizes himself as a 'she'". I found that funny. I replied, "so keep calling him a 'she', but he is a man [laughs]". (I2 / Oct 19, 2021)

Colombia: The topic is touched when we make jokes about it. Sometimes I start the jokes about him being gay, but I think it's somehow not so bad. As I say, there is no intention to make him feel bad. [...] It is more like a joke to the teacher. In my case, I did it as a joke to the teacher. I directly told her, "He is going to take away your husband". That was the phrase that started it all. (I3 / Nov 10, 2021)

Even though both participants throughout the data collection process mentioned advocating for sexual and gender diverse individuals in their professional and personal contexts, some of the shared stories depicted stigmatizing worldviews, which were translated into negative actions against LGBTIQ+ realities. According to Sue et al. (2007), microaggressions comprise microassaults, microinsults, and microinvalidations. The first excerpt consisted of a microinvalidation since the participant invalidated or denied the feelings and experiential reality of the gender and nonconforming student. As for the second excerpt, it constituted a microinsult because it conveyed insensitivity and demeaned his colleague's identity, and reflected unawareness of the consequences caused by these types of practices and comments. LGBTIQ+ microaggressions in the workplace have also been addressed in research studies like the ones conducted by Francis and Reygan (2021) and Galupo and Resnick (2016).

Furthermore, some of the heterosexual participant's stories yielded an avoidance of addressing LGBTIQ+ topics because of fear of being labeled as a member of the community instead of being regarded as just an ally. The previously stated reveals how heteronormativity and stigma also affect educators whose gender expression and way of being do not fit into the 'acceptable' model of what being a man or a woman entails. The following excerpt portrays the situation faced by a heterosexual participant who asserted being stigmatized and labeled as a homosexual person throughout his academic life due to his mannerisms and way of expressing himself.

Camilo: I haven't been able to make it visible, perhaps because I feel like I'm alluded to by that same stigma. It's amusing and curious because anything you do, like 'putting on a scarf in the middle of a class', makes you wonder if they're going to say that I'm metrosexual. Everything one does, seems to make students jump to conclusions. So I feel so self-conscious in some spaces that I don't try to do much. (12/ Sep 03, 2021)

On the other hand, the LGBTIQ+ participants' berserk actions were characterized by a lack of identity disclosure and leadership in regard to sexual and gender diversity, in addition to

a tendency to inadvertently join the oppressor by the adoption of heteronormative worldviews, which justified some discriminatory or exclusionary acts against sexual and gender diverse individuals. As for the previous group, some of these actions resulted from unawareness of how to address their own and others' sexuality or gender diversity within the educational field. Some of the adverse actions described here may be considered mechanisms that LGBTIQ+ participants adopted to endure and survive in their heteronormative workplace environments.

Concerning the lack of disclosure and leadership, it was evidenced that within some contexts, the sexual and gender diverse participants decided not to disclose their sexuality or to address LGBTIQ+ realities inside and outside the classroom. The decision to remain silent and not assume a leadership role was determined by the conduciveness of the context and the perceived job security. Those highly heteronormative and conservative work settings forced LGBTIQ+ participants to conceal part of their identities leading to dissonance (Lee, 2019; Smith et al., 2008). The following excerpt shows how a lesbian participant felt guilty and powerless for not being able to tackle the topic of sexual and gender diversity when homophobic and transphobic issues arose. The participant's inability resulted from her previous experiences within uncondusive places for 'non-normative' identities, which led to her decision to compartmentalize her professional and personal life. As a result, invisibility and the perpetuation of homophobic behaviors and attitudes without contestation were evidenced within these contexts because the participant feared people discovering her sexuality if she advocated for these identities.

Rouge: From there, I observed that there is latent hostility when talking about who you are, so I handle the heterosexual profile without a problem. Suddenly I confess guilt that, to a certain extent, when the subject has been presented at the conversation table with my co-workers, I have seen homophobia transphobia directly. I confess to being a coward because I never did anything to be able to tell him [her boss], "Hey, don't say that. Don't make fun of it like that", but I did have anger in my heart, and I wanted to be able to find the strength to say "don't be so rude". I did it precisely because they are going to say, "why do you defend this?" (...) I confess myself guilty in the sense that I have taken it upon myself to make the matter

invisible, and I make it invisible every time I am not able to defend myself when this type of thing happens in micro-contexts these micro-violences.

As evidenced in the excerpt, the decision of not manifesting against discriminatory discourses and behaviors led to complete concealment of the participant's sexuality and limited acts to avoid being recognized as an LGBTIQ+ individual, perpetuating discrimination and invisibility. Obviously, LGBTIQ+ teachers are not obliged to disclose their sexuality at work since it is a personal decision. Research on sexual and gender disclosure has unveiled that unveiling one's sexuality in the workplace is a complex process that could go from initially adopting a heterosexual profile to finally explicitly or implicitly unveiling one's sexuality at work (Griffin, 1991).

In the current study, some female LGBTIQ+ participants claimed to have adopted a heterosexual profile by sharing their personal stories with the "O" or the "neutral" version. That is, instead of referring to their partners by their actual names, they replaced them with a male version of it [María = Mario] or by using gender-neutral words in Spanish such as "mi amor" and "mi pareja". These mechanisms were adopted within their workplaces in order to be treated as an equal and to thrive without having one of their characteristics emphasized or being discriminated against because of it. Nonetheless, it is fundamental to claim that research has proven that sexual and gender disclosure experiences are varied, including LGBTIQ+ teachers feeling a sense of relief that enables them to serve as role models (Wright & Smith, 2013) or an exacerbation of internal conflict and identity management issues (Neary, 2013).

As for the junction to the oppressor, the LGBTIQ+ participants' stories also unveiled heteronormative notions, which made them validate the oppressor's conceptions and enlist in their group. In this context, the *oppressor* refers to stakeholders and individuals who seem to be invested in making invisible, underrepresenting, and misrepresenting LGBTIQ+ identities in the

workplace. The following excerpt depicts the experience of a participant whose outlook regarding LGBTIQ+ identities reflected an adoption of heteronormativity as a consequence of being embedded in a restrictive context.

Ícaro: I consider that it is a part of me, which does not define me in its entirety. I don't feel comfortable sharing my sexual orientation with my co-workers, with other teachers because, well, my biggest fear is that they have the ideal or the wrong paradigm in their heads that because they are homosexual and a teacher, they will want to attack the integrity of children and adolescents. So to avoid any comment or that they are, as they say, breathing down my neck, I have avoided sharing that part of myself.

This participant joined the oppressor by defending the no disclosure and inclusion of sexuality and gender identity topics at school, justifying the heteronormative understandings that portray these realities as unnatural and problematic, especially when working with children. Unfortunately, heteronormative systems have the potential to make LGBTIQ+ individuals feel as 'other' or 'unnatural' by privileging and promoting cisgenderism and heterosexuality as desirable and contesting and disregarding every other sexual and gender expression (Evrpidou, 2018).

Finally, the data yielded two actions shared by participants of the LGBTIQ+ and heterosexual groups. These actions were common to some participants of both samples and proved to be independent of the sexual orientation and gender identity of the individuals who took part in the study. The first action that both groups shared had to do with making excuses to explain the reason(s) they had not taken action regarding the promotion and acceptance of LGBTIQ+ realities within their work environments and the second one alluded to the participants' tendency to label other stakeholders as sexual or gender diverse based on these individuals' gender expression.

Concerning the first shared action, the culture of excuses, the data yielded that some of the participants when inquired about the inclusion of LGBTIQ+ issues inside and outside the classroom, they asserted not having done it for diverse reasons including students' age, school ideologies, and because they considered it was somebody else's job and not the English teachers'



responsibility. Therefore, extrinsic and intrinsic motivations made these participants believe they were not in charge of advocating for the acceptance and inclusion of these realities within their workspaces. Regarding extrinsic motivation, issues related to the school's religious and philosophical stances, students' age, and parents' intervention and their exercised power at school; were identified as aspects that participants recognized as fundamental to avoid taking action. As for intrinsic motivations, the data revealed that lack of preparation, clashing worldviews, and heteronormative stances were common factors that inhibited participants from taking initiatives that normalize and grant spaces to sexual and gender diverse individuals within their workplaces.

The following excerpt portrays the way extrinsic or intrinsic factors hindered a participant's actions. This excerpt tackles the issue of not feeling well-prepared to include this topic in class and how students' age can prevent teachers from taking a more active role in advocating for LGBTIQ+ rights, leading to the participant's avoidance of these diverse realities in the English class.

Xiomara: You can't talk to children openly about the subject, or there must be a specific way to talk to them because they are very young children and don't have an open mind like high school kids. [...] I'll never find a space to explain sexual orientation to children, that is mostly psychology or natural science, but not in English anymore. I have never seen it as something necessary in my class. (I3 / Nov 25, 2021)

As evidenced in the excerpt, an 'I am not in charge' discourse characterized the participant's response. This answer detailed a lack of preparedness and a sense of defeatism or resignation to never addressing the topic of sexual and gender diversity. Teachers' feelings of unpreparedness or uncertainty have also been reported in studies like the one conducted by Kurian (2020), in which teachers felt ignorant or unsure of LGBTIQ identities, LGBTIQ+ rights, and their responsibilities as teachers. Unfortunately, based on participants' testimonies

concerning their undergraduate programs, in Colombia, teacher training on tackling issues related to sexuality and gender identity is scarce, almost nonexistent.

As for the second shared action, the labeling culture refers to the regular act of trying to assign a sexual or gender category to individuals based on perceived clues, it was identified among both groups. Participants of this study could hardly ever avoid making assumptions and suspending their judgment about other individuals' sexual orientation. Although participants who self-identified as sexual or gender diverse were part of the study, they also tended to label other individuals within their contexts as LGBTIQ+ due to their behavior, mannerisms, interests, or appearance. Both groups' labeling acts unveiled prejudice, discrimination, and oppression, reinforcing heterosexual assumptions about femininity and masculinity. The following excerpt depicts how a heterosexual participant assumed the sexual orientation of a new teacher on the basis of gender expression, an interesting aspect considering that some LGBTIQ+ participants in the study mentioned not having unveiled their sexuality at school but highlighted being labeled as sexually diverse by their peers.

Colombia: I wanted to comment that now a gay teacher has arrived, or these are the comments made. That usually happens, when a teacher arrives, everyone tries to figure out particular behaviors. You start to say, "Is he gay, is he not gay?" to make prejudices that may or may not be wrong, but we always do it. He arrived, and everything was fine, but always when he is not there, we wonder, "Is he gay, is he not?" (I2 / Oct 16, 2021)

The participant's story unveiled normalization towards assuming other individuals' sexual orientation. Unfortunately, despite the fact that the participant's comments were not being directed to the individual whose sexuality was being assumed, he opened the door for more comments and a culture of stigma in which gender expression exclusively corresponds to a restrictive conception of masculine and feminine. These actions lead to conceiving sexuality as a hallway topic, which means that is okay to discuss other individuals' sexuality as long as this person does not find out about it. As Fasoli and Hegarty (2017) highlighted, most people

try to guess others' sexuality on the basis of visual, non-verbal, and vocal cues. Due to heteronormativity, most people are initially assumed as heterosexual by default until the signs mentioned above may lead to a different conception. A binary model assumes that men who are not masculine enough are therefore assumed as gay, or women who do not fit the feminine model are perceived as a lesbian. Unfortunately, this problematic conception or understanding limits and disregards the experiences of those who do not fit into a binary model of sexuality and gender identity (Rosenfeld, 2009), hampering their experiences within these restrictive work environments.

The participants' experiences and perspectives described throughout this chapter unveiled that the issue of sexual and gender-diverse realities is complex since a battle for the recognition and acceptance of these identities takes place in each particular workplace. In the following chapter, I will provide some conclusions and salient implications of this study as well as recommendations for future research considering the limitations of the study too.

## Chapter V. Conclusions

In the next lines, I will start by providing specific answers to the first question that guided the study, which aimed to determine the way a group of Colombian heterosexual and LGBTIQ+ English teachers of private and public educational institutions experience and perceive their workplace environment regarding non-normative sexual and gender identities. The participants' experiences and perspectives revealed that the educational workplace was seen as a heterogeneous space where LGBTIQ+ identities are mainly disregarded at the official level, yet at the experiential level these identities are either confronted or supported based on a series of factors that include personal attitudes, worldviews, and behaviors, and the exercised influence of the school ideologies and policies.

In regards to the invisibility at the official level, it can be stated that the majority of public and private schools neglected the inclusion of LGBTIQ+ issues within their guiding documents. In spite of the international and national demands to embrace diversity in education, some schools seem to opt for invisibilizing practices that overlook these identities ideologically and curricularly. The aforementioned situation namely attends to ideological stances that reflect religious and heteronormative worldviews, which are part of the Colombian conservative culture that is mirrored in the educational settings, hampering the visibility and inclusion of these identities. Nonetheless, as the participants asserted, language institutes seem to be more progressive in this regard, considering that their policies officially addressed and promoted the recognition of sexual and gender-diverse individuals.

As for the experiential level, the workplace can be regarded as a space where sexual and gender diversity is contested or endorsed by the individuals that are part of these educational settings. The interplay of individual factors and the institutional ideologies and policies enacted

within the educational settings can influence the type of relationships stakeholders develop with LGBTIQ+ individuals, thus the way the workplace is perceived. Students, teachers, administrators, parents, and any other member of the school community whose personal stances are heteronormative and religious-based configure the experience LGBTIQ+ teachers can have due to the fact that they tend to hamper the acceptance and confront the existence of this minority group by attacking them directly or indirectly. Conversely, any member of the educational community whose standpoints are more progressive and tolerant offers sexual and gender diverse individuals the opportunity to feel included within their workplace by developing trusting and protective relationships.

On the other hand, as addressed above, institutional ideologies and policies play an essential role in the workplace since they affect the way stakeholders relate. As the participants' stories revealed, institutional ideologies hinder or foster the type of relationship established with LGBTIQ+ members. Institutions that are characterized by restrictive and suppressing ideologies prevent individuals from developing conducive relationships with sexual and gender-diverse individuals since they have to align to what these philosophies determined stopping them from supporting these identities. Within institutions that are more tolerant or less criminalizing of sexual and gender diversity, both groups of educators assert that their relationships are more favorable and conducive since they can advocate more openly for these realities, which leads to the development of stronger relationships. In general, the work environment is seen as a place of strife toward LGBTIQ+ identities where institutional ideologies and policies, and stakeholders' individual stances about sexual and gender diversity either benefit or hinder how the work climate is perceived and experienced by all the members of the school community.

In regard to the second question of the study that referred to the way the participants of the study contributed to promoting acceptance or rejection of LGBTIQ+ realities in their workplace, it can be highlighted that both LGBTIQ+ and heterosexual teachers attempt to advocate for sexual and gender diversity in the workplace within the limitations that their settings present them with. These actions are either explicit or implicit, that is, participants either openly refer to LGBTIQ+ realities during their interactions with stakeholders, or on the contrary, they encourage recognition and respect for all individuals indistinctively of their race, gender, sexuality, or any other differentiating feature. Despite the fact that LGBTIQ+ teachers might experience the workplace as more restricting and less conducive to sexual and gender diversity, they attempt to advocate for these realities more regularly than heterosexual teachers through the implementation of projects, the design of materials with subliminal messages, or their stances during interactions with stakeholders.

Unfortunately, both LGBTIQ+ and heterosexual teachers might also show unfavorable actions and attitudes that can undermine the workplace environment for sexual and gender-diverse stakeholders. Some of these negative behaviors and attitudes take the form of jokes about an individual's sexuality, negative and stigmatizing remarks, a labeling culture based on gender expression, and an evasion of the topic within their teaching practices and interactions with stakeholders. All of these respond to heteronormative understandings of the world or to a narrowed understanding of the scope of the English class. The former refers to an understanding in which heterosexuality is perceived as natural and the frame to comprehend any type of relationship and action that might emerge and the latter to an avoidance to tackle these realities because teachers may argue that it is not their responsibility to advocate for LGBTIQ+ realities

within their classes because it is a complex issue that requires the intervention of school psychologists or the biology teachers.

Interestingly, LGBTIQ+ participants experience their workplace as less supportive in comparison with the heterosexual sample. As the data proved, the former more often experience workplaces as restrictive spaces that are characterized as being less supportive and conducive in regards to sexuality and gender diversity issues and realities. The latter frequently conceive the workplace as supportive of sexual and gender diversity; however, unawareness of discriminatory attitudes and behaviors may be common among this group due to the normalization of certain heteronormative and stigmatizing perspectives.

All in all, LGBTIQ+ identities are disregarded or contested at the structural and ideological level, but once translated into the experiential arena, more heterogeneous experiences emerged. Every workplace comprises a series of favorable and unfavorable elements that informed not only the experiences and relationships of those who are therein but also their actions and attitudes towards LGBTIQ+ identities. The participants' experiences attested to a variety of workplace environments, some more conducive than others in relation to sexual and gender diversity; however, none of these places may be considered utterly accepting or rejecting, instead these places are a mix of both given the interplay of the several factors and individuals that are part of them.

### **5.1 Implications**

In Colombia, LGBTIQ+ identities are still an intricate topic because of the conservative and religious history of our country. In the educational field, sexual and gender diverse individuals still endure exclusion and discrimination. Unfortunately, schools in Colombia continue disregarding almost completely these realities, leading to less supportive workplaces. In

order to avoid this situation, it is necessary that the departments of education and the local governments ensure anti-discrimination policies that protect LGBTIQ+ stakeholders. First of all, these parties should be aware of the real situation sexual and gender-diverse individuals face in the educational field and the myriad of factors that configure these experiences. Starting from here, departments of education and local governments can determine and assess the way official and unofficial educational institutions are acting so as to foster or hinder these realities.

Based on that knowledge, they can rule policies that demand the recognition and inclusion of these minorities or strengthen the existing ones while providing at the same time support to these institutions on how to do so correctly. For instance, the mandatory sexuality projects that have to be implemented at school should be broadened so as to include sexual and gender diversity issues since these identities coexist within educational settings. Thus, granting safer spaces through anti-discrimination policies and visibility in the sexuality projects at school could foster more conducive spaces for LGBTIQ+ stakeholders who might feel empowered to live more openly and possibly serve as role models for other sexual and gender diverse individuals.

Nevertheless, to achieve stakeholders' disclosure of their sexuality, it is also necessary to increase job security, so teachers and administrators do not feel at risk of losing their job for being honest about their sexuality neither in private nor in public schools. Stricter supervision and more interventionist measures need to be taken in educational institutions when cases of discrimination and exclusion are reported. Additionally, more supervision should also be granted to assess whether or not LGBTIQ+ individuals are presented with the same work conditions as their heterosexual counterparts. As research studies in other fields have proved, job satisfaction is closely connected to the work environment, the perceived safety the employee experiences,



and the conditions that they are offered. Therefore, job security policies are fundamental to be enacted since the lack of them make sexual and gender diverse stakeholders feel doubtful of disclosing part of their identity due to fear of being fired or harassed by other individuals that coexist within these settings

Considering that job satisfaction also comprises the relationships that can be established with coworkers and any other member who the participant relates to within the workplace, it is important that these relationships are founded on respect and recognition. Despite sexuality, gender, race, religion, or any other label that separates individuals from a group, employees should be protected from any party that seeks to vulnerate their rights because of these labels. Although minorities consistently suffer higher unemployment and discrimination in comparison to non-minorities (Morgan & Várdy, 2009), minorities have to be granted safe workplaces that enable them to relate to their colleagues in a candid and non-threatening way. Thus, spaces that foster dialogue and the integration of educators in a safe environment should be created more often. Additionally, as the participants of this study experienced, the implementation of educational projects could inform about the problematic situation these oppressed groups usually face at school, and increase students' sympathy, strengthening the bonds established between students and teachers. As a result of this rapport, some students may show a willingness to disclose their sexuality to the teacher and share their very personal experiences being a sexual or gender-diverse individual, influencing the general school environment.

Another important issue to be considered in regard to LGBTIQ+ realities in the workplace within the educational arena has to do with teachers' knowledge and readiness to address the topic. As the participants' stories unveiled, teachers usually feel unprepared to tackle these realities because they never receive formal instruction on how to correctly do so. Evidently,

teachers need to build more agency and activism, so that they prepare themselves to reclaim their own rights if they identify as LGBTIQ+ or the rights of others while serving as allies. Therefore, it is important that undergraduate programs engage their students in the discussion of topics related to social justice, including sexual and gender diversity. Raising awareness about these realities encourages future educators to be more accepting of the myriad of possible identities they could find in a classroom and to assume thoroughly the transformative role that the teaching profession entails (Vásquez-Guarnizo, 2021). As the data unveiled, only one participant during his undergraduate program received education on the issue of social justice, which led to the reconstruction of some of his worldviews. Perhaps, the inclusion of such an important topic during the undergraduate and postgraduate programs could enable teachers to feel more confident when addressing sexual and gender diversity with students of different educational levels, which might lead to the transformation of the mindset that sexuality and gender issues should not be addressed with children since they have no sexual agency.

## **5.2 Further Research**

More research that seeks to unveil the experiences of educators regarding their work environment in relation to sexual and gender diverse individuals should be conducted, especially, in those regions that were not included in this study due to its scope. Further research might be more conclusive if a larger pool of participants is considered. Evidently, there is still a need to develop research considering contextual factors, in which LGBTIQ+ identities are explored within rural and urban institutions, and across educational levels. Deepening into these features might contribute to having a thorough understanding of the phenomenon of LGBTIQ+ acceptance in the educational field in Colombia.

Furthermore, research studies that include a more representative sample of transgender and other members of the LGBTIQ+ community that were not considered in the current study might add more depth to the discussion about the workplace in relation to sexual and gender diversity. Likewise, a more representative sample that includes other stakeholders, namely administrators whose perceptions about this issue are still unknown since they have not been meaningfully included in the research studies available in Colombia. Hence, the inclusion of a broader sample may uncover perspectives and relationships about the phenomenon that have not been addressed.

An additional remark to bear in mind when conducting further research would be the need to assess sexual and gender diversity in relation to other aspects such as race or ethnicity. It is essential to comprehend that LGBTIQ+ issues intersect with other features that are part of an individual's identity. Thus, deepening into double diversity might uncover realities of the workplace that cannot be depicted by individuals whose identity does not correspond to other diversity associations.

Considering that research studies that include heterosexual and LGBTIQ+ teachers' perspectives are limited, it would be interesting to develop comparative and contrasting studies that seek to understand how gender and sexuality categories may influence the understanding and the experiences lived within the workplace. Similarly, a study in Coloniality of power (Quijano, 2000) could shed some light on the way English language teachers who identify as LGBTIQ+ experience hegemonic practices in relation to sexual orientation and gender categories, as well as how they resist these ideologies and try to be decolonized. Given that in the present study it was evidenced that heterosexual teachers might also feel restricted by pronounced gender roles, further research should address how stigmatizing practices which

comprise labeling, stereotyping, separation, status loss, and discrimination (Link & Phelan, 2001) inhibit heterosexual individuals from advocating for LGBTIQ+ identities.

Finally, considering that microaggressions toward sexual and gender-diverse individuals and other minority groups are common in educational settings, it is necessary to address this issue in our country, namely because we are embedded in a society characterized by exclusionary practices on the basis of differences. Nevertheless, it is necessary to delve into this topic of microaggressions with psychometrically sound instruments that could measure the prevalence of LGBTIQ+ and other types of microaggressions in the workplace, as stated by Resnick and Galupo (2019), since it could contribute to filling the existing gap in knowledge.

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## Appendixes

### Appendix A: Consent form

Querido participante,

Usted ha sido invitado a ser parte de un estudio de investigación titulado “LGBTIQ+ Acceptance in the Workplace: Heterosexual and LGBTIQ+ English Teachers’ Perspectives”. Este estudio busca profundizar en las percepciones y experiencias de un grupo de profesores heterosexuales y LGBTIQ+ en relación a la aceptación o rechazo de identidades sexuales y/o de género no normativas enmarcadas dentro del entorno laboral. Es importante que lea con detenimiento y realice las preguntas que considere necesarias para obtener una clara explicación de los procedimientos, la naturaleza del estudio, y su rol a lo largo de la investigación.

Su participación en esta investigación es confidencial. Sus comentarios y respuestas se utilizarán con fines de investigación y pueden llegar a ser incluidos en mi tesis de maestría y/o en cualquier artículo publicado que surja como producto de este proyecto. Su nombre y el nombre de su lugar de trabajo se mantendrán completamente anónimos y se reemplazará con un seudónimo cualquier dato que pueda llegar a develar su identidad o la de las instituciones mencionadas.

Si acepta participar en este estudio, se le pedirá que participe en una serie de entrevistas individuales, un grupo focal y unas narrativas orales. Toda la información será recolectada a través de grabaciones de audio que luego serán transcritas. Una vez transcritas las grabaciones, usted tendrá la oportunidad de revisar la transcripción y aclarar cualquier información con el investigador. La recolección de datos se llevará a cabo desde junio del hasta diciembre del 2021. Aclaro que no se realizará ninguna recopilación de datos en su lugar de trabajo.

A lo largo de la investigación se indagará sobre sus experiencias y percepciones respecto a la aceptación o rechazo de identidades LGBTIQ+ en su lugar de trabajo. En caso de malestar psicológico frente a alguna de las preguntas, podrá abstenerse de contestar o retirarse

definitivamente del proyecto en cualquier momento si lo considera necesario. Cabe recalcar que negarse a participar o retirarse de este estudio no implicará ninguna sanción.

Si tiene preguntas o inquietudes sobre el estudio, comuníquese con José Antonio España Delgado al 3208244384 o [josh.spain96@gmail.com](mailto:josh.spain96@gmail.com) o Jhon Jairo Viáfara Gonzalez al [john.viafara@uptc.edu.co](mailto:john.viafara@uptc.edu.co).

Si ha decidido participar en este estudio de investigación, lea y marque las siguientes declaraciones para indicar su consentimiento.

- He leído la información anterior, he hecho preguntas y he recibido respuestas sobre el estudio.
  
- He recibido una copia de este documento para guardar en mis registros
  
- Acepto voluntariamente participar en este proyecto de investigación.

Firma: \_\_\_\_\_

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_

Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_

Celular: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix B: Demographic questionnaire**

### ANTECEDENTES EDUCATIVOS

¿Cuál es el nivel más alto de educación que ha completado?

Pregrado

Especialización

Maestría

Doctorado

Marque la opción correcta para los distintos niveles de escolaridad en relación con la naturaleza de la institución en la que desarrolló sus estudios

	Pública	Privada
Educación primaria	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Educación secundaria	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Educación media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Educación superior	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

¿Durante sus años como estudiante cómo percibió su ambiente escolar en relación a la aceptación o no de identidades y orientaciones sexuales diversas?

Tu respuesta \_\_\_\_\_

[Atrás](#) [Siguiente](#) [Borrar formulario](#)

## Appendix C: Narratives

### Narrativa 1

**Objetivo:** Reconstruir sus experiencias de vida de forma narrativa (oral o escrita) proporcionando información rica y detallada sobre la forma en que ha percibido o experimentado su entorno laboral en relación a la aceptación o rechazo de identidades LGBTQ+ dentro de instituciones educativas de carácter público y/o privado.

**Instrucciones:** Por favor, lea las siguientes recomendaciones para que pueda desarrollar efectivamente la narrativa:

- a. Es de vital importancia disponer de un espacio físico adecuado. Escoja una habitación que sea lo más silenciosa posible y que esté alejada de baños, cocina y/o la calle; para así evitar ruidos excesivos o interrupciones.
- b. De optar por la narración oral, emplee la grabadora de voz de su celular o una aplicación disponible en su dispositivo móvil que le permita grabar audios libremente. Considere emplear audífonos para una mejor calidad de audio. Se recomienda que la narrativa tenga una extensión entre 20 y 30 minutos, sin embargo, de requerir más tiempo para contar con mayor detalle su experiencia, siéntase libre de extenderse el tiempo que considere necesario.
- c. En caso de optar por la narración escrita, emplee un programa como Microsoft Word que le permita escribir y organizar la información de forma más eficiente. La extensión mínima de su historia debe ser alrededor de 4 páginas con un espaciado doble y una fuente de 12 puntos ya sea Arial, Calibri o Times New Roman.
- d. Lea la información presentada en “*Entorno laboral*” y reflexione sobre la misma previamente a iniciar la grabación. Tómese un tiempo considerable para pensar en su experiencia en este sentido y organice sus ideas. Puede tomar nota de cierta información que considere importante incluir y no le gustaría olvidar.

Recuerde que los datos obtenidos a partir de las grabaciones o escritos, se emplearán sólo con fines investigativos. En ningún caso será juzgado o se vulnerará su privacidad. Igualmente, toda la información recolectada será presentada de manera anónima.

### ***Entorno laboral:***

*El entorno laboral es multidimensional y es un elemento esencial en la satisfacción laboral de los trabajadores (Wright & Davis, 2003). Este comprende el entorno físico, las relaciones interpersonales entre empleados y empleadores, y el componente organizacional (sistemas, procedimientos, prácticas, valores y filosofías de la institución). La interacción de estas tres dimensiones determina si un entorno laboral es propicio o nocivo para el trabajador.*

Teniendo en cuenta lo anterior, lo invito a grabar un audio o escribir un texto en el que narre su experiencia en relación al entorno laboral. Céntrese en una vivencia que usted considere

representativa e importante en la que se refleje cómo aspectos relacionados al entorno físico, relaciones interpersonales y organizacionales de dicho entorno laboral influyeron en la forma en que se vivieron y se abordaron las identidades LGBTQ.

Al contar su vivencia detalle los participantes, el contexto y la forma en que se desarrollaron los eventos. Considere incluir las siguientes características para cada uno de los componentes anteriormente señalados:

- **Participantes:** identidad usando nombres ficticios con el fin de mantener el anonimato de los mismos, la relación existente entre estos personajes y usted, personalidad, lenguaje empleado, visiones de mundo, actitudes y acciones que pudo llegar a evidenciar respecto a la forma en que el entorno laboral influyó o no en la manera en que se vivieron y abordaron las identidades LGBTQ.
- **Contexto:** lugar donde se desarrollaron los eventos en relación con la forma en que dicho entorno laboral influyó en cómo se vivían y se abordaban las realidades LGBTQ, naturaleza del mismo (público o privado), características físicas y ambientales, posibles elementos que influían en el ambiente de este contexto, las condiciones laborales en este lugar, y actitudes frente a este lugar.
- **Eventos:** causa o situaciones que fueron determinantes para que dicho entorno laboral influyese en la manera cómo se vivían y se abordaban las realidades LGBTQ, forma(s) en la que se abordó la situación, reacciones tanto propias como de los demás frente a la situación que se presentaba, emociones y formas de pensar en ese momento, su actuar y la razón para el mismo, posibles cambios en los involucrados a través de los eventos, desenlace de la situación descrita y puntos de vista o reacciones frente a este desenlace.

## **Narrativa 2**

**Objetivo:** Relatar un suceso de su vida en forma oral o escrita proporcionando información valiosa y minuciosa sobre la forma en que usted a través de sus acciones y actitudes contribuyó o no al fomento de la aceptación, rechazo, visibilización o invisibilización de identidades LGBTQ dentro de su entorno laboral.

**Instrucciones:** Por favor, lea las siguientes recomendaciones para que pueda desarrollar efectivamente la narrativa:

- a. Es de vital importancia disponer de un espacio físico adecuado. Escoja una habitación que sea lo más silenciosa posible y que esté alejada de baños, cocina y/o la calle; para así evitar ruidos excesivos o interrupciones.
- b. De optar por la narración oral, emplee la grabadora de voz de su celular o una aplicación disponible en su dispositivo móvil que le permita grabar audios libremente. Considere emplear audífonos para una mejor calidad de audio. Se recomienda que la narrativa tenga una extensión entre 10 y 15 minutos, sin embargo, de requerir más tiempo para contar con mayor detalle su experiencia, siéntase libre de extenderse el tiempo que considere necesario.



- c. En caso de optar por la narración escrita, emplee un programa como Microsoft Word que le permita escribir y organizar la información de forma más eficiente. La extensión mínima de su historia debe ser alrededor de 4 páginas con un espaciado doble y una fuente de 12 puntos ya sea Arial, Calibri o Times New Roman.

Recuerde que los datos obtenidos a partir de las grabaciones o escritos, se emplearán sólo con fines investigativos. En ningún caso será juzgado o se vulnerará su privacidad. Igualmente, toda la información recolectada será presentada de manera anónima.

*Le invito a grabar un audio o escribir un texto en el que narre una experiencia en relación con la forma en que usted contribuyó directa o indirectamente a promover la aceptación, rechazo, visibilización o invisibilización de las realidades LGBTQ dentro de su entorno laboral. Considere cómo sus actitudes, comentarios, chistes, estereotipos, o la forma en que reaccionó frente a actitudes o acciones de otro miembro de la comunidad educativa pudo llegar a influir en la forma como se percibían las realidades LGBTQ en su lugar de trabajo. Igualmente, lo invito a reflexionar frente a qué pudo llegar a suceder de haber reaccionado o intervenido de manera distinta.*

Al contar su vivencia detalle los participantes, el contexto y la forma en que se desarrollaron los eventos. Considere incluir las siguientes características para cada uno de los componentes anteriormente señalados:

- Participantes: identidad usando nombres ficticios con el fin de mantener el anonimato de los mismos, la relación existente entre estos personajes y usted, personalidad y lenguaje empleado por los mismos, visiones de mundo, actitudes y acciones que evidenció contribuían a la aceptación o estigma de las realidades LGBTQ en este lugar de trabajo.
- Contexto: lugar donde se desarrollaron los eventos de aceptación o rechazo de realidades LGBTQ, naturaleza de dicho lugar (público o privado), características físicas y ambientales, las condiciones laborales en este lugar, y actitudes frente al mismo.
- Eventos: causa o situaciones que fueron determinantes para que usted actuara o reaccionara de la forma que lo hizo, sus acciones, emociones y formas de pensar en ese momento, descripción de cómo inició la situación, posibles cambios en los involucrados a medida que se desarrollaron los eventos, desenlace de toda la situación descrita y puntos de vista o reacciones frente a este desenlace, y posibles desenlaces de haberse abordado la situación de manera distinta.

## Appendix D: In-depth interviews

### Protocol

- There will be three in-depth interviews with the participants, each scheduled for 45 to 60 minutes. The interviews will be conducted via a video conferencing platform based on the participants' time availability. The virtual meeting will be held on Google Meet since it allows the recording of the sessions. Naturally, the location selected to develop the interviews will be a place that is conducive for online one-on-one interview.
- Prior the first interview, the researcher will have already introduced himself to the interviewee, presented the purpose of the study, and reviewed the informed consent form with the respondents. Time will be allowed for participants to ask questions. Participants will be asked if recording the interview is acceptable before beginning the interview. Participants will be reminded to try and refrain from including any identifying information in their responses. However, they will be assured that, should they include such information, it will be removed during transcription.
- Probing questions may be used to clarify participant responses (e.g., Would you give me an example? In what ways? What do you mean by that? Would you explain that further?)
- Upon completion of the interview, participants will be thanked for their participation, asked if they have any questions, and reassured again of their confidentiality.

### Entrevista a profundidad (profesores heterosexuales)

**Objetivo:** Recopilar una descripción estructural de sus vivencias y perspectivas como docente heterosexual en relación con la aceptación o rechazo de las identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales no normativas dentro de su entorno laboral. Esta información conducirá a la comprensión de las experiencias compartidas y divergentes con el resto de los participantes.

#### *Entrevista 1: Enfocada en historia de vida*

**Objetivo:** Reconstruir las primeras experiencias de los participantes respecto a la **aceptación o rechazo** de identidades LGBTQ durante su vida escolar y entornos laborales previos.

#### Preguntas generales

1. ¿Cómo eran percibidas las identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas durante su escolaridad? Describa su experiencia en este sentido (educación primaria, secundaria y educación superior)
2. ¿Durante su escolaridad, conoció a algún docente que se identificara o de quien se rumoraba que fuese LGBTQ? ¿Cuáles eran sus actitudes y las de los demás frente a este docente?
3. ¿Considera usted que sus actitudes y acciones contribuyeron o no a que tanto este docente como el resto de personas LGBTQ fuesen aceptadas dentro de la institución?

4. ¿Podría describir su primer contacto con el campo laboral, entiéndase la práctica educativa, en relación con la forma en la que se percibían y abordaban las identidades LGBTQ dentro de esta institución?
5. ¿Qué actitudes en relación con las identidades LGBTQ por parte de los distintos miembros de la comunidad educativa logró percibir durante su permanencia en este contexto escolar?
6. ¿Cuáles elementos de este contexto ya sea el entorno físico, las condiciones laborales, las relaciones interpersonales entre los distintos miembros de la comunidad educativa, materiales educativos., considera que influían o reflejaban la forma cómo se abordaban y percibían las identidades sexuales y de género diversas?
7. ¿Desde el ámbito profesional una vez graduada, cuando usted comenzó a trabajar cómo describiría su entorno laboral en relación con la forma en que se percibían y abordaban las identidades LGBTQ? ¿Qué tipo de actitudes se evidenciaban en ese momento hacia las realidades LGBTQ?
8. ¿Considera que dicho contexto era un lugar tolerante o intolerante frente a las identidades LGBTQ? ¿Qué la lleva a indicar esto? ¿Cómo llegó a esta conclusión?
9. ¿Desde su cargo como docente en ese momento, cree usted que sus actitudes y acciones contribuían o no a hacer de su entorno laboral un lugar más propicio frente a las identidades LGBTQ? ¿En qué medida?

#### Preguntas individuales

10. En su narrativa indicó no haber percibido discriminación directa hacia Andrés o personas LGBTQ, ¿qué factores considera que influyeron para que su entorno laboral fuese un lugar libre de discriminación?
11. Andrés le comentó que sólo confiaba en tres personas dentro de la institución ¿por qué cree que él se sentía cómodo con estas tres personas? ¿Qué caracterizaba a estas personas?
12. Conoce cuáles fueron las causas que llevaron a Andrés a renunciar a la institución ¿Podría indicar si las mismas estuvieron relacionadas al aspecto del entorno laboral?
13. Según lo que María le dio a entender sobre Andrés, ella lo describía como alguien “arrogante”, ¿describiría usted a Andrés como alguien “arrogante” o cómo lo describiría?
14. En la conversación que usted sostuvo con Esperanza se indica que ella no consideraba Mocoa o la institución educativa el lugar indicado para Andrés tras haber visto sus estados de WhatsApp, ¿cuál considera pudieron ser las razones para tal aseveración? ¿Cuál es su posición al respecto?

15. En la narrativa se señala que la coordinadora le permitió a Andrés ir con aretes a la institución, garantizando así la libre expresión del mismo, ¿cómo describiría usted la filosofía institucional y los valores de la misma? ¿Velaba o no la institución por la protección y el respeto de las personas LGBTQ?
16. En la narrativa se indica que la forma de presentarse y el actuar de Andrés buscaba normalizar las identidades LGBTQ, ¿cómo percibió usted que los estudiantes y padres de familia trataban a Andrés teniendo en cuenta su apariencia y su actuar?

### ***Entrevista 2: Detalles de la experiencia***

***Objetivo:*** Indagar sobre las experiencias vividas por los participantes en sus entornos laborales actuales en relación con la aceptación o rechazo de identidades LGBTQ.

1. ¿Qué clase de discursos o acciones ha escuchado/presenciado en relación con la forma en que se perciben las identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas en su entorno laboral actual?
2. ¿Conoce a algún docente LGBTQ en su lugar de trabajo actual? Describa la relación existente entre este docente y los demás miembros de la comunidad educativa incluido(a) usted.
3. ¿Cómo se visibilizan o invisibilizan las realidades LGBTQ en su lugar de trabajo? ¿Qué implicaciones tiene esta visibilización/invisibilización de las realidades LGBTQ en la forma en que usted y los demás perciben el entorno laboral?
4. ¿Qué rol juega la comunidad educativa en la aceptación o rechazo de este docente y el resto de personas LGBTQ en su lugar de trabajo? ¿Cómo contribuyen estos a que la identidad de género y/u orientación sexual sea aceptada o rechazada?
5. ¿En qué medida el currículo institucional promueve la visibilización o invisibilización de las realidades LGBTQ?
6. ¿En qué medida la filosofía y las políticas institucionales de su lugar de trabajo actual promueven la visibilización o invisibilización de las diversidades? ¿Qué tipo de relación existe entre lo establecido por estos y lo que evidencia usted en su entorno laboral en relación con la aceptación o rechazo de las realidades LGBTQ?
7. ¿Cree que las condiciones laborales en su lugar de trabajo actual son las mismas para todos los docentes indistintamente de su orientación sexual o identidad de género? ¿Por qué?

### ***Preguntas individuales***

1. En la narrativa usted señala que su actitud hacia Andrés era positiva ¿por qué concluye esto?
2. Usted señala que no se centraba en la orientación sexual de Andrés y buscaba tratarlo normal ¿qué acciones o actitudes describiría como normal y cuáles como anormal?
3. Igualmente, en la narrativa indica que hace chistes o bromas sobre personas LGBTQ ¿podría indicar qué tipo de chistes hace y la frecuencia de los mismos durante sus interacciones con otras personas?
4. ¿Considera que las bromas sobre las personas LGBTQ influyeron de manera positiva o negativa en su relación con Andrés?
5. En la narrativa usted indica que Andrés reaccionaba de buena manera a los chistes que usted hacía ¿podría describir con más detalle las reacciones del mismo?
6. Usted indica que busca hacer sentir bien a las personas que pertenecen a minorías ¿cómo hizo esto con Andrés y qué lo llevó a hacer esto?
7. ¿Hay algo más que le gustaría agregar sobre la forma en que usted influye en la visibilización o invisibilización de las realidades LGBTQ?

### ***Entrevista 3: Reflexión sobre el significado***

***Objetivo:*** Reflexionar sobre el significado de las experiencias de los participantes estableciendo conexiones entre cómo factores contextuales y personales en sus vidas los llevan a entender y actuar en relación a la aceptación o rechazo de identidades LGBTIQ+ en el ámbito laboral.

1. Teniendo en cuenta su vida antes de convertirse en docente y su experiencia profesional previa y actual, ¿cómo entiende la aceptación o el rechazo de identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas en el ámbito laboral?
2. ¿En qué medida sus experiencias pasadas y su entorno laboral actual lo han llevado a aceptar o rechazar las identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas en el ámbito laboral?
3. ¿Qué significan para usted sus actitudes o la forma en que actúa (o no actúa) en el trabajo en relación con la aceptación o el rechazo de identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas?
4. ¿Qué medidas considera necesarias implementar en relación con la aceptación o rechazo de identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas en el campo laboral?

5. ¿Considera que los docentes durante el desarrollo de sus estudios deberían ser instruidos frente a cómo abordar apropiadamente la temática y las realidades LGBTIQ+ en clase? ¿Por qué?
6. ¿Cómo considera que serán percibidas las identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas en el ámbito laboral en un futuro (en su contexto actual, a nivel nacional e internacional)? ¿Cómo se llegará a esto que usted describe?
7. ¿Cómo se ve a sí mismo actuar en un futuro en relación con la aceptación o el rechazo de identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas en el ámbito laboral?

### **Entrevista a profundidad (profesores LGBTIQ+)**

**Objetivo:** Recopilar una descripción estructural de sus vivencias como docente LGBTIQ+ en relación con la aceptación o rechazo de las identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales no normativas dentro de su entorno laboral. Esta información conducirá a la comprensión de las experiencias compartidas y divergentes con el resto de los participantes.

#### ***Entrevista 1: Enfocada en historia de vida***

**Objetivo:** Reconstruir las primeras experiencias de los participantes respecto a la **aceptación o rechazo de identidades LGBTIQ+ durante su vida escolar y entornos laborales previos.**

#### *Preguntas generales*

1. ¿Cómo eran percibidas las identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas durante su escolaridad? Describa su experiencia en este sentido (educación primaria, secundaria y educación superior)
2. ¿Durante su escolaridad, conoció a algún docente que se identificara o de quien se rumoraba que fuese LGBTIQ+? ¿Cuáles eran sus actitudes y las de los demás frente a este docente?
3. ¿Desde el ámbito profesional, cómo describiría su(s) entorno(s) laboral(es) previos en relación con la forma en que se percibían y abordaban las identidades LGBTIQ+?
4. ¿Qué aspectos de este entorno laboral (*características ambientales, cultura organizacional, procedimientos, prácticas, y valores institucionales, condiciones laborales*) considera que contribuían a hacer de su lugar de trabajo un lugar tolerante o intolerante frente a las identidades LGBTIQ+?
5. ¿En qué medida la filosofía, valores y políticas de la(s) institución(es) influían en la forma en que se percibían las identidades LGBTIQ+?

6. ¿Considera que algún elemento relacionado al componente físico y técnico de su lugar de trabajo (*por ejemplo mensajes en carteleras dentro y fuera del aula, grafitis en pupitres o baños; música o mensajes dentro de la radio institucional, etc.*) reflejó la forma como se percibían o abordaban las identidades LGBTIQ+? ¿Cómo?
7. ¿Qué actitudes percibió que la comunidad educativa (docentes, estudiantes, administrativos, y padres de familia) revelaba frente a las identidades LGBTIQ+?
8. ¿Desde su cargo, cree usted que sus actitudes y acciones contribuían o no a hacer de su entorno laboral un lugar más propicio frente a las identidades LGBTIQ+?

### Preguntas individuales

1. En la narrativa usted menciona que no es partidario de revelar su orientación sexual en el campo laboral, ¿qué factores lo llevan a tomar esta postura?
2. Usted señala que no se siente cómodo revelando su orientación sexual a las personas del trabajo, sin embargo, menciona haberlo hecho ocasionalmente ¿qué caracteriza a las personas con las que se siente cómodo revelando su orientación sexual de aquellas con las que no alcanza ese nivel de comodidad?
3. En la narrativa también se indica conocer casos de personas quienes al revelar su orientación sexual fueron víctimas de discriminación, ¿presenció usted de manera directa estas situaciones o cómo llegó a conocer de ellas?
4. Usted señala temer frente al poder perder su trabajo por revelar su orientación sexual, ¿considera posible que los docentes LGBTIQ+ tengan seguridad laboral pese a su sexualidad?
5. En la narrativa se menciona que en su lugar de trabajo lo cuestionaban frente al tener novia o no, ¿cómo se sentía frente a estos interrogantes? ¿Qué actitud percibía en las personas al hacerle estas preguntas?
6. ¿Cómo se sintió frente a la insistencia de las dos mujeres que lo interrogaban frente a su orientación sexual?
7. En la narrativa se indica que usted se llevaba bien con estas dos mujeres, ¿qué lo llevó a no ser directo frente a su orientación sexual una vez ellas le preguntaron pese a la buena relación interpersonal que existía?
8. También se menciona la existencia de otro docente LGBTIQ+ en el colegio a quien también lo interrogaron frente a su sexualidad, ¿Conoce cuál fue la respuesta de este docente frente a dichos cuestionamientos?
9. Usted relaciona la insistencia frente al cuestionamiento de la orientación sexual con el posible hecho de que los administrativos tuviesen una visión negativa frente a las

identidades LGBTIQ+ pese a que otras personas señalaban que no era así, ¿qué lo lleva a concluir esto?

10. Usted señala haber entrado en confianza con una de las administrativas de la institución, ¿qué características de esa persona o qué factores lo llevaron a desarrollar esta confianza?
11. Al revelarle a la administrativa su orientación sexual, ¿cuál fue su reacción? ¿evidenció algún cambio en la forma en que ella se relacionaba con usted tras haber revelado su orientación sexual?
12. Usted señala haber notado un cambio actitudinal de un administrativo hacia usted, ¿qué lo llevó a concluir que ese cambio se relacionaba a su orientación sexual?
13. En la narrativa se señala que la institución educativa donde sucedió la historia era cristiana ¿en qué medida considera que esto influyó en la forma en que se percibían y abordaban las identidades LGBTIQ+ tanto propia como ajenas? ¿Influyó esta ideología en la forma en que usted se relacionaba con las distintas personas que laboraban en la institución?
14. En la narrativa se señala que los docentes LGBTIQ+ siempre están ligados al qué dirán los papás ¿Cuál era su relación con los estudiantes y los padres de familia?
15. Usted señala haber escuchado a papás hacer comentarios homofóbicos, ¿podría describir un poco más dichas situaciones?

### ***Entrevista 2: Detalles de la experiencia***

***Objetivo:*** Indagar sobre las experiencias vividas por los participantes en sus entornos laborales actuales en relación con la aceptación o rechazo de identidades LGBTIQ+.

1. ¿Qué clase de discursos o acciones ha escuchado/presenciado en relación con la forma en que se perciben las identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas en su entorno laboral actual?
2. ¿Conoce a algún docente LGBTIQ+ en su lugar de trabajo actual? Describa la relación existente entre este docente y los demás miembros de la comunidad educativa incluido(a) usted.
3. ¿Cómo se visibilizan o invisibilizan las realidades LGBTIQ+ en su lugar de trabajo? ¿Qué implicaciones tiene esta visibilización/invisibilización de las realidades LGBTIQ+ en la forma en que usted y los demás perciben el entorno laboral?
4. ¿Qué rol juega la comunidad educativa en la aceptación o rechazo de este docente y el resto de personas LGBTIQ+ en su lugar de trabajo? ¿Cómo contribuyen estos a que la identidad de género y/u orientación sexual sea aceptada o rechazada?



5. ¿En qué medida el currículo institucional promueve la visibilización o invisibilización de las realidades LGBTIQ+?
6. ¿En qué medida la filosofía y las políticas institucionales de su lugar de trabajo actual promueven la visibilización o invisibilización de las diversidades? ¿Qué tipo de relación existe entre lo establecido por estos y lo que evidencia usted en su entorno laboral en relación con la aceptación o rechazo de las realidades LGBTIQ+?
7. ¿Cree que las condiciones laborales en su lugar de trabajo actual son las mismas para todos los docentes indistintamente de su orientación sexual o identidad de género? ¿Por qué?

### **Preguntas individuales**

1. En la narrativa se indica que no es partidario de revelar su orientación sexual, sin embargo, indica que sí lo ha hecho en algunos trabajos ¿Podría describir estas situaciones en las que develó su orientación sexual?
2. Usted señala que dentro de sus espacios laborales entre charla y charla ha llegado a expresar su opinión frente a temáticas LGBTIQ+, ¿podría describir en qué contexto, con quiénes, la forma en que se desarrollaron estas charlas y la forma como las personas han reaccionado?
3. Igualmente, usted señala que el tema de las diversidades sexuales y de género es un tema pertinente en la actualidad que debe enseñarse a los estudiantes, sin embargo, usted no lo aborda directamente en sus clases ¿de qué forma contribuye usted a la visibilización de estas diversidades sin aludir directamente a ellas?
4. En la narrativa señala que usted trata de promover el respeto y la tolerancia en los estudiantes por la otredad, ¿Podría describir con una situación de clase vivida como lo ha hecho?
5. En la narrativa señala haber sido víctima de estigma de parte de sus compañeros del colegio, ¿Cuál sería la situación con respecto a esto que usted más recuerda y por qué? ¿Qué haría usted diferente si estuviera en esa situación nuevamente teniendo en cuenta cómo actuó inicialmente ?
6. ¿De qué manera ha contribuido usted como docente en la promoción o represión del estigma hacia las identidades LGBTIQ+?
7. Usted señala que no revela su orientación sexual a los estudiantes por temor a que su rol como docente pase a un segundo plano y el foco de atención sea su orientación sexual ¿en qué medida considera que esta invisibilización ha influido en la forma que las identidades LGBTIQ+ son percibidas en su entorno laboral?

8. Igualmente, señala que usted oculta su orientación sexual por temor a la reacción de los padres, ¿en qué medida las actitudes y acciones de los padres frente a esta temática lo limitan a usted como docente LGBTIQ+?
8. ¿Hay algo más que le gustaría agregar sobre la forma en que usted influye en la visibilización o invisibilización de las realidades LGBTIQ+?

### **Entrevista 3: Reflexión sobre el significado**

***Objetivo:** Reflexionar sobre el significado de las experiencias de los participantes estableciendo conexiones entre cómo factores contextuales y personales en sus vidas los llevan a entender y actuar en relación a la aceptación o rechazo de identidades LGBTIQ+ en el ámbito laboral.*

1. Teniendo en cuenta su vida antes de convertirse en docente y su experiencia profesional previa y actual, ¿cómo entiende la aceptación o el rechazo de identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas en el ámbito laboral?
2. ¿En qué medida sus experiencias pasadas y su entorno laboral actual lo han llevado a aceptar o rechazar las identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas en el ámbito laboral?
3. ¿Qué significan para usted sus actitudes o la forma en que actúa (o no actúa) en el trabajo en relación con la aceptación o el rechazo de identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas?
4. ¿Qué medidas considera necesarias implementar en relación con la aceptación o rechazo de identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas en el campo laboral?
5. ¿Considera que los docentes durante el desarrollo de sus estudios deberían ser instruidos frente a cómo abordar apropiadamente la temática y las realidades LGBTIQ+ en clase? ¿Por qué?
6. ¿Cómo considera que serán percibidas las identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas en el ámbito laboral en un futuro (en su contexto actual, a nivel nacional e internacional)? ¿Cómo se llegará a esto que usted describe?
7. ¿Cómo se ve a sí mismo actuar en un futuro en relación con la aceptación o el rechazo de identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas en el ámbito laboral?

### Appendix E: In-depth interview (adjusted)

#### *Entrevista 2: Detalles de la experiencia*

**Objetivo:** Indagar sobre las experiencias vividas por los participantes en sus entornos laborales actuales en relación con la aceptación o rechazo de identidades LGBTQ.

1. ¿Qué clase de discursos o acciones ha escuchado/presenciado en relación con la forma en que se perciben las identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas en su entorno laboral actual?
2. ¿Conoce a algún docente LGBTQ en su lugar de trabajo actual? Describa la relación existente entre este docente y los demás miembros de la comunidad educativa incluido(a) usted.
3. ¿Cómo se visibilizan o invisibilizan las realidades LGBTQ en su lugar de trabajo? ¿Qué implicaciones tiene esta visibilización/invisibilización de las realidades LGBTQ en la forma en que usted y los demás perciben el entorno laboral?
4. ¿Qué rol juega la comunidad educativa en la aceptación o rechazo de este docente y el resto de personas LGBTQ en su lugar de trabajo? ¿Cómo contribuyen éstos a que la identidad de género y/u orientación sexual sea aceptada o rechazada?
5. ¿En qué medida el currículo institucional promueve la visibilización o invisibilización de las realidades LGBTQ?
6. ¿En qué medida la filosofía y las políticas institucionales de su lugar de trabajo actual promueven la visibilización o invisibilización de las diversidades? ¿Qué tipo de relación existe entre lo establecido por estos y lo que evidencia usted en su entorno laboral en relación con la aceptación o rechazo de las realidades LGBTQ?
7. ¿Cree que las condiciones laborales en su lugar de trabajo actual son las mismas para todos los docentes indistintamente de su orientación sexual o identidad de género? ¿Por qué?

#### *Entrevista 3: Reflexión sobre el significado*

**Objetivo:** Reflexionar sobre el significado de las experiencias de los participantes estableciendo conexiones entre cómo factores contextuales y personales en sus vidas los llevan a entender y actuar en relación a la aceptación o rechazo de identidades LGBTQ en el ámbito laboral.

1. Teniendo en cuenta su vida antes de convertirse en docente y su experiencia profesional previa y actual, ¿cómo entiende la aceptación o el rechazo de identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas en el ámbito laboral? ¿En qué medida sus experiencias pasadas y su entorno laboral actual lo han llevado a aceptar o rechazar las identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas en el ámbito laboral?

2. ¿Cómo percibe sus actitudes y la forma en que actúa (o no actúa) en el trabajo en relación con la aceptación o el rechazo de identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas? ¿Considera que su actuar sería diferente en un contexto laboral distinto?
3. ¿Considera que como docente se encuentra preparada para abordar apropiadamente temáticas LGBTQ dentro y fuera del aula? ¿Considera que los docentes durante el desarrollo de sus estudios deberían ser instruidos frente a cómo abordar apropiadamente la temática y las realidades LGBTQ en clase? ¿Por qué?
4. Si usted fuera un directivo (por ejemplo) ¿qué medidas consideraría necesarias implementar para lograr la aceptación o evitar el rechazo de identidades LGBTQ en los diversos contextos laborales de los cuales ha sido parte y de los que ha hablado en esta investigación?
5. ¿Cómo considera que serán percibidas las identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas en el ámbito laboral en un futuro (en su contexto actual y en los diversos contextos laborales que ha mencionado a lo largo de este proyecto)? ¿Cómo se llegará a esto que usted describe?
6. ¿Cómo percibe será su actuación en el futuro en relación con la aceptación o el rechazo de identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas en el ámbito laboral?

## Appendix F: Focus group interview

### Protocol

- One focus group interview will be conducted with the participants. The interview will be scheduled for 90 to 120 minutes. It will be conducted via a video conferencing platform based on the participants' time availability. The virtual meeting will be held on Google Meet since it allows the recording of the sessions.
- The interviewer will inform participants of the objective of the focus group interview. Time will be allotted for participants to ask questions. The interviewer will remind interviewees that the interviews will be digitally recorded for the sake of accuracy. Additionally, the participants will be reminded to try and refrain from including any identifying information in their responses. However, they will be assured that, should they include such information, it will be removed during transcription.
- Probing questions may be used to clarify participant responses (e.g., Would you give me an example? In what ways? What do you mean by that? Would you explain that further?)
- Upon completion of the interview, participants will be thanked for their participation, asked if they have any questions, and reassured again of their confidentiality.

### Entrevista grupo focal

**Objetivo:** Explorar y ahondar en las experiencias de los participantes en relación a la aceptación o rechazo de las identidades de género y/u orientaciones sexuales diversas propias o de otros individuos LGBTQ en sus entornos laborales e inquirir en la forma en que ellos contribuyen a fomentar el rechazo o la aceptación de estas realidades.

- 1.) ¿Si alguien estuviera buscando trabajo en la institución en la cual labora actualmente o en la última institución en la que se desempeñó como docente, y le preguntara '¿cómo es el entorno laboral para las personas LGBTQ?', ¿qué le diría?
- 2.) En las entrevistas realizadas de manera individual, algunos de ustedes señalan que el contexto regional influye en la forma como son percibidas las realidades LGBTQ dentro de las instituciones educativas ¿cómo describiría la situación para las personas LGBTQ en su región a partir de su experiencia en los diversos lugares en los que se ha desempeñado como docente? ¿En qué medida estas visiones de mundo se han visto reflejadas dentro de los establecimientos educativos en los que ha laborado?
- 3.) En las entrevistas realizadas de manera individual también se señala que en ciertos contextos laborales las realidades LGBTQ son percibidas como el tema Voldemort (todos saben que existen, están ahí, pero nadie se refiere o alude a las mismas). ¿Desde su experiencia en las distintas instituciones educativas ha percibido o no esta situación? ¿En qué medida esto influye en la forma en que usted y los demás perciben o experimentan su entorno laboral en relación con las identidades LGBTQ?

- 4.) En las entrevistas ustedes señalan la afiliación religiosa de la institución o de los miembros de la comunidad educativa como uno de los factores que influye significativamente en la forma en que se perciben las realidades LGBTQ dentro del entorno laboral. ¿Cómo ha influido este factor en las relaciones interpersonales y laborales que se establecen dentro de los establecimientos educativos y que involucran a personas LGBTQ? ¿En qué medida este factor influye en la forma en que usted (como persona LGBTQ o como alguien relacionado con personas LGBTQ) ha percibido o experimentado su seguridad laboral (o la seguridad laboral de personas LGBTQ) en las distintas instituciones educativas en las que se ha desempeñado?
- 5.) Otro de los factores que se mencionó dentro de las entrevistas fue la relación existente entre aceptación o rechazo de las realidades LGBTQ y el género de los individuos que hacen parte de esta comunidad. Se indica que hombres y mujeres LGBTQ pueden experimentar de manera distinta su entorno laboral, puesto que un grupo es aceptado con mayor facilidad que el otro. Desde su experiencia en las distintas instituciones educativas ¿en qué medida se refleja esta relación entre aceptación o rechazo de las realidades LGBTQ y el género de los individuos que hacen parte de esta comunidad?
- 6.) ¿Ha evidenciado o sido partícipe de tratos humanizantes/dignificantes hacia los maestros abiertamente LGBTQ o que son percibidos como parte de la comunidad LGBTQ en alguno de sus contextos laborales? ¿Qué tipo de tratos y cómo reaccionó al respecto?
- 7.) ¿Ha evidenciado o sido partícipe de tratos desiguales o micro agresiones hacia los maestros LGBTQ o que son percibidos como parte de la comunidad LGBTQ en alguno de los contextos laborales en los que se ha desempeñado? ¿Qué tipo de tratos y cómo reaccionó al respecto?
- 8.) ¿Qué aspectos ha usted evidenciado en los entornos laborales en los cuales ha estado que tomaría como aspectos para enfatizar, continuar, y promover pues contribuyen a crear un entorno laboral saludable para los docentes LGBTQ y demás miembros de la comunidad educativa?
- 9.) ¿Qué aspectos ha usted evidenciado en los entornos laborales en los cuales ha estado que considera necesarios mitigar, cambiar, eliminar en pro de la construcción de un entorno laboral más saludable para los docentes LGBTQ y demás miembros de la comunidad educativa?
- 10.) ¿Qué rol ha jugado usted en la construcción de los distintos entornos laborales de los que ha sido parte en relación con la aceptación o rechazo de las realidades LGBTQ?
- 11.) ¿Qué rol han jugado los distintos miembros de la comunidad educativa (estudiantes, directivos, docentes, padres de familia) en la construcción de los diferentes

entornos laborales de los que ha sido parte en relación con la aceptación o rechazo de las realidades LGBTQ?

- 12.) ¿Considera que espacios de reflexión y discusión como los desarrollados a lo largo del proyecto influyen en la forma en que usted entiende o percibe las realidades LGBTQ? ¿En qué medida?
- 13.) ¿Hay algo más que le gustaría agregar o compartir en relación con las realidades LGBTQ enmarcadas en el ámbito profesional?