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A Global School Climate Crisis:

Insights on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Queer Students in Latin America

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A Global School Climate Crisis:

Insights on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Queer Students in Latin America

by Joseph G. Kosciw, Ph.D and Adrian D. Zongrone, M.P.H.

In collaboration with our partners:

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GLSEN is the leading national education organization focused on ensuring safe schools for all students. Established in 1990, GLSEN envisions a world in which every child learns to respect and accept all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. GLSEN seeks to develop school climates where difference is valued for the positive contribution it makes to creating a more vibrant and diverse community. For more information on our educator resources, research, public policy agenda, student leadership programs, or development initiatives, visit www.glsen.org.

Todo Mejora was founded in 2012 as an affiliate of It Gets Better to promote the well-being of children and adolescents who experience bullying and suicidal behavior due to discrimination based on sexual orientation, identity and gender expression. We work to reduce the suicide rates of children and eradicate bullying in schools, creating safe environments.

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Preface

Fundación Todo Mejora was founded in Chile 7 years ago, as an affiliate of It Gets Better, with the mission of promoting the well-being of children and adolescents suffering from bullying and suicidal behavior, due to discrimination based on their sexual orientation, identity and/or gender expression (SOGIE).

It was an honor for us to partner with GLSEN to articulate the work of twelve NGOs from Latin American countries, allowing us today to understand and highlight the experiences of SOGIE-related school violence in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay. This report enables us to frame the regional challenges of creating safer and more inclusive schools for students who identify themselves or are perceived as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (LGBTQ), also identifying certain national characteristics that deserve attention. It is also an important contribution to the global knowledge base as much of the already existing evidence on SOGIE-related violence comes from countries in the Global North.

During the last decade, school violence in general has become a topic of global concern, resulting in two reports by the UN Secretary General on the subject in 2016 and 2018. In the same period, there has been a great deal of evidence that points to the negative effects of bullying, showing that children and adolescents who are bullied (especially those who experience it frequently) are at risk for a wide range of health outcomes, as well as social, economic and cognitive outcomes, until almost 40 years after the occurrence of bullying. We also know that children recognized as different, especially those perceived as LGBTQ, continue to be at increased risk of school violence and bullying throughout the world, and that victimization based on bias-based harassment, including SOGIE-related bullying, is associated with worse health outcomes compared to bullying for other reasons.

In this context, raising evidence from Latin America regarding negative indicators of the school climate, availability of support resources for LGBT students, and impact of these factors on their academic experiences, constitutes an invaluable contribution, not only for academic discussion, but—in a very important way—also for informing influencers and leaders of the social and political world. Those who make public policy decisions today now have relevant data, generated from research tools adapted for cultural context and for global use. In Chile, we already have concrete examples of how these data serve to support technical and regulatory initiatives that aim to concretely improve the lives of these students and their educational communities.

For this reason, at Fundación Todo Mejora, we express our commitment to continue investigating the reality of students in Chile who suffer for being who they are and who have not had the opportunity to have a voice, so that these students can be heard. In order for us to hold true to this commitment and not have it be a mere expression of hope, the generation of quality information is a fundamental step in order to change contexts that today continue to be hostile and insecure for many students.

Rocío Faúndez García
Directora Social
Todo Mejora

In 2011, GLSEN launched its formal global initiative to partner with LGBTQ organizations around the world to unearth the evidence for action to improve LGBTQ students' lives. Today, we are at work in more than 30 countries in three global regions – Eastern Europe, the Pacific Islands, and Latin America. In the context of rising anti-LGBTQ disinformation, hate, and violence around the world, we stand in solidarity with our partner organizations to proclaim the truth about LGBTQ youth lives in each of their countries and bring our collective voice to bear on international debates on global goals for education, youth development, and human rights.

This report provides an overview of the situation across seven countries in Latin America, illuminating a crisis across the region. We also examine variations in LGBTQ student experience in the countries, considering the impact of their specific religious, social, educational and political contexts.

GLSEN's international initiative has already created new opportunities to respond to the global crisis for LGBTQ youth, through partnerships and advocacy with international institutions including UNESCO, the World Bank, and the World Health Organization. We seek to ensure that global goal-setting and monitoring of development and human rights will include attention to the experience of LGBTQ youth, and that improvements in their lives will become a benchmark for progress worldwide. To date, the World Bank, the WHO, and UNESCO have all created new statements, standards, and/or data collection protocols that include LGBTQ student experience, and provide new leverage for advocacy at the national and international level.

This report is a next step forward in this continuing fight. As governments around the world attack their own LGBTQ communities, we seek to ensure that the damage they cause will be vivid and measurable, and that these communities themselves cannot be ignored or erased. And in those places where governments seek to progress on human rights and LGBTQ inclusion, the data and analysis here and in the country level school climate reports released by our partners provides a roadmap for action, and a baseline to measure the resulting benefits to some of their most vulnerable youth.

We salute each of our partners for their remarkable work to secure the future for LGBTQ youth in their countries, in increasingly difficult circumstances. We thank them for their trust and collaboration. And we pledge continued action, wherever we have access or the ability to open doors, to press the case for LGBTQ youth and bring new voices to the table in this collective fight. .

Eliza Byard, Ph.D.
Executive Director
GLSEN

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The authors first wish to thank the students who participated in the national surveys for enlightening the world about their experiences in school. The project owes tremendous gratitude to Julio Dantas, founder and former executive director of Todo Mejora, and his colleague Andrea Infante Soler for the foundation and leadership of this regional group. Many thanks also go to Rocío Faundez, Todo Mejora's program director, for her current leadership and her insights and feedback on this regional report. We are also thankful to the representatives of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for their tremendous work on their national surveys, as well as their input for this regional report: Ricardo Vallarino, 100% Diversidad y Derechos; Toni Reis, ABGLT and Grupo Dignidade; Roberto Baeza, COJESS and Fundación Arcoiris; José Ramallo, Colectiva Ovejas Negras; Juan Felipe Rivera, Colombia Diversa; George Hale, Promsex, and Lina Cuellar and Juliana Martinez, Sentiido. We are also grateful for Ricardo Baruch for his contribution to this project and Jorge Herrera Valderrábano for input on laws and policies in Mexico.

Our original connections to the NGOs in this region came from a UNESCO regional consultation on homophobic and transphobic bullying and violence, led by Mary Guinn Delaney UNESCO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean. We would like to thank Mary Guinn for involving us in the consultation and for her continued involvement with many of the NGO partners in the region with regard to addressing anti-LGBTQ bullying and harassment in schools.

We would like to acknowledge the Arcus Foundation for their initial funding of GLSEN's international initiatives. We are grateful for the wisdom of our colleague Oren Pizmony-Levy, Teachers College - Columbia University regarding GLSEN's global work and insights on this report. We are also indebted to former GLSEN Research staff members Neal Palmer and Noreen Giga for their early work on the project, as well as Noreen's continued edits and insights on this report. Finally, much gratitude goes to Eliza Byard, GLSEN's Executive Director, for her insights and her deep commitment to the GLSEN Research Institute and to GLSEN's global efforts.

Executive Summary

Introduction

In recent years, there has been increasing international attention to the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) students in schools. Much of the data on this topic, however, has historically come from the United States. Additionally, much of the research conducted internationally on LGBTQ student experiences has been assessed using a variety of research designs and instruments. This has limited the capacity for comparative research in this field. Thus, it has curtailed opportunities to understand how LGBTQ student populations are served in different social contexts and educational systems, which could allow researchers to point to current best practices and future possibilities.

GLSEN's international initiative was formally launched in 2011 to build on years of informal dialogue, exchange, and support with non-governmental organization (NGO) partners from around the world who were concerned about LGBTQ youth health, opportunity, and well-being. The purpose of this initiative was to help build a global knowledge base about the experiences of LGBTQ students and SOGIE-based violence and discrimination in schools. In 2013, GLSEN began a partnership with Todo Mejora, a Chilean-based NGO, to further work on LGBTQ students in Latin America. With support from GLSEN, Todo Mejora established a regional hub consisting of 12 NGOs in 7 Latin American countries: 100% Diversidad y Derechos (Argentina), ABGLT and Grupo Dignidade (Brazil), Todo Mejora (Chile), Sentiido and Colombia Diversa (Colombia), COJESS, Fundación Arcoiris, El Clóset de Sor Juana and INSPIRA A.C (Mexico), PROMSEX (Peru), and Colectivo Ovejas Negras (Uruguay). As a result of this partnership, each of the seven countries conducted national surveys of LGBTQ youth about their experiences in school, and each published national reports from their data. In this report, we used the combined data from all seven countries to examine both positive and negative indicators of school climate for LGBTQ students across all seven of these countries. Our intention is not to rank these countries with regard to where LGBTQ students' educational experiences are better or worse. Rather, this report serves two primary goals: to present challenges shared across all of these countries for creating safer and more inclusive schools for LGBTQ students; and, when there are differences in school climate, to explore the possible structural, cultural, or governmental reasons that may contribute to them.

Methods

Data used for this report came from national surveys of LGBTQ secondary students in seven Latin American countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, and Uruguay. Research was led by national NGOs in each country, and each national survey was based on GLSEN's *National School Climate Survey*, modified by each NGO partner to reflect their country's educational system and cultural context. Each survey assessed negative indicators of school climate, the availability of supportive resources for LGBTQ students, and the possible impact that these factors have on LGBTQ students' academic experiences. The surveys were available online, and the final sample included 5,318 students between the ages of 13 and 20, from all 7 countries. The majority of participants identified as gay or lesbian (66.7%) and were between 16 and 17 years old, with 42.9% identifying as female.

Summary of Findings

Hostile School Climate

Across all seven countries, schools are hostile environments for a distressing number of LGBTQ students, the majority of whom routinely hear anti-LGBTQ language and experience victimization at school. As a result, many LGBTQ students feel unsafe at school, avoid school activities, or miss school entirely. This climate also affects LGBTQ students' psychological well-being and school belonging.

School Safety

- LGBTQ students felt unsafe most often due to their sexual orientation (ranging from 47.4% to 80.6% of students), followed by their gender expression (32.4% – 62.7%).
- LGBTQ students in Colombia were more likely than the other six countries to report feeling unsafe because of how they expressed their gender and gender identity.
- LGBTQ students in all seven countries avoided certain school spaces due to feeling unsafe. Typically gendered spaces were most commonly avoided, including bathrooms, locker rooms, and physical education/gym class.
- A quarter or more of LGBTQ students (23.0% – 36.2%) reported missing at least one day of school in the past month because of feeling unsafe.

Anti-LGBTQ Remarks

- In all seven countries, three-quarters or more of LGBTQ students regularly heard homophobic remarks and negative remarks about gender expression from other students.
- LGBTQ students in Argentina were most likely to report hearing homophobic remarks and negative remarks from students about transgender people, while those in Mexico and Colombia were most likely to hear negative comments from students about gender expression.
- The majority of LGBTQ students (ranging from 58.2% to 79.1%) reported hearing homophobic remarks from teachers or other school staff. Students in Colombia and Peru were most likely to hear these remarks from staff, while students in Chile and Uruguay were least likely.
- In nearly all seven countries, the majority of LGBTQ students (48.5% – 80.4%) reported hearing negative remarks about gender expression from teachers or other school staff. Students in Mexico were most likely to hear these remarks, while students in Uruguay were least likely.
- LGBTQ students in Argentina and Chile were most likely to report that staff had intervened on other students making homophobic remarks, while students in Brazil and Mexico were least likely. Responses ranged from 46.1% to 69.4% of students reporting this across all seven countries.

Harassment and Assault at School

- Most LGBTQ students reported having experienced verbal harassment (e.g., called names or threatened) based on sexual orientation (ranging from 48.9% to 74.6%) or the way they express their gender (58.2% – 70.8%).
- Between a fifth and two-fifths of LGBTQ students reported physical harassment (e.g., shoved or pushed) based on their sexual orientation (22.1% – 43.0%) or the way they express their gender (24.5% – 42.5%).
- Nearly a tenth or more of LGBTQ students reported physical assault (e.g., punched, kicked, or injured with a weapon) based on their sexual orientation (8.9% – 16.5%) or the way they express their gender (10.3% – 15.2%).
- Half or fewer of LGBTQ students (34.7% – 51.4%) ever reported incidents of harassment and assault to teachers and other school staff. Students reporting that staff responses were effective varied greatly across countries, from 28.4% in Brazil to 69.7% in Chile.

- Fewer than half of LGBTQ students (31.6% – 46.1%) ever reported incidents of harassment and assault to a family member. Likewise, less than half of students (31.6% – 40.6%) reported that their family member regularly ("always" or "most of the time") talked with school staff about the incident.

Effects of Hostile School Climate

Compared with students who experienced lower levels of victimization based on their sexual orientation, students across the seven countries who experienced higher levels of victimization:

- Were two or more times as likely to have missed school in the past month;
- Reported a lower sense of school belonging; and
- Had lower levels of self-esteem, and higher levels of depression.

LGBTQ-Related School Resources and Supports

There are several key resources that may help to promote a safer climate and more positive school experiences for students: school personnel who are supportive of LGBTQ students, LGBTQ-inclusive curricular materials, and school policies for addressing incidents of harassment and assault. Thus, each of the countries asked questions about the availability of these resources and supports for LGBTQ students. LGBTQ students who have LGBTQ-related school resources report better school experiences and psychological well-being. Unfortunately, all too many schools fail to provide these critical resources. Further, we examined the utility of these school supports with regard to school safety, student well-being, and educational outcomes (achievement and aspirations).

Supportive School Personnel

Availability

- The majority of LGBTQ students (77.2% – 94.0%) could identify at least one staff member supportive of LGBTQ students at their school.
- Fewer than half of students (17.4% – 43.9%) could identify at least six supportive school staff.
- Among school staff, LGBTQ students were most comfortable speaking with teachers and school-based mental health professionals about LGBTQ-related issues, and were least comfortable speaking with their school director.

Utility

Compared with students with no supportive school staff, students across the seven countries with many supportive staff (six or more) at their school:

- Had a higher sense of school belonging; and
- Were much less likely to have missed school in the past month for safety reasons.

Inclusive Curricular Resources

Availability

- Fewer than half of LGBTQ students (ranging from 19.3% to 43.8%) said that their classes included LGBTQ topics in a positive way, yet there was a similar range in the percentages of LGBTQ students who said their classes included negative curricular inclusion (13.7% – 41.7% of students).

- In Peru, LGBTQ students were more commonly taught negative LGBTQ content than positive content. In Argentina, Chile, Mexico, and Uruguay, positive inclusion was more common than negative, although low in incidence.

- Fewer than a quarter of LGBTQ students (13.3% – 23.1%) had school textbooks or assigned readings that included LGBTQ content.

Utility

Compared to LGBTQ students who had not, students who had been taught positive information about LGBTQ people, history, and events:

- Had a higher sense of school belonging; and

- Were less likely to miss school for safety reasons (in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, and Uruguay).

School Policies

Availability

- Half or fewer of LGBTQ students (ranging from 30.5% to 55.4%) had or knew of any type of anti-bullying or harassment policy in their school. (N.B. Uruguay's survey did not include a question about policy.) Far fewer students (6.9% – 14.7%) reported that these policies specifically enumerated sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

- Students in Colombia were most likely to report having an anti-bullying/harassment policy, and also most likely to report having an inclusive policy (i.e., enumerating both sexual orientation and gender identity/expression).

Utility

Compared to students in schools without an inclusive anti-bullying/harassment policy, students in schools with an inclusive policy:

- Were less likely to hear homophobic remarks in school;

- Were less likely to experience verbal harassment due to sexual orientation (in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Mexico);

- Were more likely to report victimization to school staff (in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Mexico);

- Were more likely to report that teachers and other school staff regularly intervened on homophobic remarks; and

- Were more likely to report that staff intervention on harassment/assault was effective.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Results from this multinational report clearly demonstrate that, for all seven of these countries in Latin American, there is an urgent need for action to create safe and affirming learning environments for LGBTQ students. LGBTQ students across these countries commonly feel unsafe in school, hear anti-LGBTQ remarks, and experience harassment and assault due to their sexual orientation or gender expression. Further, school personnel do not often intervene when they hear anti-LGBTQ remarks, and often make anti-LGBTQ remarks themselves. Moreover, we found that the victimization faced by many LGBTQ students can lead to poorer well-being, less welcoming schools, and more negative educational outcomes. Positive LGBTQ student supports — including supportive staff, inclusive curricular resources, and inclusive anti-bullying/harassment policies — can improve academic experiences for LGBTQ students. To that end, each country has outlined specific recommendations for their own national context, and we would encourage readers to examine these in detail. Some recommendations that were common among the seven countries include:

- Enacting and enforcing policies to address anti-LGBTQ discrimination and violence in schools, and developing national protocols to report and respond to such incidents;
- Ensuring that school policies and practices do not discriminate against LGBTQ students, and that existing discriminatory policies and practices are eliminated;
- Designing school-based interventions to promote better school coexistence, specifically with regard to anti-LGBTQ harassment and violence, including guidance for students and family members on how to effectively respond to anti-LGBTQ harassment and violence;
- Providing accurate, relevant, and comprehensive sex education that does not serve to marginalize people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities;
- Training teachers to better respond to the needs of their LGBTQ students by providing professional development to current educators and requiring that LGBTQ topics are covered in undergraduate and graduate educator training courses;
- Developing public awareness campaigns and providing educational materials for families in the school community to promote a more inclusive school environment for all students, including LGBTQ students; and
- Conducting and funding research that continues to both examine the experiences of LGBTQ students in each country and evaluate practices to improve school climate for LGBTQ students.

Taken together, such measures can move us toward a future in which all students have the opportunity to learn and succeed in school, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Learn More

This Executive Summary provides a broad overview of a school climate for LGBTQ students in the seven Latin American countries. The full report provides greater detail and insight into each of the items highlighted above, as well as more detailed explorations of each individual country, including:

- Differences in hostile school climate and supportive LGBTQ student resources between countries;
- Differences between countries in how LGBTQ student experiences are impacted by victimization and biased language;
- Differences in how supportive school resources in different countries improve school climate for LGBTQ students; and
- An examination of various cultural factors that may impact LGBTQ student experiences in each individual country.

Introduction

In recent years, there has been increasing international attention to the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ[1]) students in schools, and a growing concern regarding anti-LGBTQ violence and bias directed at youth as a serious human rights issue and barrier to global development goals. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) called for more research on LGBTQ students globally, particularly in developing countries, and has hosted new initiatives, including the first-ever international consultation on homophobic and transphobic bullying in schools, which was accompanied by two related publications: *Review of Homophobic Bullying in Educational Institutions*, and *Education Sector Responses to Homophobic Bullying*.[2] UNESCO defined homophobic and transphobic bullying as a global problem that violates LGBTQ students' rights and impedes their educational success. In 2016, UNESCO released *Out in the Open: Education Sector Responses to Violence Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity/Expression*, a global review documenting both the violence, harassment, and discrimination that LGBTQ students experience and the available educational interventions.[3] UNESCO also issued a "Call for Action" at an International Ministerial Meeting on sexual orientation, and gender identity/expression (SOGIE)-related violence and discrimination, to which 56 nations have signed on, including 15 Latin American countries.[4] Further, in their recent report *Investing in a Research Revolution for LGBTQI Inclusion*, the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) state:

> *Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) people throughout the world have led global efforts to raise awareness of their experience of ongoing discrimination, exclusion, and violence. Despite some gains that have made information more available, huge gaps in research and data on LGBTI experiences persist in every country, blocking progress toward inclusion and the realization of human rights for all. (p. 2)*[5]

Despite this international call for research, much of the existing data on LGBTQ student experiences has come from the United States[6], providing limited opportunity for comparative research in this field.[7] This shortage of comparative research is also a result of scholars' use of different research designs and/or instruments. Comparative research on the experience of LGBTQ students would further the development of scholarship and practice. Recent comparative research from the U.S. and Israel, for example, has provided initial insight into how the experiences of LGBT students are similar in different country contexts, illustrates some key differences both in the prevalence of anti-LGBT behaviors in school and how these occurrences affect LGBT students, and further illustrates the need for further comparative research on LGBT students across multiple country contexts.[8] Comparative research on school experience of LGBTQ students is needed to understand how the LGBTQ student populations are served in different social contexts and educational systems, and, in turn, point to current best practices and future possibilities.[9]

GLSEN's international initiative was formally launched in 2011 to build on years of informal dialogue, exchange, and support with non-governmental organization (NGO) partners from around the world who were concerned about LGBTQ youth health, opportunity, and well-being. The purpose of this initiative was to help build a global knowledge base about the experiences of LGBTQ students and SOGIE-based violence and discrimination in schools. As part of this initiative, in 2013, GLSEN began a partnership with Todo Mejora, a Chilean-based NGO, to further work on LGBTQ students in Latin America. With support from GLSEN, Todo Mejora established a regional hub consisting of 12 NGOs in 7 Latin American countries: 100% Diversidad y Derechos (Argentina), ABGLT and Grupo Dignidade (Brazil), Todo Mejora (Chile), Sentiido and Colombia Diversa (Colombia), COJESS, Fundación Arcoiris, El Clóset de Sor Juana and INSPIRA A.C (Mexico), PROMSEX (Peru), and Colectivo Ovejas Negras (Uruguay). This initiative, in part, responds to the call for evidence-based practice from international organizations, e.g., UNDP, UNESCO, and World Bank, to improve the lives of LGBTQ learners in primary and secondary schools around the world at the regional, national, and international levels.

National Contexts of the Latin American Countries in the Study

The Latin American countries in this initiative have advanced the protection and recognition of the rights of LGBTQ people (see Appendix). Marriage equality exists in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and

Uruguay, and in some Mexican states; Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru have anti-discrimination laws that include protections based on sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, and Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Uruguay recognize gender identity, as in legally being able to change one's gender on government documents.[10] However, there is a growing concern in the region about current circumstances that could undermine LGBTQ rights, as well as result in an escalation of hate crimes targeting LGBTQ people, including religious hate speech and institutional initiatives. The MERCOSUR IPPDH (Instituto de Políticas Públicas en Derechos Humanos [Institute for Human Rights Policies]), an intergovernmental body created in 2009 that works to support in the coordination of regional human rights policies across several Latin American countries, maintains that nations need to address inequities for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) populations in fundamental rights, including education.[11] The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has also expressed concern about "the high levels of violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and intersex (LGBTI) persons, or those perceived as such in the Americas and the lack of an efficient response from the States," and that violence against LGBTQ youth is most common in schools.[12] The NGOs in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, and Uruguay work to protect and promote the rights of LGBTQ people, including LGBTQ students. Many of the countries below have advocated for school policies and practices to provide education on sexual and gender diversity, yet they face substantial opposition from both the government and religious groups, which are sometimes embedded within the governments themselves. These country-specific obstacles facing the countries included in our study include:

Argentina

Although there is recognition of same-sex marriage and gender identity in law, Argentina has no legal protection of LGBTQ people against discrimination. Furthermore, there has been recent national defunding of programs that address discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity/expression. In addition, there are no legal protections for sexual orientation and gender identity in education and the healthcare systems.

Brazil

Representation from ultraconservative religious leaders and from institutions dedicated to promoting "traditional values" have increased at the legislative branch at national, state and municipal levels of government in Brazil. In terms of education, Brazil has a national ten-year education plan, which is approved in the form of a law, and has been replicated with few alterations at state and municipal legislative levels. The majority of these plans were enacted in 2014 and 2015. However, during the period in which the laws were drafted and approved, heated debates emerged about the "gender ideology" fallacy and respect for sexual diversity in schools. Specific mention of promotion of gender equality and respect for sexual diversity was struck from the wording of the proposed national law and most sub-national laws. Several municipalities went so far as to specifically prohibit teachers from speaking about gender equality and respect for sexual diversity, and from having these subjects included in any kind of education material; thus, the majority of schools is not particularly favorable to advancing LGBTQI issues. Further, in 2017, a Brazilian federal judge decided psychologists could perform "conversion therapy," a widely discredited practice meant to change a person's sexual orientation.[13] There have been recent positive actions by the government, specifically related to transgender people. In 2018, the Brazilian Education Ministry issued an ordinance allowing transgender students, whether over or under the age of majority, to use their preferred name (rather than their legal name) at school and on all school records and the Brazilian Supreme Court ruled that transgender persons no longer need to have medical reports, to have undergone gender confirmation surgery and to take out legal proceedings in order to have their name and gender changed on all official records.

Chile

In 2017, the Ministry of Education launched a guide of recommendations for the incorporation of LGBTQ students in schools in Chile. Also in 2017, the Ministry of Education issued two ministerial ordinances: *Circular de Derechos de niñas, niños y jóvenes trans en el ámbito de la educación* [Circular regarding the rights of girls, boys and trans youth in the field of education][14] and *Orientación para la inclusión de las personas lesbianas, gays, bisexuales, trans e intersex en*

el sistema educativo chileno [Guidance for the inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex persons in the Chilean educational system][15]. Both initiatives offer unprecedented instructions and guidance on measures such as: allowing trans students to use their name, even if it was different from the legal name; the right to wear uniforms that match students' gender identity; and facilitate transgender students the use of restrooms and facilities according to their gender identity. In November 2018, the Gender Identity Law was passed and will take effect at the end of 2019. This law will allow the legal recognition of transgender people, including the option for adolescents between 14 and 17 years of age to change their name and registration sex if accompanied by one of their parents. However, in Chile during 2016, 11,503 complaints were made to the *Superintendencia de Educación* [Superintendent of Education], an autonomous public institution, in charge of regulating and auditing various school procedures. Of these complaints, 44% were related to discrimination or abuse in school, of which many were related to sexual orientation or gender expression.[16] Public policy is still pending in Chile that would allow for implementing practices that would reduce school violence for SOGIE-related reasons.

Colombia

In 2016, there was religious and political opposition to the law allowing same-sex partners and single parents to adopt children in Colombia, which ultimately failed. The suicide of high school student Sergio Urrego, in 2014, that was related to harassment and discrimination at his school, resulted in a historic lawsuit that mandated all schools to revise their *manuals de convivencia* to ensure they did not discriminate against LGBTQ students and to promote discrimination-free environments.[17] In 2016, Colombia's Ministry of Education, in conjunction with two United Nations agencies, had prepared a manual for sexual and gender diversity for educators, Ambientes escolares libres de discriminación [Discrimination-Free School Environments], which was a mandate from the Constitutional Court.[18] That same year, the defeat of the referendum that sought to validate the historic peace agreement with the FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) failed because of the influence of Christian and conservative groups that disagreed with the incorporation of gender in the agreement, given that it explicitly recognized LGBTQ people as victims of specific forms of sexual- and gender-based violence in the context of the armed conflict.

Mexico

Even though there has been progress in the legal framework recognizing LGBTQ rights in Mexico, this progress has been unequal throughout the country, due to the ability of states to develop their own policies and regulations. Thanks to efforts by the Supreme Court, adoption is now possible for any family, regardless of its composition at a national level. Nevertheless, children's rights at schools are not being fully promoted and protected. At the federal level, several government ministries[19] and other institutions[20] have included LGBTQ rights in their platforms[21], but the Ministry of Education (SEP) has been one of the few where no advancement has been made. Sexuality education in schools is still limited and inclusion of LGBT related content is almost nonexistent.[22] Even though there have been campaigns against bullying, there is no official recognition of violence at school motivated by sexual orientation or gender identity. Several organizations[23] have been pushing for years for official recognition of homophobic bullying as a problem, with little or no success. The threat from a growing conservative force is similar to that facing other countries in Latin America and has made it harder to work on gender and sexuality issues in schools.

Peru

In Peru, workshops on sexual orientation, sex, and gender issues have been held for students, teachers, and parents in different parts of the country such as the regions of Lima, Ayacucho, Ucayali, and Loreto. However, there was a very intense campaign by a citizens group, *Con Mis Hijos No Te Metas* [Don't Mess with my Kids], to eliminate the gender focus of the National Basic Education Curriculum that reached the courts, resulting in the elimination of this content. However, the terms "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" were still maintained in the curriculum. In reaction to the controversy, PROMSEX carried out their campaign #EducaciónConIgualdad (Education With Equality), which resulted in many members of the Executive Branch of Peru expressing their support for this important educational policy that sought the prevention of violence against children,

adolescents and LGBTQI people. Nevertheless, opposition groups took this to Court and a resolution is still pending.

Uruguay

There has been recent opposition from political, religious, and conservative family groups in Uruguay against sexual education in general, and sexual diversity education specifically. Since 2014, two didactic guides were presented to work on issues of sexual education and diversity in the educational space, eliciting controversies and reactions from government and religious sectors. In 2014, the Ministry of Social Development, in collaboration with Colectivo Ovejas Negras, Inmujeres and ANEP, presented a Didactic Guide on Sexual Education and Diversity, but its distribution was suspended because it considered that some contents were not relevant. In 2017, the Council of Initial and Primary Education (CEIP) released their Educational proposal for the approach to sexual education in Initial and Primary Education renewing controversy and criticism on the issues. Political opposition publicly criticized the guide claiming that it sought to impose a gender ideology that would "denaturalize" and "deconstruct" gender models and roles and would result in discrimination against heterosexuals. Religious opponents of the Evangelical and Catholic churches were similarly critical about diversity and human rights education, similarly making claims about "gender ideology." For example, the Cardinal of the Catholic Church in Montevideo wrote: "You have to be vigilant. We must be attentive to the gender ideology that they want to impose...which is ideological colonization."[24] Additionally, in November 2017, the Uruguayan civic organization Con Mis Hijos No Te Metas [Don't Mess with My Kids], supported by the movement A Mis Hijos No Los Tocan - Uruguay [Don't Touch My Children], held a national demonstration calling to reject the education standards claiming "gender ideology" violates the right of parents.

While the network of countries in this initiative do have their own unique challenges and opportunities, they also share common obstacles and recommendations as to how the individual countries and perhaps the region can best ensure that LGBTQ youth can thrive in safer educational environments, enabling these young people to fully exercise their right to an education. In their own countries and also regionally, these organizations work to protect and advance the rights of LGBTQ persons and have long been the sources of information about the experiences of this population. Specifically, NGOs in these countries have worked to decriminalize being LGBTQ, prevent discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE), and advance social and economic rights such as marriage and job protection. This initiative marked the first time that national surveys on the experiences of LGBTQ students had been conducted in most of these countries, providing the much needed evidence to advocate for this population and to prevent discrimination and violence based on SOGIE in schools.

Methods and Sample

Data used for this report came from national surveys of LGBTQ secondary students in seven Latin American countries: Argentina (AR), Brazil (BR), Chile (CH), Colombia (CO), Mexico (MX), Peru (PE), and Uruguay (UR). In each country, the research was led by national NGOs whose mission is related to LGBTQ human rights generally or to the experiences of LGBTQ youth specifically: 100% Diversidad y Derechos (AR), ABGLT and Grupo Dignidade (BR), Todo Mejora (CH), Sentiido and Colombia Diversa (CO), COJESS (MX), PROMSEX (PE), and Colectivo Ovejas Negras (UR). The research was part of a regional effort led by Todo Mejora and GLSEN to expand the knowledge base about LGBTQ issues in education in Latin America.

In each national survey, participants completed an online survey about their experiences in school at the end of the prior school year. In most of the countries, data was collected from December 2015 to March 2016. As Mexico uses a different academic calendar than the other countries, data was collected in Mexico from June to September 2016.[25] Each national survey was based on the GLSEN National School Climate Survey, which has been conducted in the United States biennially since 1999[26], but was modified by each NGO partner to reflect each country's educational system and cultural context. All surveys assessed the frequency of hearing biased remarks, the frequency of being harassed or assaulted, and the extent to which LGBTQ students felt safe and comfortable at school. The surveys also assessed students' academic experiences, attitudes about school, involvement in school-related activities, and availability of supportive school resources. Youth in each country were eligible to participate in the survey if they were at least 13 years of age (14 years of age in Peru)[27], attended a secondary school in their respective country during the 2015 or 2015/2016 academic year, and identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or a sexual orientation other than heterosexual (e.g., queer, questioning) or described themselves as transgender or as having another gender identity that is not cisgender ("cisgender" describes a person whose gender identity is aligned with the sex they were assigned at birth). National findings from surveys of each individual country are available from the respective NGOs (in Portuguese for the Brazil report, Spanish for all other countries).[28]

In each country, the survey was available online and advertised through the NGOs website or social media sites, email lists, and through partner organizational contacts in the respective countries. Each NGO also advertised the survey on Facebook to users living in their country between 13 (14 for Peru) and 18 years of age who indicated on their profile that they might identify as LGBTQ, including: male and interested in men, male and interested in men and women, female and interested in women, and female and interested in women and men, liking the NGO organization's page, or being interested in LGBTQ issues (e.g., Pride, marriage equality).

The final sample from all countries consisted of a total of 5,318 students between the ages of 13 and 20. Table 1.1 presents participants' demographic and school characteristics. The majority of the participants identified as gay or lesbian (66.7%), 42.9% identified as female, and 51.8% were between 16 and 17 years old.

In this report, we examine indicators of school climate for LGBTQ students across seven countries in Latin America, including both negative student experiences and positive school supports. Our intention is not to rank these countries with regard to where LGBTQ students' educational experiences are better or worse. Rather, this report serves two primary goals: to present challenges shared across all of these countries for creating safer and more inclusive schools for LGBTQ students; and, when there are differences in school climate, to explore the possible structural, cultural, or governmental reasons that may contribute to them.

Table 1.1. Demographic Characteristics of the Participants in the Seven Latin American Countries
(Total N = 5318*)

Country (n = 5318)	
Argentina	14.7%
Brazil	19.1%
Chile	8.0%
Colombia	10.9%
Mexico	33.3%
Peru	6.0%
Uruguay	8.0%
Sexual Orientation (n = 5308)	
Gay or Lesbian	66.7%
Bisexual or Pansexual	28.0%
Another Sexual Orientation (e.g., queer or questioning)	5.3%
Gender (n = 5258)	
Cisgender Female	42.9%
Cisgender Male	39.3%
Transgender	6.4%
Other Gender (e.g., genderqueer)	11.4%
Age (n = 5313)	
13	2.8%
14	7.7%
15	15.6%
16	22.8%
17	29.0%
18	17.0%
19 or older	5.7%
Mean = 16.4 years	
Type of School (n = 5292)	
Public School	68.1%
Private School, Religious	15.5%
Private School, Non-Religious	15.4%
Other Type of School (e.g., privately managed public school)	1.0%
School Location (n = 4978)	
Urban	79.6%
Suburban	15.8%
Small Town, Village or Rural	4.5%

*Sample sizes ("n") for demographic variables differ because respondents were allowed to skip questions, resulting in some missing data.

Results: Experiences of Hostile School Climate for LGBTQ Students

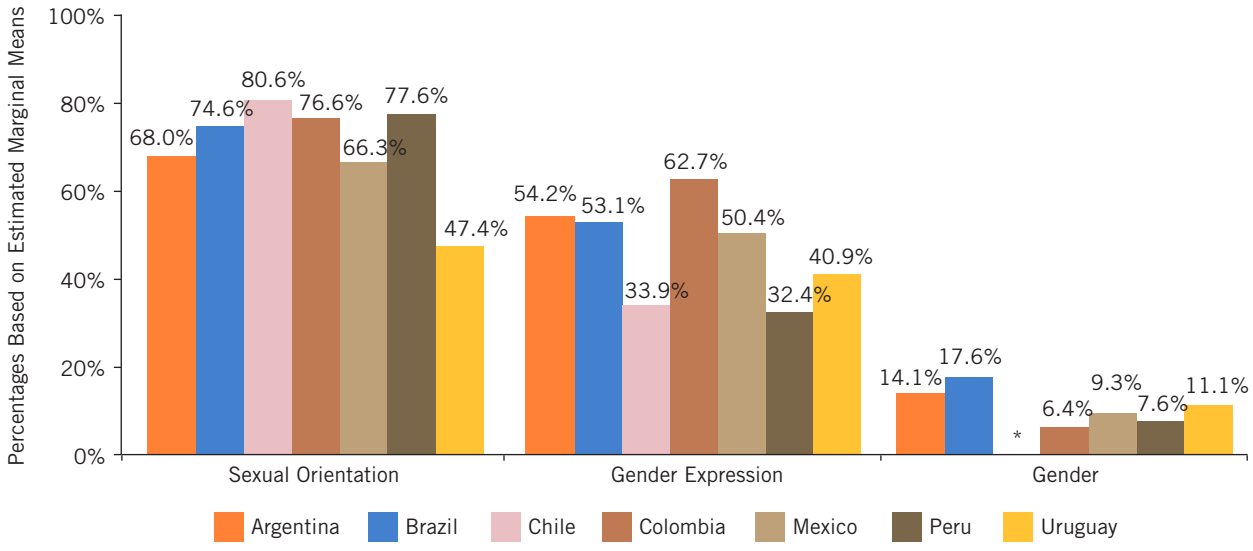
School Safety

For LGBTQ youth, school can be an unsafe place for a variety of reasons. Students across the seven surveys were asked whether they ever felt unsafe at school during the past year because of a personal characteristic, including: sexual orientation, gender, and gender expression (i.e., how traditionally "masculine" or "feminine" they were in appearance or behavior). As shown in Figure 1.1, across all countries LGBTQ students most commonly felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation, followed by their gender expression. Regarding sexual orientation, two-thirds or more of LGBTQ students in each of the countries felt unsafe, with the exception of Uruguay.[29] Regarding gender expression, the percent of students feeling unsafe ranged from about a third of students in Chile, Peru, and Uruguay to more than half in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Mexico.[30] LGBTQ students in the seven countries were less likely to report feeling unsafe because of their gender, but across most countries, a tenth or more felt unsafe for this reason.[31] LGBTQ students in Colombia were most likely to report feeling unsafe because of how they expressed their gender and their gender identity compared to LGBTQ students from the other six countries.

When students feel unsafe or uncomfortable in school they may choose to avoid the particular areas or activities where they feel most unwelcome or may feel that they need to avoid attending school altogether. Thus, a hostile school climate can impact an LGBTQ student's ability to fully engage and participate with the school community. In each of the seven surveys, LGBTQ students were asked if there were particular spaces at school that they avoided specifically because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable. As shown in Figure 1.2, the majority of LGBTQ students in all seven countries reported that they had avoided spaces at school because they feel unsafe. LGBTQ students in Colombia and Mexico were less likely to avoid spaces compared to their peers in the other five countries.[32] Each national survey asked about specific spaces that students avoided, and across all countries, LGBTQ students most commonly avoided gender segregated spaces such as, bathrooms, locker rooms, and physical education/gym class.

Feeling unsafe and uncomfortable at school can negatively affect the ability of students to succeed academically, particularly if it results in avoiding school or classes. All seven national surveys asked whether students had missed school in the past month because of feeling unsafe. As shown in Figure 1.3, one fifth to one third of LGBTQ students reported not going to school at least one day in the last month. Missing school for safety reasons was less common for LGBTQ students in Colombia and Mexico.[33]

Figure 1.1. Feeling Unsafe at School



*Country did not include this question.

Figure 1.2 Avoid Spaces at School for Safety Reasons

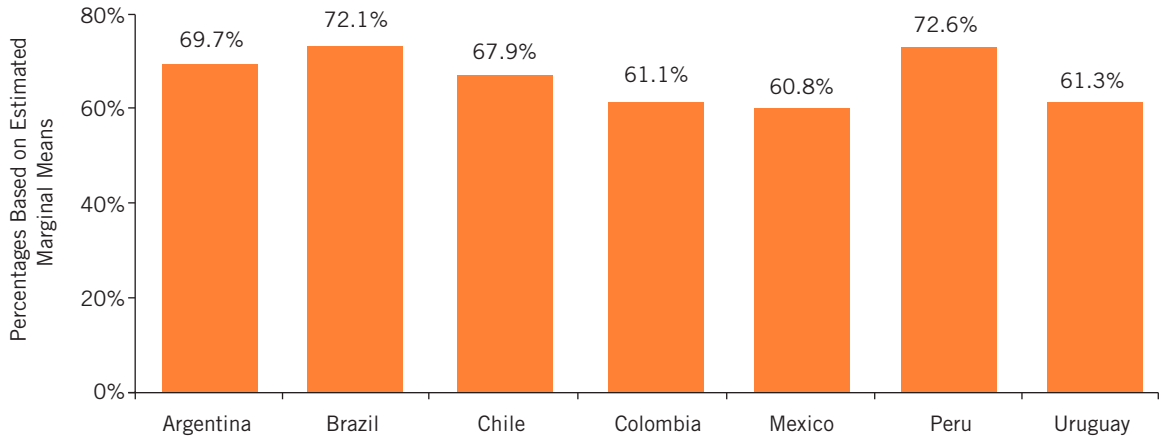
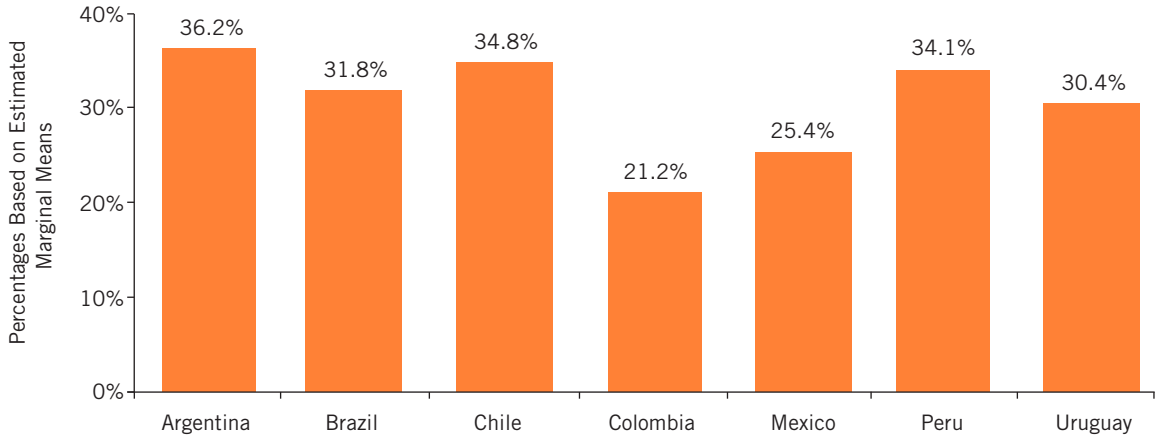


Figure 1.3. Missing School Because of Feeling Unsafe
(percent reporting missing at least one day of school in the past month)



Exposure to Biased Language

Homophobic and other types of biased language can create a hostile school environment for all students. In all seven countries, LGBTQ students were asked about their experiences with hearing anti-LGBTQ remarks from both students and from school staff: homophobic remarks, negative remarks about gender expression, and negative remarks about transgender people.

Students

As shown in Figure 1.4, homophobic remarks and remarks about gender expression from other students were pervasive in all seven Latin American countries, with three-quarters or more of students reporting they heard these remarks sometimes, often, or frequently in the previous school year. Across the seven countries, students in Argentina were more likely to report hearing homophobic remarks and negative transgender remarks than students in all other countries, and students in Mexico and Colombia were more likely to hear negative comments about gender expression.[34] (Note: Mexico's survey did not ask about transgender remarks at school.)

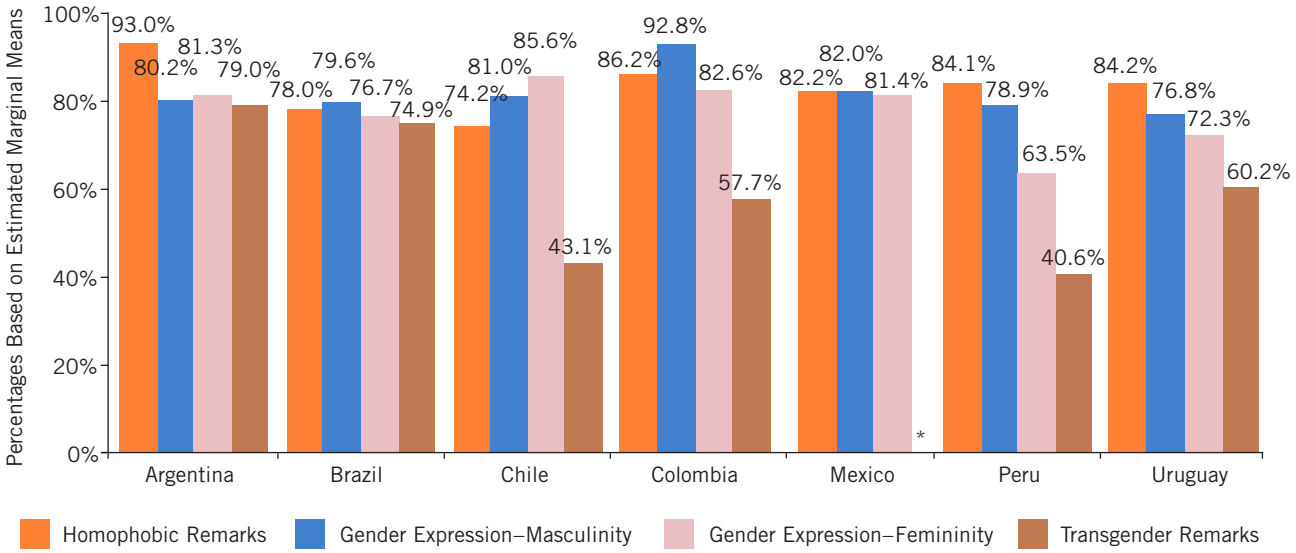
School Staff

Across countries, students commonly reported hearing homophobic remarks and negative gender expression remarks from teachers and other school staff. As shown in Figure 1.5, with the exception of Uruguay, nearly 80% of students in all other countries reported hearing negative gender remarks from faculty and over 60% ever heard homophobic remarks. With regard to homophobic remarks, students in Colombia and Peru were more likely to hear these remarks from school personnel compared to all other countries, and students in Chile and Uruguay were least likely to hear these remarks from school personnel.[35] With regard to negative remarks about gender expression, students in Mexico were most likely to report hearing these remarks from staff, and Uruguay was again least likely.[36]

Intervention by School Staff

One would expect teachers and school staff to intervene when biased language is used in their presence. As shown in Figure 1.6, across the seven Latin American countries, the percentage of LGBTQ students who reported higher frequencies of intervention by school staff regarding homophobic remarks ranged from about half to

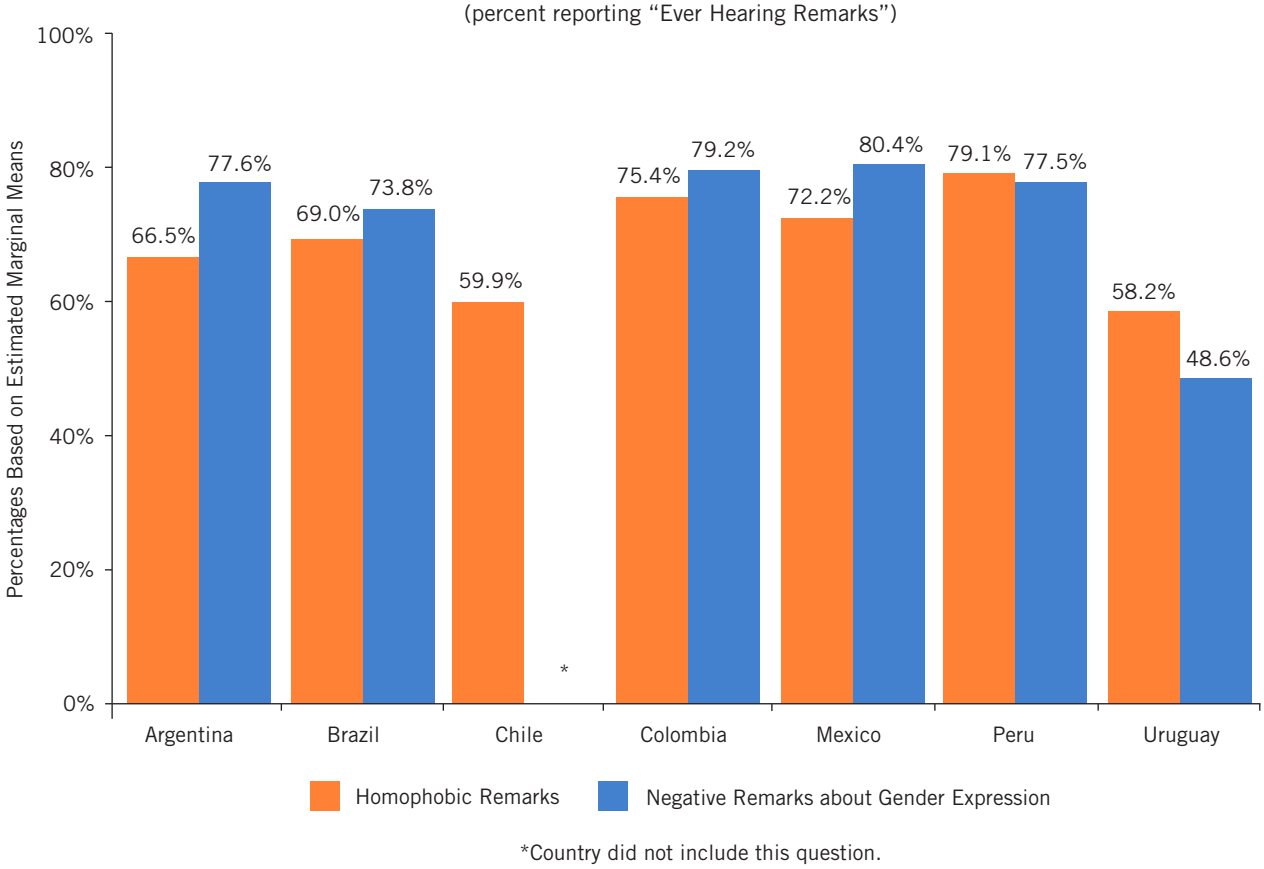
Figure 1.4. Frequency of Hearing Anti-LGBTQ Remarks in School in the Past Year
(percentage reporting "sometimes," "often," or "frequently")



*Country did not include this question.

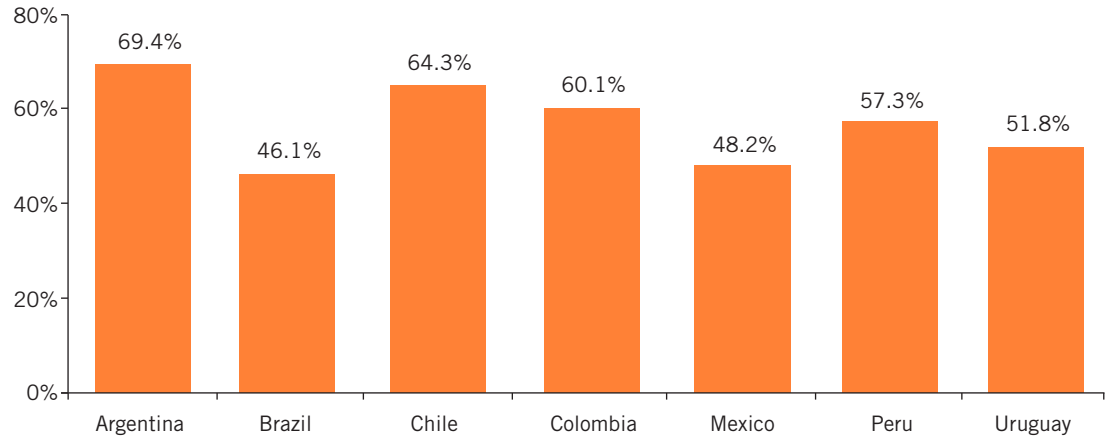
two-thirds of the students. Students in Argentina and Chile were more likely to report intervention in homophobic remarks than all other countries, and Brazil and Mexico were less likely than all others.[37]

Figure 1.5. Percent of Students Hearing Anti-LGBTQ Remarks from Teachers or School Staff
(percent reporting "Ever Hearing Remarks")



*Country did not include this question.

Figure 1.6. Educator Intervention Regarding Homophobic Remarks
(percent who reported above average intervention)



Experiences of Harassment and Assault at School

Hearing anti-LGBTQ remarks in school can contribute to feeling unsafe at school and create a negative learning environment. However, direct experiences with harassment and assault may have even more serious consequences on the lives of these students. In each of the seven countries, participants were asked how often ("never," "rarely," "sometimes," "often," or "frequently") they had been verbally harassed, physically harassed, or physically assaulted at school during the past year specifically because of a personal characteristic, including sexual orientation and gender expression (e.g., not acting "masculine" or "feminine" enough).[38]

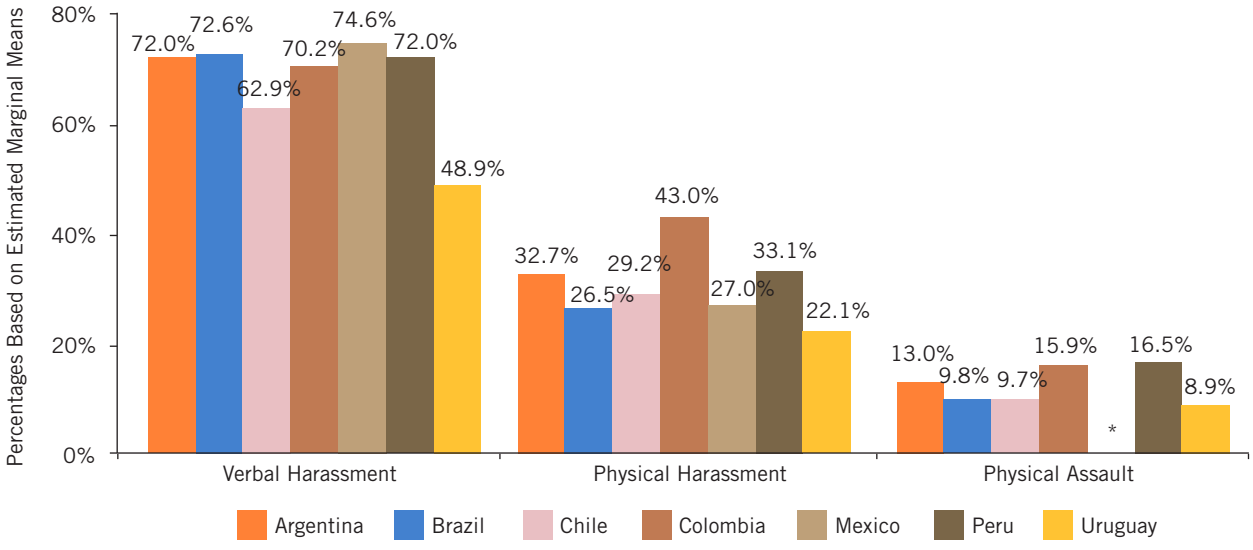
With regard to victimization based on sexual orientation, as shown in Figure 1.7:[39]

- The majority of LGBTQ students in the seven countries (between half and three-quarters) reported having experienced verbal harassment (e.g., being called names or threatened) at school. Students in Chile and Uruguay reported significantly lower frequencies, on average, than those in all other countries, and students in Argentina and Brazil reported higher frequencies than most of the other countries.[40]
- Between a fifth and two-fifths of LGBTQ students reported physical harassment (e.g., shoved or pushed). Students in Colombia reported a significantly higher frequency, on average, than students in other countries.[41]
- Nearly a tenth or more of LGBTQ students reported physical assault (e.g., punched, kicked, or injured with a weapon) at school in the past year. Students in Argentina, Colombia and Peru reported significantly higher frequencies compared to students in Brazil and Chile.[42]

With regard to victimization based on gender expression, as shown in Figure 1.8:[43]

- More than two-thirds of LGBTQ students in all seven countries reported having experienced verbal harassment (e.g., being called names or threatened) because they did not present their gender as "feminine" or "masculine" enough according to stereotypical ideals of gender at school. Students in Chile and Peru reported significantly lower frequencies, on average, than those in all other countries.[44]

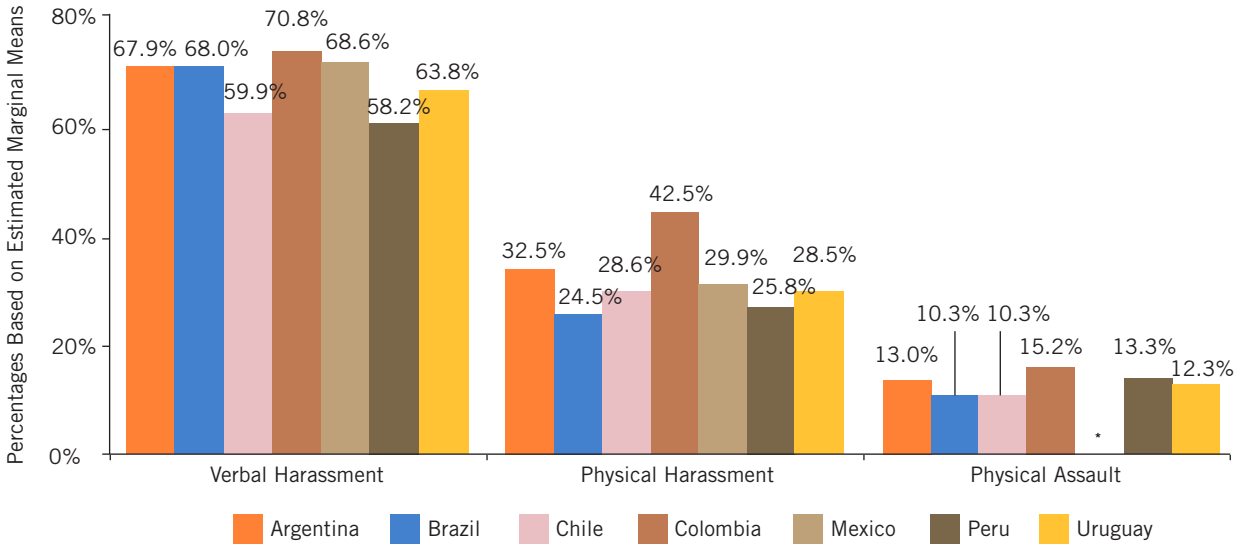
Figure 1.7. Harassment and Assault Because of Sexual Orientation
(Any Experience in the Past Year)



*Country did not include this question.

- Between one-fifth and one-quarter of LGBTQ students reported physical harassment (e.g., shoved or pushed). Students in Colombia and Argentina reported a significantly higher frequency, on average, than students in most other countries.[45]
- Nearly a tenth or more of LGBTQ students reported physical assault (e.g., punched, kicked, or injured with a weapon) at school in the past year. There were no significant differences across the seven countries.[46]

Figure 1.8. Harassment and Assault Because of Gender Expression
(Any Experience in the Past Year)



*Country did not include this question.

Reporting of School-Based Harassment and Assault

When harassment and assault occur in school, we expect the teachers and school personnel to address the problems effectively. However, students may not always feel comfortable reporting these events to staff. In each of the Latin American surveys, students who had experienced harassment or assault in the past school year were asked how often they had reported the incidents to school staff. As shown in Figure 1.9, across the seven countries, only half or fewer of these students ever reported incidents to staff. LGBTQ students in Argentina were more likely to report incidents to staff than those students in all other countries.[47]

Students who said that they had reported incidents of victimization to school staff were also asked how effective staff members were in addressing the problem. There was a wide range in students' ratings of effectiveness across the seven countries, from 28.4% reporting that staff were somewhat or very effective in Brazil to 69.7% in Chile (see Figure 1.10). LGBTQ students in Chile reported higher ratings of effectiveness than students in all other countries except Mexico, and students in Brazil reported lower ratings than students in all other countries except Uruguay.[48]

Given that family members may be able to advocate on behalf of the student with school personnel, students were asked if they reported harassment or assault to a family member (i.e., to their parent or guardian or to another family member). Yet less than half of students across the seven countries said that they had ever told a family member (see also Figure 1.9). The levels of reporting victimization to family members largely did not differ among the seven countries.[49]

Students who had reported incidents to a family member were asked how often a family member had talked to school staff about the incident. As shown in Figure 1.11, less than half of LGBTQ students in the seven countries said that the family member had regularly addressed the issue with school staff ("always" or "most of the time"), and there were no differences across the seven countries.

Figure 1.9. Frequency of Students Reporting Victimization
(percentages of those who ever reported)

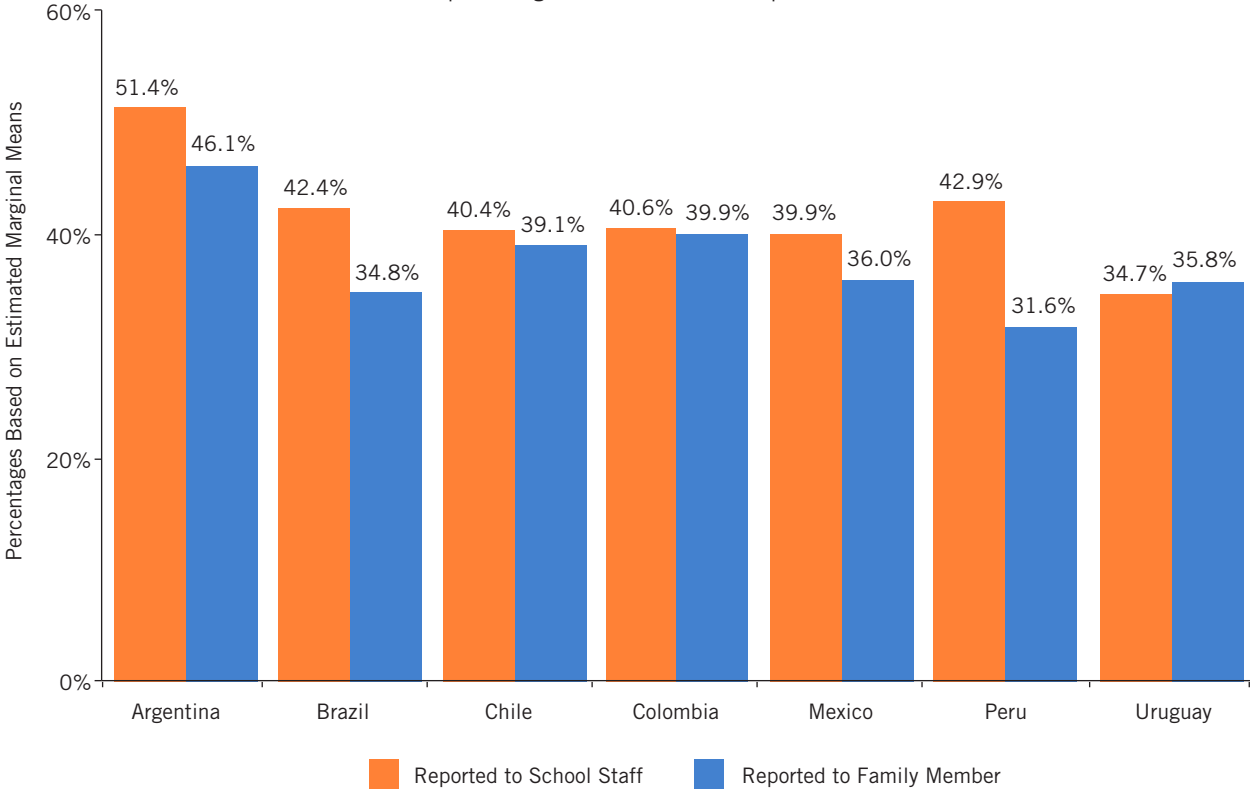


Figure 1.10. Effective Reporting to School Staff
(percentage reporting "somewhat effective" or "very effective")

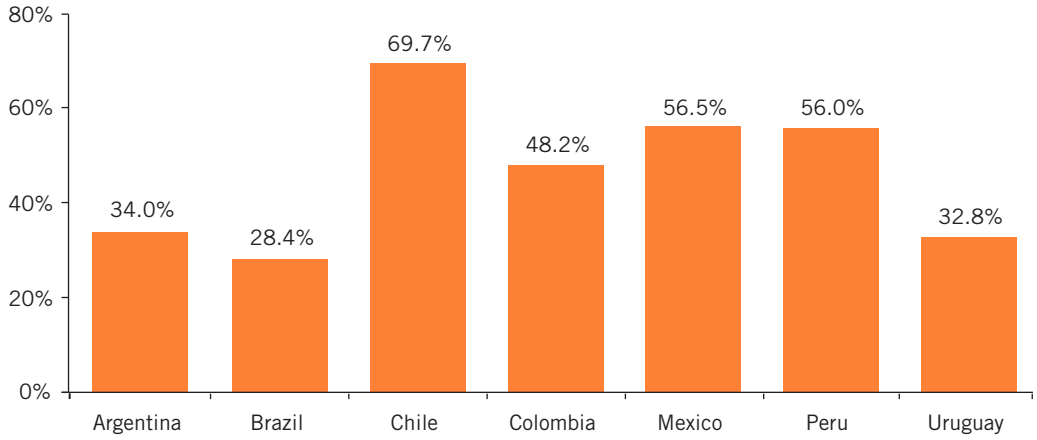
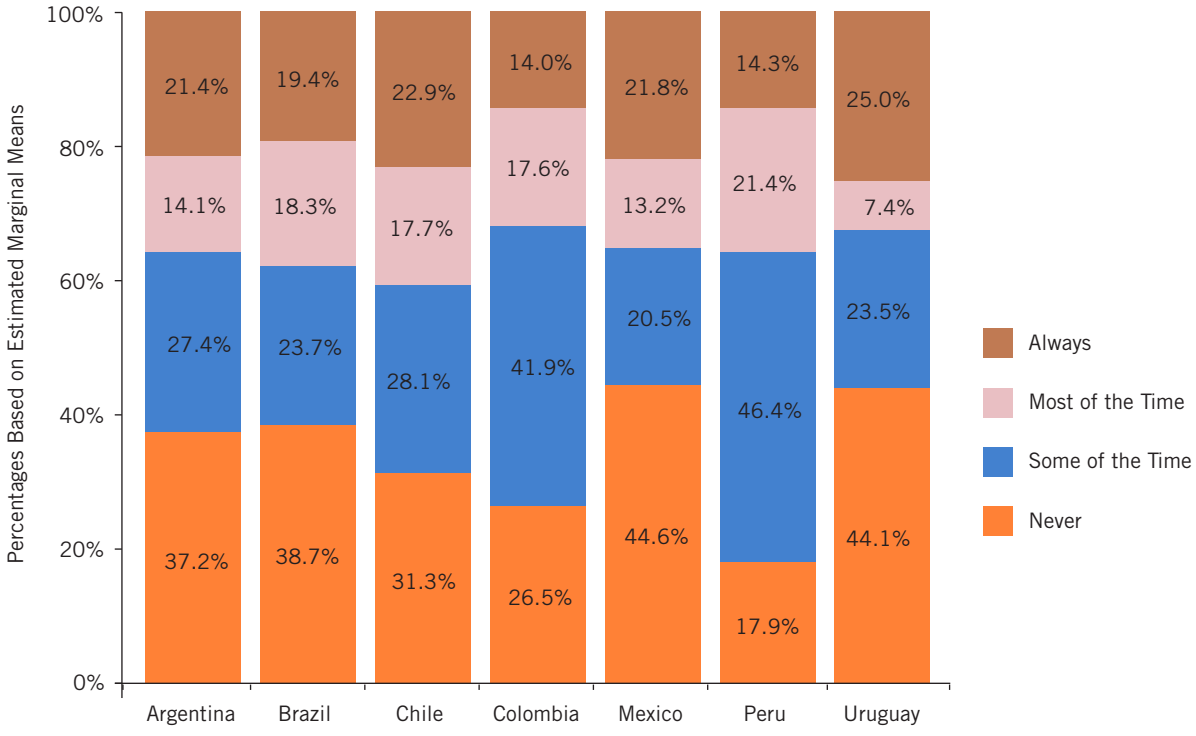


Figure 1.11. Family Member Discussed with School Staff



Hostile School Climate, Educational Outcomes, and Well-Being

All students deserve equal access to education, yet LGBTQ students can face a variety of obstacles to academic success and opportunity. Given the hostile climates encountered by LGBTQ students, it is understandable that some students could have poorer outcomes in school, and may also be adversely affected psychologically and emotionally. In this section, we examine the effect of a hostile school climate on absenteeism, sense of school belonging, and psychological well-being.

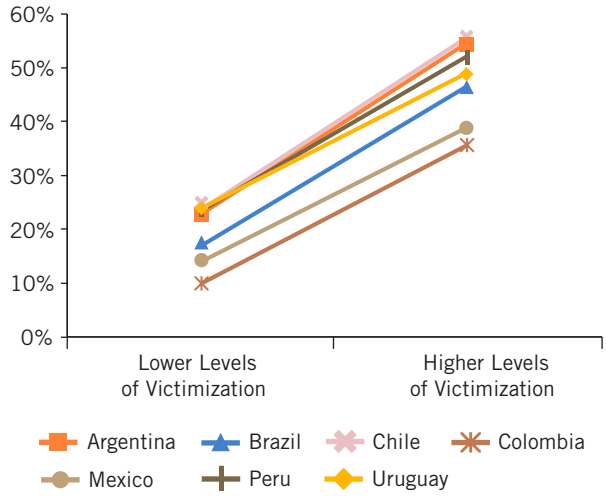
Absenteeism

Students who are regularly harassed or assaulted in school may attempt to avoid these hurtful experiences by not attending school and, accordingly, may be more likely to miss school than students who do not experience such victimization. Across the seven Latin American countries in this study, we found that experiences of victimization were, in fact, related to missing days of school.[50] As shown in Figure 1.12, LGBTQ students in each country were two or more times likely to have missed school in the past month if they had experienced higher levels of verbal harassment related to their sexual orientation.[51]

Sense of School Belonging

The degree to which students feel accepted by and a part of their school community is another important indicator of school climate and is related to a number of educational outcomes, such as greater academic motivation and effort as well as higher academic achievement.[52] Students who experience victimization or discrimination at school may feel excluded and disconnected from their school community. In order to assess LGBTQ students' sense of belonging to their school community, survey participants in all seven countries were given a series of statements about feeling like a part of their school. The items were taken from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which allowed for comparison between the samples of LGBTQ students to the sample of the general population of students in each country.[53] As shown in Figure 1.13, LGBTQ students in all seven Latin American countries had a lower sense of school belonging than the general student population: across the countries, LGBTQ samples LGBTQ students had belonging scores ranging from 64.0% to 70.3% compared to belonging scores ranging from 75.4% to 80.7% in the general population.[54,55] Among the LGBTQ student samples, there were significant differences in the degree of school belonging by country, with LGBTQ students in Chile, Colombia, and Mexico having the highest belonging scores, and students in Argentina and Brazil having the lowest (see also Figure 1.13).[56]

Figure 1.12. The Relationship of Verbal Harassment Based on Sexual Orientation and Absenteeism
(percent reporting having missed at least one day of school in the past month for safety reasons)



These differences between LGBTQ students and the general population of students in these seven Latin American countries may, at least in part, be related to experiences of negative school climate. Within the LGBTQ population samples, we examined the relationship between school belonging and verbal harassment related to sexual orientation and found a significant relationship across all countries. As shown in Figure 1.14, LGBTQ students who experienced higher levels of harassment reported significantly lower sense of school belonging.[57] In fact, across countries, the average belonging scores among LGBTQ students who reported low levels of harassment was consistent with the belonging scores of the general population of students. For example, LGBTQ students in Argentina who had lower levels of harassment had an average belonging score of 68.9% and the general population of students in Argentina had an average of 75.4%. In contrast, LGBTQ students in Argentina who had higher levels of harassment had an average belonging score of 57.2%.

Figure 1.13. Sense of School Belonging: Comparison between LGBTQ and General Population Students
(mean percentage of total scale items)

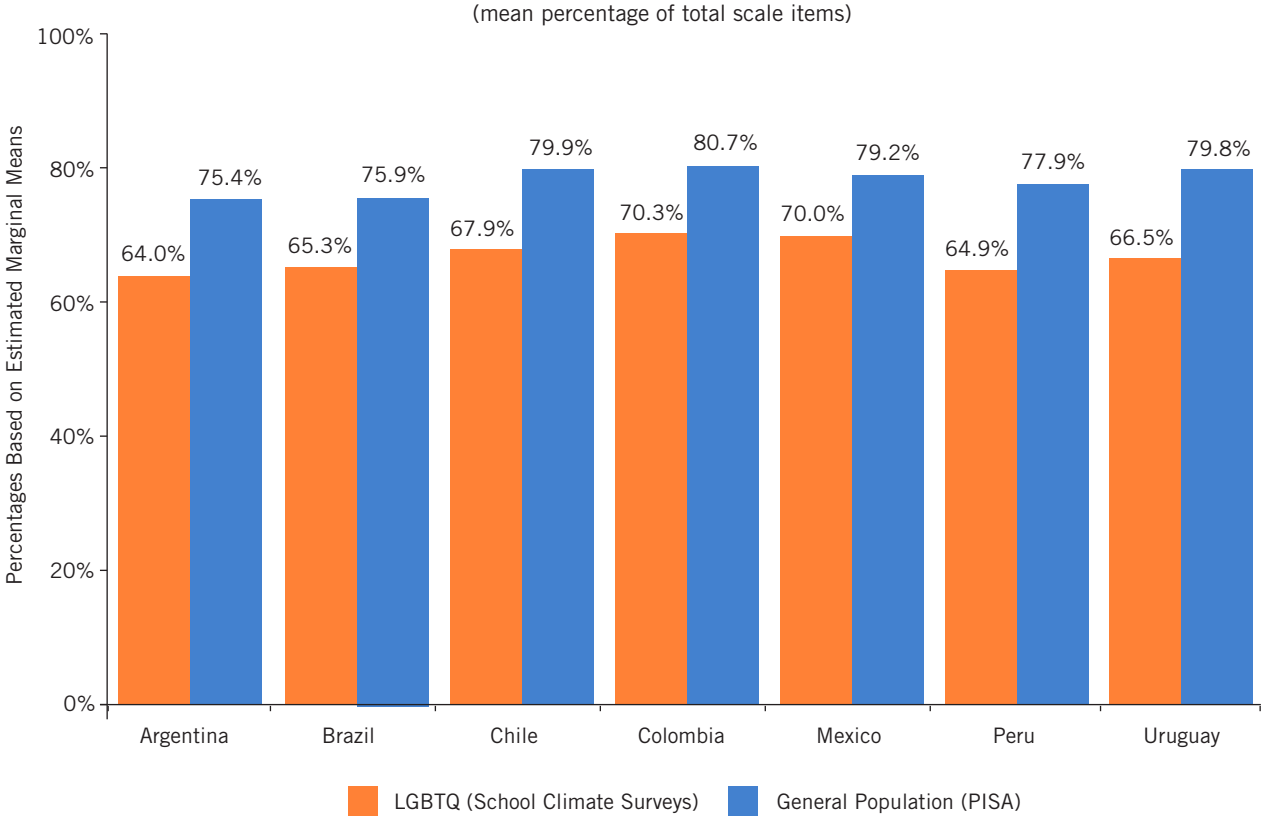
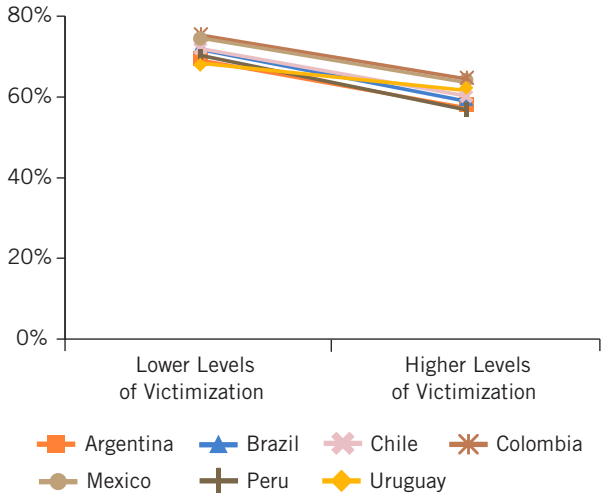


Figure 1.14. The Relationship of Verbal Harassment Based on Sexual Orientation and Sense of School Belonging
(mean percentage of total scale items)

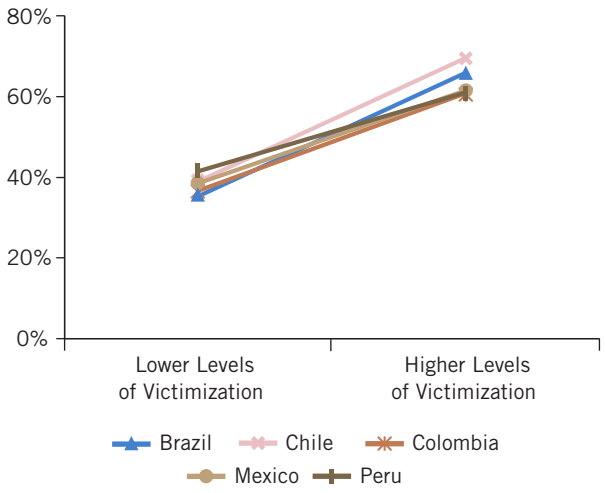


Well-Being

Being harassed or assaulted at school may have a negative impact on students' mental health and self-esteem. Given that LGBTQ students are at an increased likelihood for experiencing harassment and assault in school, it is especially important to examine how these experiences relate to their well-being. Five of the Latin American surveys (Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru) asked questions about depression[58] and self-esteem.[59] Among all five countries, students who reported more severe victimization regarding their sexual orientation had worse indicators of psychological well-being. As shown in Figure 1.15, LGBTQ students who reported a higher frequency of verbal harassment because of their sexual orientation (frequently or often) also reported higher levels of depression.[60] It is interesting to note that there were some important patterns of difference in the levels of depression across countries—LGBTQ students in Colombia had the lowest levels of depression, compared to Brazil, Chile, Mexico, and Peru. LGBTQ students in Chile had higher levels of depression than LGBTQ students in Colombia and Mexico, but did not differ from students in Brazil and Peru.

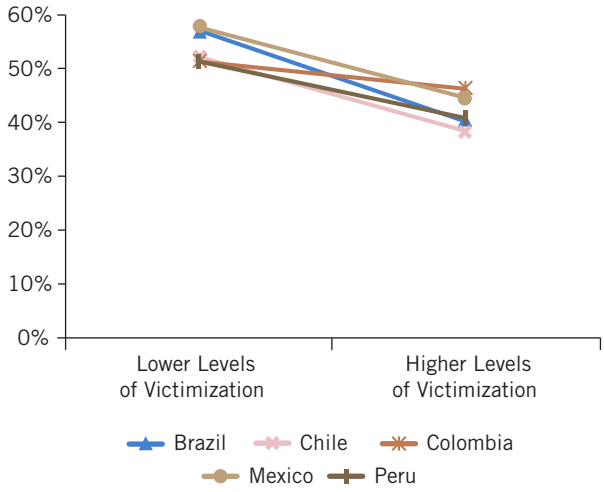
As shown in Figure 1.16, LGBTQ students who reported higher levels of verbal harassment because of their sexual orientation also reported lower levels of self-esteem in the five countries that asked about well-being — Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru.[61] There were no notable patterns of difference in the levels of self-esteem among LGBTQ students across the five countries. However, it is interesting to note that the negative effect of victimization on self-esteem was lower for LGBTQ students in Colombia but higher for LGBTQ students in Chile. Thus, it may be that victimization had less of a negative effect on self-esteem for Colombian students but more of a negative effect for Chilean students.[62]

Figure 1.15. The Relationship Between Verbal Harassment Based on Sexual Orientation and Depression*
(percent reporting high levels of depression)



*Note: Argentina and Uruguay did not include the depression scale in their surveys.

Figure 1.16. The Relationship of Verbal Harassment Based on Sexual Orientation and Self-Esteem*
(percent reporting high levels of self-esteem)



*Note: Argentina and Uruguay did not include the self-esteem scale in their surveys.

Conclusion

LGBTQ students in the seven countries commonly feel unsafe in school because of their sexual orientation and their gender expression (i.e., how they express their gender) and avoid spaces in their schools because of feeling unsafe. Further, many LGBTQ students in all seven countries have missed school because they felt unsafe to attend. However, there were some notable differences across the countries. LGBTQ students in Uruguay were less likely than those in the other countries to feel unsafe at school because of sexual orientation or gender expression. Although students in Chile and Peru were similar to most other countries in their likelihood of feeling unsafe because of their sexual orientation, they were far less likely to feel unsafe because of their gender expression. LGBTQ students in Colombia and Mexico were less likely to have missed school because of safety reasons.

Hearing anti-LGBTQ remarks in school can be a major factor in creating unsafe and unwelcoming school environments for LGBTQ students. Across the seven countries, the vast majority of LGBTQ students commonly heard homophobic remarks (like "fag" or "dyke") and negative remarks about gender expression in their schools. In Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and Uruguay, the majority of LGBTQ students commonly heard negative remarks about transgender people. Although a sizeable number of students in Chile and Peru reported hearing these remarks, it was far less common than the other types of anti-LGBTQ language.

It was not uncommon for LGBTQ students in the seven countries to hear anti-LGBTQ remarks from their teachers and other school staff, especially negative remarks about gender expression. It is interesting to note that comments about gender expression from teachers appeared to be somewhat more common than homophobic remarks in most of the countries, with two notable exceptions. In Peru, the rates of homophobic and gender expression remarks from teachers were similar, and in Uruguay, the rate for homophobic remarks from teachers was higher than the rate of negative remarks about gender expression. Thus, it may be normative, in many of the countries, for teachers and school staff to comment on students' gender expression, in a sense, policing gender expectations. However, in certain national and cultural contexts, such as in Peru and Uruguay, it may be that regulating normative expectations for sexual orientation are just as important, or even more important, than regulating expectations about gender expression.

In addition to contributing to the negative school climate by their own use of anti-LGBTQ language, school staff did not always intervene when such language was used in school, and thus, may be condoning such behaviors, whether implicitly or explicitly. In most of the countries, only two-thirds of students reported an above average level of intervention. LGBTQ students in Argentina reported the highest levels of staff intervention regarding homophobic remarks, which is notable given that these students in Argentina also reported the highest frequency of hearing these remarks. In that we considered frequency of remarks when we examined differences in intervention levels, this finding may indicate that school staff in Argentina intervene when hearing homophobic remarks regardless of how commonly they hear them.

LGBTQ students in the seven countries also experienced high levels of harassment and assault, which can have even more serious consequences on the lives of these students. In most countries, the vast majority of LGBTQ youth have experienced verbal harassment because of their sexual orientation and gender expression, and a disturbing number have also experienced physical harassment and assault for these reasons as well. Again, there are certain notable differences in victimization across the countries. Overall, LGBTQ students in Uruguay reported lower levels of victimization than their peers in other countries. However, it is interesting to note that LGBTQ students in Uruguay reported a higher incidence of victimization based on gender expression than on sexual orientation, which is the opposite phenomenon in the other six countries. LGBTQ students in Colombia were similar to others in their levels of verbal harassment, but they were much higher on physical harassment and assault. This finding may suggest that victimization of LGBTQ students in Colombian schools is much more physically aggressive than in other parts of Latin America.

When LGBTQ students in the seven countries had experienced harassment and assault, only half or fewer reported the event to school staff. LGBTQ students in Argentina were most likely to report these events to school staff, which is consistent with the finding that LGBTQ students in Argentina reported higher staff intervention regarding

homophobic remarks. It may be that intolerance for anti-LGBTQ behaviors is more commonplace in Argentinian schools, and thus, students may feel more comfortable or justified in reporting victimization and staff may be more compelled to intervene. However, LGBTQ students in Argentina were not more likely than others to report that staff acted in an effective manner when they informed about in-school victimization. Thus, school staff in Argentina may not have the adequate skills to effectively intervene. In contrast, LGBTQ students in Chile were on the lower end with regard to reporting victimization, but they were higher in their reports on staff effectiveness. Thus, students in this country may feel less justified in reporting such events, but staff may have become more equipped in handling them. Further investigation is needed to understand the factors that affect whether LGBTQ students report incidents of harassment and assault and the factors that affect their beliefs about the effectiveness of staff intervention.

It was also no more common for LGBTQ students to have told a family member about the victimization. In some countries, Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico, LGBTQ students were much more likely to report victimization to the school than to their family. Again, this may be due to cultural norms about the family-school connection — it may be that it is less common for family to be involved in educational matters in some countries versus others. However, there were no differences across the countries in the likelihood of family members intervening on their child's behalf when victimization had been reported to them. Further research is needed to understand the role of parents in education in the region with regard to intervention with school personnel on any educational matters, and bullying and harassment in particular.

The differences found in the experiences of LGBTQ students across countries may be due to many factors. Perhaps differences in SOGIE victimization in school reflect more general differences in violence across national contexts. For example, the World Bank indicated that Colombia had one of the highest homicide rates in Latin America (second only to Venezuela),[63] and LGBTQ students in Colombia reported the highest rates of physical victimization. Another potential factor contributing to differences in LGBTQ student experiences by country is the different educational governance structures. Some countries, such Colombia and Mexico, have a more national education system, whereas others, such as Argentina and Brazil, allow for more state and/or local control regarding K–12 education. It is possible that a more decentralized system results in less oversight and accountability whereas a more centralized system is able to more efficiently implement anti-bullying measures. Other differences in educational climate across countries, such as class size and school funding, should also be explored in further comparative research.

Overall, we found that victimization can lead to poorer well-being, less welcoming schools, and more negative educational outcomes for LGBTQ students. In order to ensure that LGBTQ students are afforded a supportive learning environment and educational opportunities, community and school advocates should work to prevent and respond to in-school victimization. In Part 2 of this report, we will examine the availability of supports in school that may benefit the educational experiences of LGBTQ students.

Results: School-Based Resources and Supports

LGBTQ students may not have the same types of support from peers at their schools and in their communities. Students in all countries but Uruguay included a question assessing perceptions of peer acceptance of LGBTQ people. As shown in Figure 2.1, across the seven countries, half or fewer of LGBTQ students reported that other students at school were accepting of LGBTQ people ("very accepting" or "somewhat accepting").[64] LGBTQ students in Mexico reported the highest level of peer acceptance, followed by students in Chile, whereas LGBTQ students in Peru reported the lowest levels.[65] Furthermore, as shown in Figure 2.2, very few LGBTQ students reported having access to programs or groups for LGBTQ youth outside of school.[66] Students in Brazil were most likely to report having a program or group for LGBTQ youth outside of school, but more than half reported that they did not, and LGBTQ students in Chile were least likely to report having such resources in their communities.[67] Although having supportive community resources for LGBTQ youth is important, not all LGBTQ youth feel comfortable attending or are capable of attending due to geographical or familial constraints. In Chile, Colombia, and Peru, the majority of LGBTQ youth who did have a program or group never participated. In Argentina and Brazil, more than half of youth who did have a program or group participated in it, but it is still a small percentage of all the LGBTQ youth in the surveys. Given that support groups for LGBTQ youth outside of school are less common, and perhaps not easily accessed by LGBTQ students, the availability of resources and supports at school for LGBTQ students can be extremely important in these countries. There are several key resources that may help to promote a safer climate and more positive school experiences for students: school personnel who are supportive of LGBTQ students, LGBTQ-inclusive curricular materials, and school policies for addressing incidents of harassment and assault. Thus, each of the countries asked questions about the resources and supports for LGBTQ students.

Supportive School Personnel

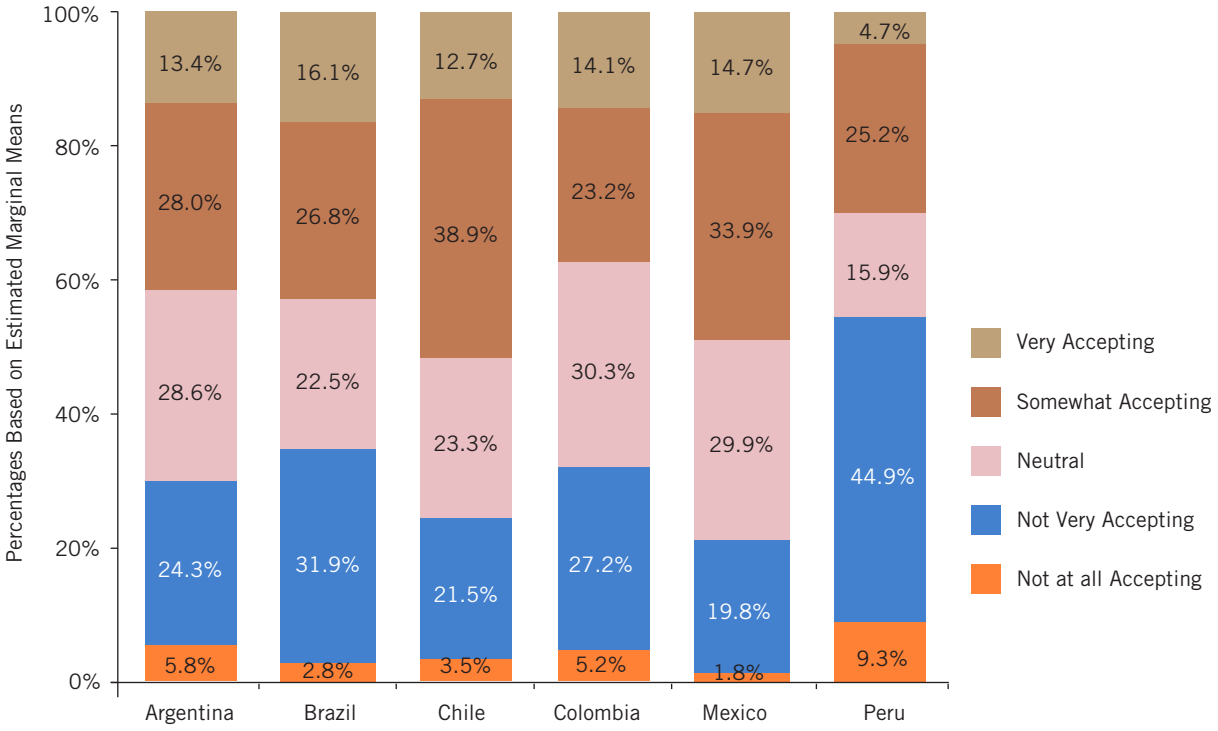
Availability of Supportive School Staff

Supportive teachers, principals, and other school staff serve as another important resource for LGBTQ students. Being able to speak with a caring adult in school may have a significant positive impact on the school experiences for students, particularly those who feel marginalized or experience harassment. Across the seven countries, the majority of students could identify at least one school staff member whom they believed was supportive of LGBTQ students at their school (85.4%), ranging from 77.2% in Peru to 94.3% of students in Chile. However, fewer than half of the LGBTQ students in all countries could identify six or more supportive school staff (see Figure 2.3). LGBTQ students in Brazil and Chile reported, on average, a higher number of supportive school staff than most other countries, and those in Peru reported the lowest number of supportive staff overall.[68]

Comfort Speaking with School Staff

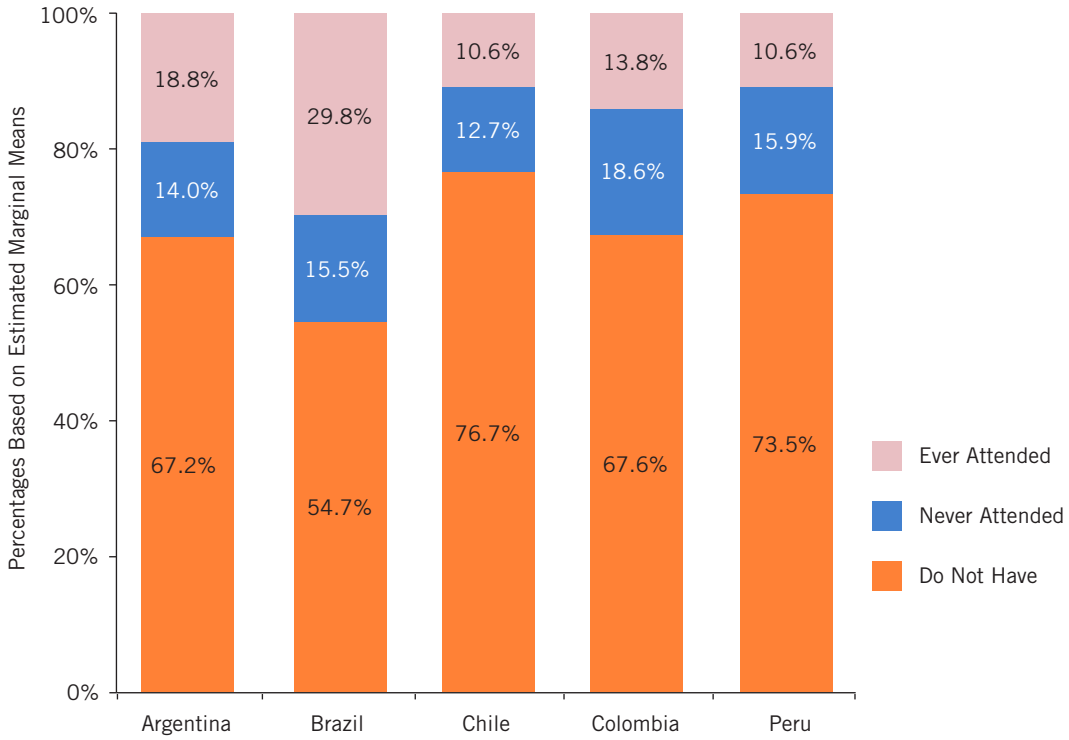
To understand whether certain types of school personnel were more likely to be seen as supportive, LGBTQ students were asked how comfortable they would feel talking one-on-one with various school personnel about LGBTQ-related issues.[69] As shown in Figure 2.4, across the seven countries, LGBTQ students appeared more comfortable speaking with teachers or school-based mental health professionals (such as consejero, trabajador social o psicopedagogo, psicólogo de la escuela), and appeared least comfortable speaking with their school director. LGBTQ students in Argentina and Mexico appeared to be most comfortable and LGBTQ students in Peru appeared least comfortable overall in speaking with school staff about LGBTQ-related issues.[70] However, it is important to note that normative school culture with regard to staff roles may vary across countries. The role of a director, for example, may be more distant from students or more of a disciplinarian in one cultural context and less so in another. Similarly, the cultural contexts may vary with regard to how common it is for any student, LGBTQ or not, to seek out school staff in general or certain types of staff for support. Further research is needed to fully understand these differences in roles and the perceived potential for support from LGBTQ students.

Figure 2.1.Peer Acceptance of LGBTQ People*



*Note: Uruguay did not include this question in their survey.

Figure 2.2. Attending an LGBTQ Youth Group or Program*



*Note: Mexico and Uruguay did not include this question in their surveys.

Figure 2.3. Number of Educators and School Staff at School Who Are Supportive of LGBTQ Students

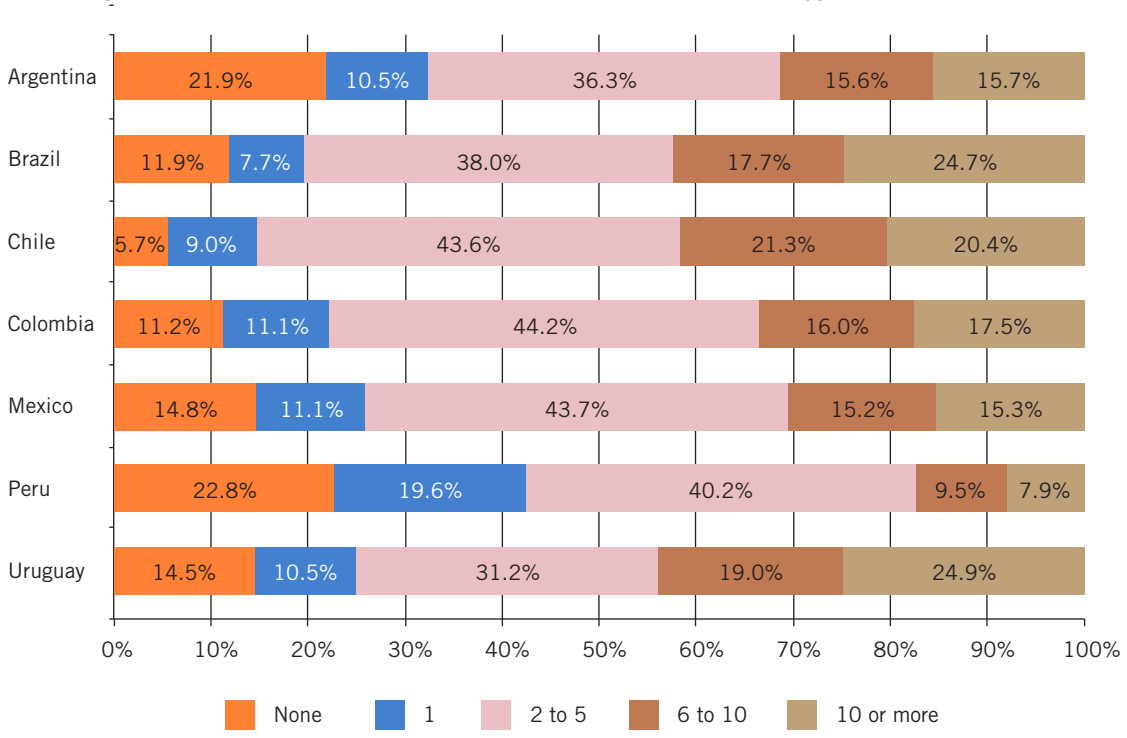
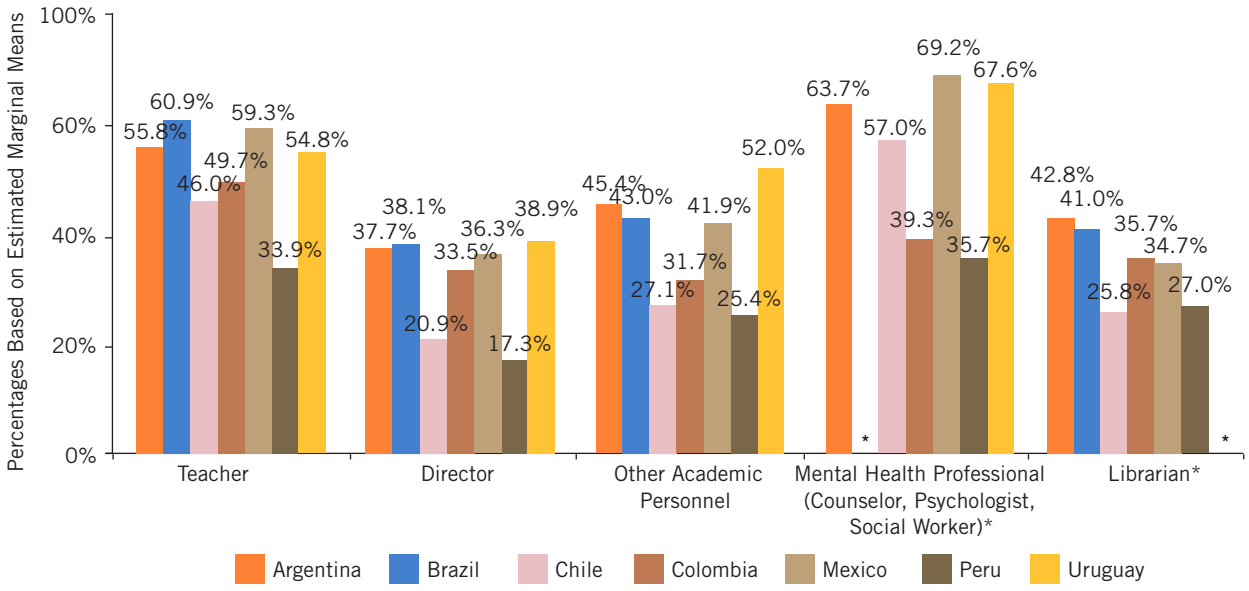


Figure 2.4. Comfort Level Speaking with School Staff about LGBTQ Issues*
(percent report "very comfortable" or "somewhat comfortable")



* Brazil did not ask about mental health professionals, and Uruguay did not ask about librarians in their surveys.

Benefits of Supportive School Staff

Having supportive teachers and school staff may have a positive effect on the educational experiences of any student, increasing student motivation to learn and positive engagement in school. Being able to speak with a caring adult at school may have a significant positive impact on the school experiences for students, particularly those who feel marginalized or experience harassment.

As shown in Figure 2.5, across all seven Latin American countries, LGBTQ students who reported a greater number of supportive school staff had a higher sense of school belonging in school.[71] Further, as shown in Figure 2.6, LGBTQ students who reported a greater number of supportive school staff were much less likely to have missed school in the past month for safety reasons.[72] Although this was true for LGBTQ students in all seven countries, the effect appeared to be even greater for LGBTQ students in Brazil and Peru. Given that LGBTQ students often feel unsafe and unwelcome in school, having access to school personnel who provide support may be critical for creating more welcoming learning environments for LGBTQ students.

Figure 2.5. The Relationship of Availability of Supportive Educators and Sense of School Belonging
(mean percentage of total scale items)

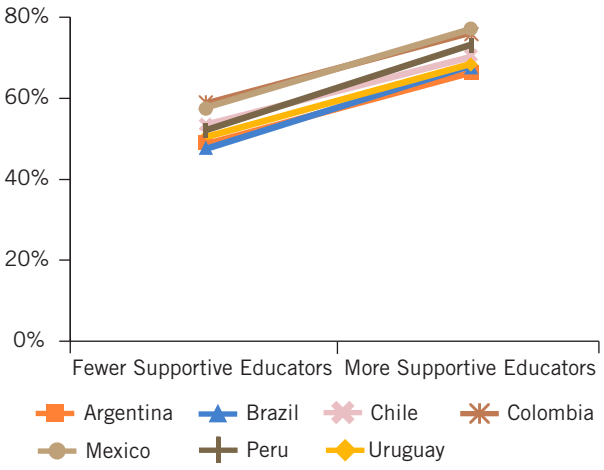
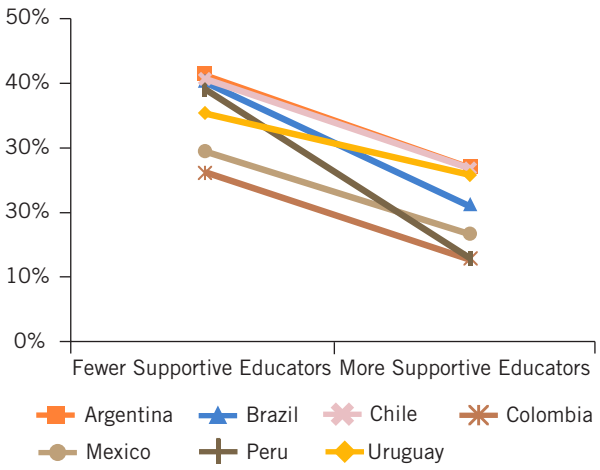


Figure 2.6. The Relationship of Availability of Supportive Educators and Missing Days of School by Country
(mean percentage of missing at least one day of school in the past month)



Inclusive Curricular Resources

LGBTQ student experiences may also be shaped by inclusion of LGBTQ-related information in the curriculum. Learning about LGBTQ historical events and positive role models may enhance their engagement with the school community and provide them with valuable information about the LGBTQ community. In all seven Latin American countries, students were asked whether they had been exposed to representations of LGBTQ people, history, or events in lessons at school, and whether the content was negative, positive, or both.

Curricular Inclusion

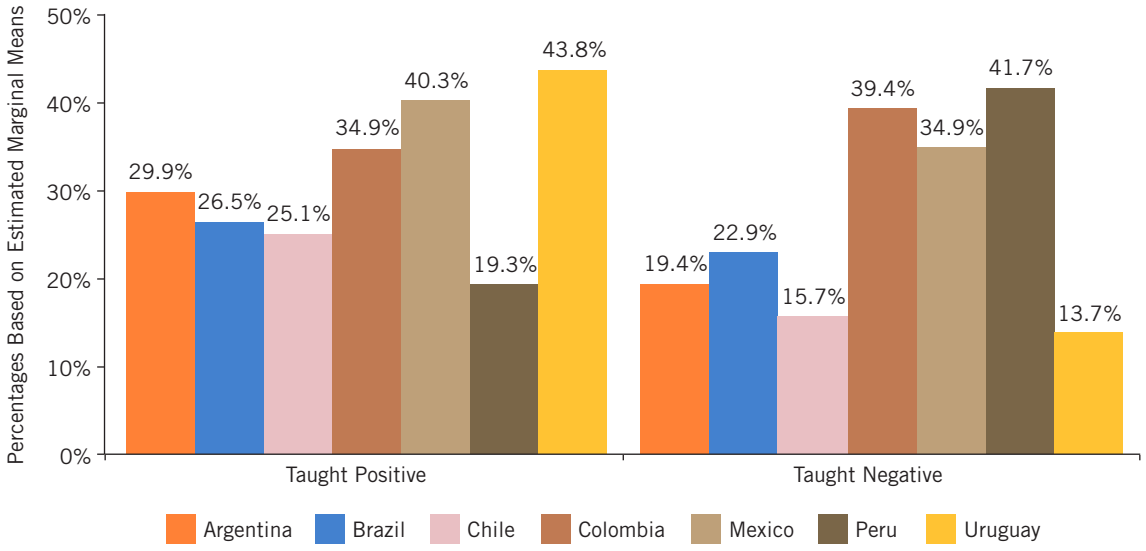
As shown in Figure 2.7, fewer than half of respondents said that their classes included LGBTQ topics in a positive light. Students in Peru were least likely to report positive curricular inclusion (19.3%) and students in Uruguay were most likely (43.8%).[73] Curricular content and types of classes taught, in general, vary across countries, so it is not possible to compare the types of inclusion across countries. However, LGBTQ students who had been taught positive LGBTQ content in class generally reported that it occurred in social science classes (including history, civics, human relations, sociology). In a few countries, LGBTQ students also reported being taught positive LGBTQ content in religion or ethics classes (Argentina, Chile, Colombia, and Peru), language arts classes (Brazil and Mexico), and communications classes (Chile and Peru).

As also shown in Figure 2.7, many students reported also having been taught negative curricular content regarding LGBTQ issues — most notably, over a third of students in Colombia, Mexico, and Peru. LGBTQ students in Peru, in fact, were more likely than all others to have been taught negative content.[74] Students in Peru were also much more likely to have been taught negative content than positive content. In contrast, students in Argentina, Chile, Mexico, and Uruguay were more likely to have been taught positive content than negative content, and in Brazil and Colombia, students reported no differences in the likelihood of being taught positive content versus negative content.[75]

Textbooks and Readings

In six of the seven Latin American countries, students were asked about their ability to access information about LGBTQ issues that teachers may not be covering in class, such as textbooks or additional reading materials featuring information about LGBTQ issues. These types of LGBTQ-related curricular resources were not available for most LGBTQ students in all surveys. As shown in Figure 2.8, less than a quarter of students in these countries reported having inclusive content in their curricular materials ranging from 13.3% in Brazil to 23.1% in Colombia.

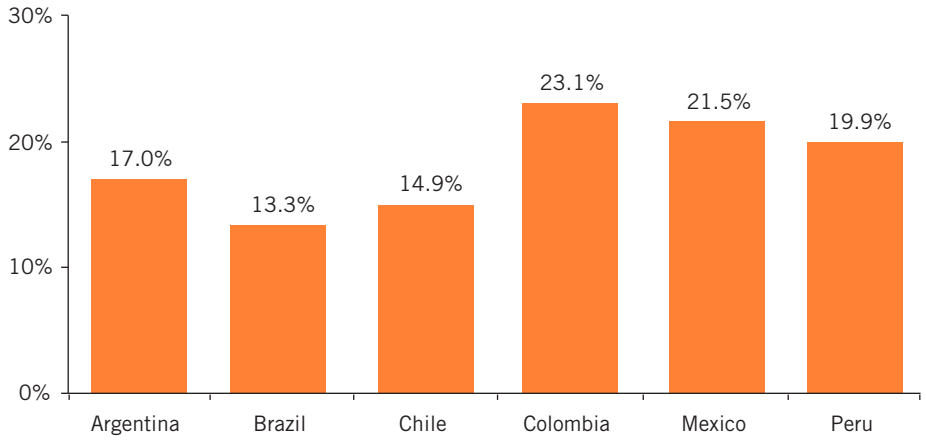
Figure 2.7. LGBTQ Topics in the Curriculum



Benefits of Curricular Inclusion

Including LGBTQ-related issues in the curriculum in a positive manner may make LGBTQ students feel like more valued members of the school community, and it may also promote more positive feelings about LGBTQ issues and persons among their peers, thereby resulting in a more positive school climate. As shown in Figure 2.9, across all seven Latin American countries, LGBTQ students who had been taught positive information about LGBTQ people, history, and events felt a higher sense of school belonging than LGBTQ students who had not.[76] Further, as shown in Figure 2.10, overall LGBTQ students who reported positive LGBTQ curricular content were less likely to miss school for safety reasons.[77] However, as shown in Figure 2.10, the effect does not appear strong in certain countries; the differences were not significant for LGBTQ students in Colombia and Peru.[78] It is important to note however, that the question on inclusive curriculum did not include any questions regarding content or frequency, making it impossible to fully understand what positive inclusive curriculum includes. More research is needed to further explore the content and prevalence of inclusive curriculum and its relationship with school climate.

Figure 2.8. Access to Textbooks or Assigned Readings that Included LGBTQ Content*



*Note: Uruguay did not include this question in their survey.

Figure 2.9. The Relationship of LGBTQ Curricular Educators and Sense of School Belonging
(mean percentage of total scale items)

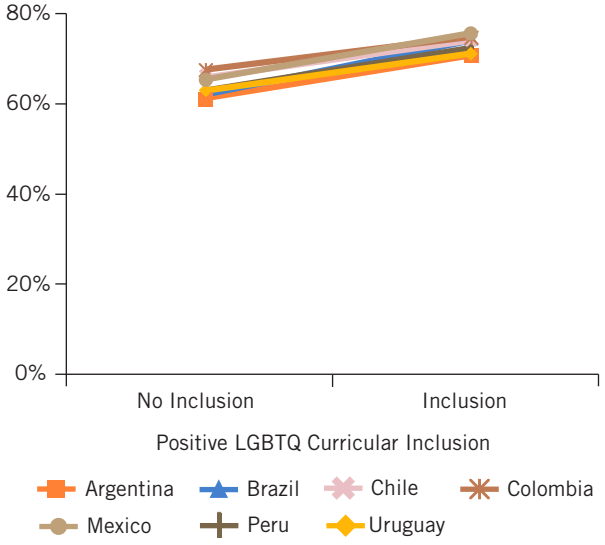
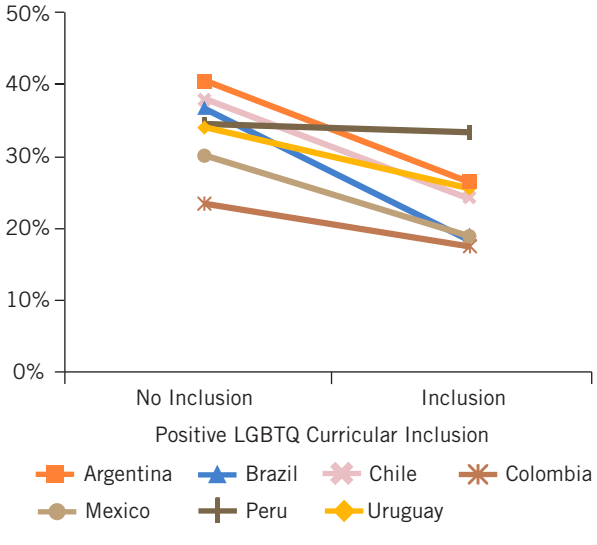


Figure 2.10. The Relationship of LGBTQ Curricular Inclusion and Missing Days of School by Country
(mean percentage of total scale items)



School Policies for Addressing Bullying, Harassment, and Assault

School policies that address in-school bullying, harassment, and assault are powerful tools for creating school environments where students feel safe. These types of policies can explicitly state protections based on personal characteristics, such as sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, among other important protected categories, such as gender, race/ethnicity, religion, disability status, and national origin. In this report, we refer to an "inclusive" policy as one that explicitly enumerates protections based on personal characteristics, including both sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. When a school has and enforces an inclusive policy, especially one that also includes procedures for reporting incidents to school authorities, it can send a message that bullying, harassment, and assault are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Inclusive school policies may also provide students with greater protection against victimization because they make clear the various forms of bullying, harassment, and assault that will not be tolerated and can also signal to educators that they have a responsibility to actively intervene and support their LGBTQ students. It may also demonstrate that student safety, including the safety of LGBTQ students, is taken seriously by school administrators.

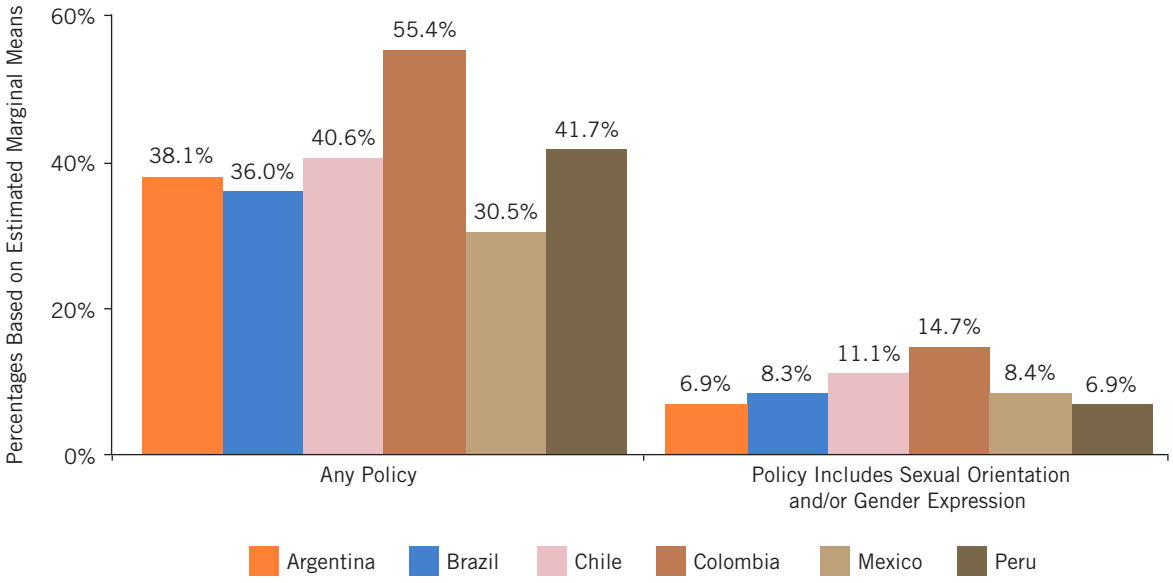
Availability of School Policies

In six of the seven Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru), students were asked whether their school had a policy about in-school bullying, harassment, or assault, and if that policy explicitly included protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. As shown in Figure 2.11, half or fewer of the LGBTQ students reported having or knowing of any type of bullying/harassment policy in their schools, ranging from the lowest from Mexico at 30.5% to the highest from Colombia at 55.4%.[79] However, in all six countries, far fewer students reported having a policy that specifically mentioned sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, with less than a tenth of students in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, and Peru, and less than a fifth in Chile and Colombia reporting inclusive or partially inclusive protections (i.e., including sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, but not both).[80] LGBTQ students in Colombia were most likely to report having any policy, and also most likely to report having a policy that includes specific protections regarding sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

Benefits of School Policies

These inclusive types of anti-bullying/harassment policies may provide school staff with the guidance

Figure 2.11. Anti-Bullying/Harassment School Policies*



*Note: Uruguay did not include the school policy question in their survey.

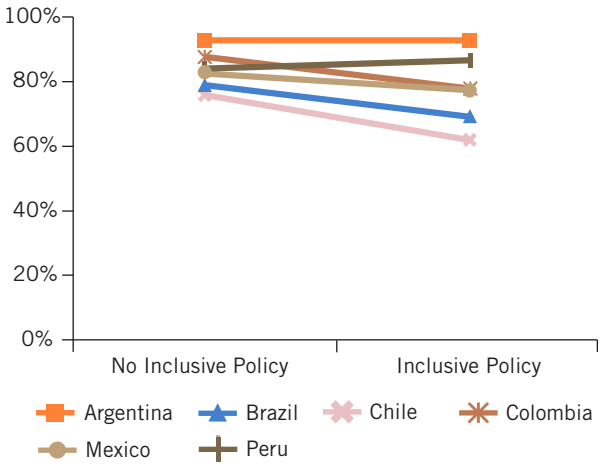
needed to appropriately intervene when students use anti-LGBTQ language and when LGBTQ students report incidents of harassment and assault. These policies can also instruct students regarding their rights to a safe education and provide instruction on how to report incidents of violence. However, for LGBTQ students, school policies may be less effective if they are general and do not specifically address violence related to sexual orientation or gender expression. Thus, we examined whether there were differences by type of school policy on indicators of school safety.

With regard to the frequency of hearing homophobic remarks, overall among the countries, LGBTQ students who were in a school without an inclusive policy were more likely to report hearing these remarks (see Figure 2.12).[81] We also found that inclusive policies were related to decreased incidences of verbal harassment across the countries. As shown in Figure 2.13, LGBTQ students who reported having an inclusive policy also reported lower frequencies of verbal harassment because of sexual orientation.[82] In examining the effects of policy across the countries, we did not find a significant effect of having an inclusive policy in Argentina and Peru. However, it is important to note that these two countries were least likely to have these inclusive policies, which could result in a lack of statistical power to detect any differences statistically.

As mentioned, LGBTQ students in schools with an inclusive policy about bullying and harassment may be more likely to tell school personnel when they have been the victim of bullying and harassment. In general, among LGBTQ students in Latin America, students were more likely to have reported incidents of victimization to school personnel when they were in a school with an inclusive policy. However, when we conducted within-country analyses, there was a statistically significant relationship only for LGBTQ students in Colombia and Mexico.[83] Further research is needed to aid in our understanding of how policies are implemented and can be more effective in the region.

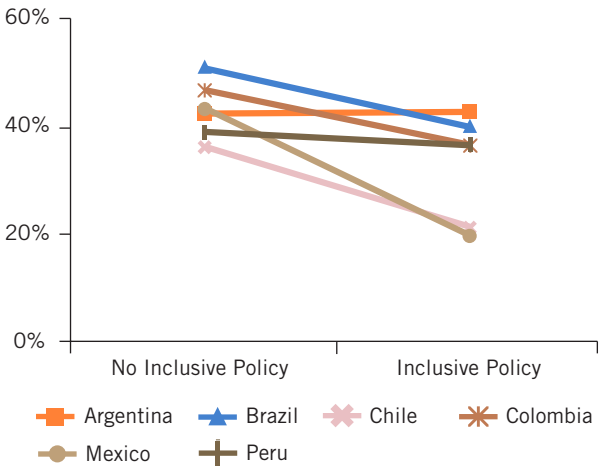
In addition, policies can provide guidance to school personnel on how to respond to anti-LGBTQ behaviors from students. With regard to teacher intervention when hearing homophobic remarks, as shown in Figure 2.14, LGBTQ students across the six countries whose schools did not have an inclusive policy about bullying or harassment were less likely to report that teachers intervened than LGBTQ students whose school did have an inclusive policy.[84] Furthermore, as shown in Figure 2.15, LGBTQ students were more likely to report that the response from school staff was "somewhat" or "very" effective when they were in a school that had an inclusive bullying policy, and the benefit of having a policy was similar across the six countries.[85]

Figure 2.12. Hearing Homophobic Remarks and Inclusive School Anti-Bullying Policy*
(percent reporting "Sometimes," "Often," or "Frequently")



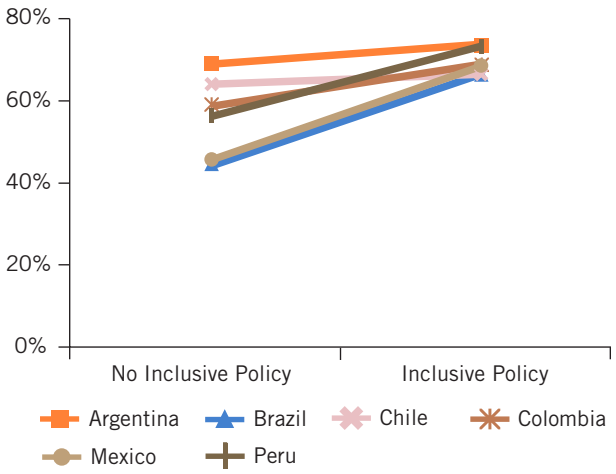
*Note: Uruguay did not include the school policy question in their survey.

Figure 2.13. Verbal Harassment Re: Sexual Orientation and Inclusive School Anti-Bullying Policy by Country*
(percent reporting "Sometimes," "Often," or "Frequently")



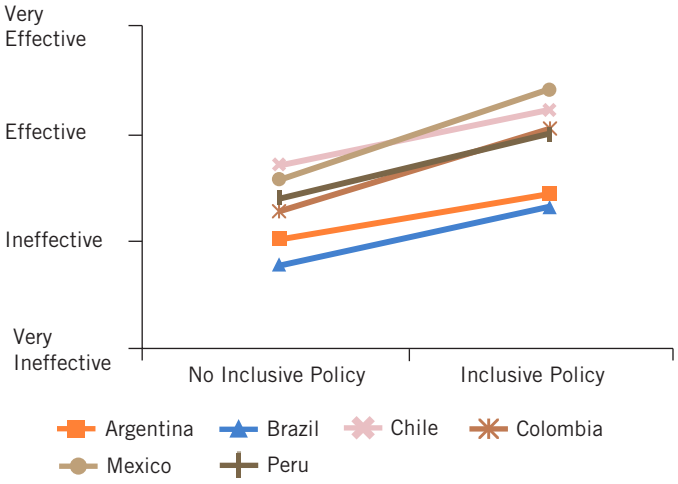
*Note: Uruguay did not include the school policy question in their survey.

Figure 2.14. Educator Intervention Re: Homophobic Remarks and Inclusive School Anti-Bullying Policy*
(percent reporting high levels of intervention)



*Note: Uruguay did not include the school policy question in their survey.

Figure 2.15. Effecitveness of Staff Intervention Re: Harassment/Assault and Inclusive School Anti-Bullying Policy by Country*
(mean scores of effectiveness)



*Note: Uruguay did not include the school policy question in their survey.

Conclusion

Across all seven Latin American countries, there is evidence that LGBTQ-related school resources are related to a more positive educational environment, yet there is a consistent lack of these resources for LGBTQ students. LGBTQ students in the these countries report a low incidence of learning positive information about LGBTQ people, history, or events in class, and a significant percentage of students report learning negative content. Furthermore, few students report that their schools have anti-bullying or harassment policies that include protections based on sexual orientation and/or gender expression. Nevertheless, the survey results indicate that educators are important resources — the majority of LGBTQ students reported that they have at least one teacher or school staff person who is supportive of LGBTQ students, and in most countries, at least half report that they would be comfortable speaking with a teacher about being LGBTQ.

Our analyses reveal that there are some notable differences across the countries in the availability of supports. Students in Chile and Brazil are more likely to report having supportive school personnel at school, and students in Argentina and Mexico are more comfortable speaking with educators about LGBTQ issues. Students in Peru were least likely to report having supportive school personnel and least likely to feel comfortable speaking with educators about LGBTQ issues. However in Peru, LGBTQ students may receive the most benefit from having supportive educators, as they were far less likely to miss school when such support was available.

With regard to anti-bullying/harassment policies, Colombia had the highest percentage of LGBTQ students who had any type of policy and also the highest percentage who had a policy inclusive of sexual orientation and gender expression. The findings indicate that these policies were also more effective in Colombia — students were even more likely than those in other countries to report less victimization and more likely to have told school staff about victimization when there was a policy in place. With regard to implementation of policy, it is also interesting to note that LGBTQ students in Chile were one of the higher reporters of policy, but the effect of policy on student reporting of victimization to school staff was low. Again, this may speak to a need to address how policies are

implemented within that country. Furthermore, this may also be evidence of how policies are not enough if the schools are not willing to implement a cultural and systems change in their educational practices.

The results also provide some potential insight into the role of national law in regard to reducing bullying and harassment at school. Of the seven countries surveyed, four have some type of national law that addresses school bullying: Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and Peru. (However, Brazil's law only came into effect in November 2015, at the very end of the school year that was the focus of the survey, and thus, any effects of the law would have occurred after the study was completed.) In Argentina, where there is more local oversight of education, LGBTQ students were not less likely to report having a protective school policy than those in most of the other countries. However, there appeared to be limited impact of these policies on the school experiences of these students. In contrast, in Colombia, the education system is also centralized, and LGBTQ students in Colombia were most likely, compared to students in the other countries, to report that their school had a policy. In addition, Colombian students seemed to benefit most from having a policy. However, despite the existence and suggested effectiveness of having a policy, overall, LGBTQ students surveyed in Colombia reported the highest rates of physical victimization in school. It may be that the anti-bullying school policies and the anti-bullying law were a response to high rates of existing school victimization. Nevertheless, these findings point to the complex interplay of national law and school policy and practice. It is also unclear what stipulations have been made or systems put in place to monitor the implementation of laws and policies in the countries that have them. More research on the content and implementation of these laws and policies is warranted.

Discussion

Limitations

This study expands upon the current research by comparing the school experiences of LGBTQ youth in seven countries, also providing insight into how hostile school climate similarly affect youth in multiple country contexts. Nonetheless, our study has several limitations. First, there are potential limitations to the generalizability of the findings. It is important to note that these data and this report only represent experiences from LGBTQ students in seven Latin American countries, and thus cannot speak to other countries in South America (e.g., Bolivia, Ecuador, or Venezuela), and in Central America and the Caribbean. However, the seven countries represented in this report attended the UNESCO's regional consultation on homophobic and transphobic violence in schools,[86] had an infrastructure in place to conduct research, and were already working to improve LGBTQ equality in their countries. It is possible that the work of the NGOs in these countries has had some previous positive effect on school climate for LGBTQ students, and that the school experiences of LGBTQ students in countries without similar efforts from NGOs are even more dire. However, it is also possible that the interest of the seven countries in focusing on LGBTQ issues in education reflect a more urgent concern based on more serious problems for LGBTQ students in their education systems.

All of the data samples consist of youth who already define themselves as LGBTQ (or another non-heterosexual and/or non-cisgender identity) and therefore may exclude youth who will eventually identify as LGBTQ but may not yet do so. We cannot make determinations from the data about the experiences of youth who might be engaging in same-sex sexual activity or experiencing same-sex attractions but who do not identify themselves as lesbian, gay, or bisexual. Such youth may have experiences that differ from those of youth who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual—they may be more isolated, they may not be aware of supports for LGBTQ youth, or, even if aware, may not be comfortable using such supports. Similarly, not all youth whose gender identity or gender expression is outside of cultural norms may experience themselves as or identify as transgender, or even have the resources to understand what being transgender means. Thus, the data may not reflect the experiences of these youth, who may also be more isolated and without the same access to resources as the transgender youth in the survey. Furthermore, it is important to note that this study does not include those students who may not be LGBTQ but are subjected to anti-LGBTQ violence and discrimination in school, such as those students who are perceived to be LGBTQ or those who have LGBTQ parents.

It is also important to note that the seven countries discussed in this report most likely vary in their reach to the population of LGBTQ secondary students in their countries, which could result in different samples of LGBTQ students in their countries. There also may be unknown differences between sexuality and gender identity development, as well as with self-identification regarding LGBTQ identities across cultures. Such sampling differences could also account for some of the differences across the seven countries. However, for these reasons, we did statistically control for key demographic characteristics that were significantly different across the countries, such as age and gender. Nevertheless, there may be other variables that we did not account for that might have resulted in some of the differences we found in this study. We also were not able to control for certain education indicators, such as education spending or class size, that may vary across the countries and affect school climate in general. In addition, the surveys were all conducted online, and thus, had to have internet access. Thus, the survey samples may not be representative of LGBTQ youth who are in rural or lower economic areas of the countries, or whose families have lower incomes and cannot afford internet access.

Considerations of Culture, Language, and Social Norms Across Countries

As discussed above, there are numerous findings demonstrating a consistency across countries in LGBTQ students' school experiences. Specific to the variables examined in this multinational study, cultural differences in education that may be of particular relevance are:

Differences in school staff positions and roles

With regard to questions about students speaking with staff about LGBTQ issues, each survey asked about the specific school staff positions that were most relevant for their own country context.

There were some positions that were the same in name, such as teachers (*professor/a)* or mental health professional (*consejero, trabajador social o psicopedagogo, psicólogo de la escuela*), and they likely have the same or similar functions. There were other positions, such as precept (*preceptor/a*), that were included by various countries, but the function of the position may vary across the countries. However, even when there are equivalent roles related to pedagogical practice, staff positions may vary across countries with regard to having the primary responsibility for intervention in school bullying and harassment. In addition, the staff positions responsible for intervention may not be the same staff positions that are seen as most welcoming and supportive for LGBTQ students, as might be the case in any country. Using research findings from the U.S. as an example, school resource or safety officers typically have oversight for general safety, but these positions are not seen as supportive for LGBTQ students.[87]

Monitoring and supervision of students

The countries may vary in the structure of the school day and the extent to which students are left unsupervised by school staff. In GLSEN's research on LGBTQ students in U.S. schools, for example, we find that students are more likely to experience anti-LGBTQ events at times when and in places where school staff are not present, such as in hallways and bathrooms.[88] However, there may be differences in the structure of the school day and norms about the presence of school staff that vary across the Latin American countries represented in this study. Thus, a greater incidence of anti-LGBTQ behaviors in one country vis-a-vis another could be, in part, related to normative differences in monitoring and supervision by adults at school. In addition, norms regarding missing school or even the possibility of not being in school may vary across the countries. For example, LGBTQ students in Chile and Mexico were less likely to have missed school because of safety reasons, but did not necessarily report feeling more safe at school. It may be that differences such as these are related to the structure of the school day and oversight of student attendance.

Reporting negative school experiences

There may be cultural norms about students having an active voice about their school experience and whether it is common to reach out to teachers and school staff about problems at school. It is possible that some of the differences in students reporting victimization to school staff, or even being comfortable talking to them about LGBTQ issues may, in some part, be related to such norms. For example, LGBTQ students in Argentina were the most likely to report victimization to school staff. Other research has demonstrated that Argentinian students in general (not LGBTQ specific) also were more likely to believe their voice will be heard by their teachers. In data from UNESCO's SERCE (Segundo Estudio Regional Explicativo y Comparativo) study on 6th grade students from 16 countries in Latin America, students in Argentina were most likely to agree with the statement, "most teachers really listen to what I have to say" [L*a mayoría de los profesores realmente escucha lo que yo tengo que decir*], compared to students from the other six countries in the region included in this report.[89,90] Thus, it may be more common for students in Argentina, LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ, to see teachers as someone that they can seek out, which could account for some of the differences found in this report.

Role of family-school connection

When considering the degree to which LGBTQ students report victimization to their family members and how often parents intervene with the school when they are told, it is important to consider that there may be cultural differences across the seven countries with regard to the degree of family involvement in school generally. Data from UNESCO's SERCE study included questions for parents on their school involvement, and shows evidence of differences in involvement across six of the countries represented in our study (SERCE data from Mexico did not include these questions).[91,92] Although there were few differences in the likelihood of LGBTQ students telling their family members about victimization at school, the rate in Argentina was higher than in Peru and Uruguay. Considering the SERCE data on attending meetings with school personnel and participation in school activities, parents in Uruguay reported a lower frequency and those in Peru reported a higher frequency than the other five countries. Thus, for Uruguay, parents' relative lack of intervention with the school on behalf or LGBTQ students may, in part, be consistent with the normative family-school relationship in that country. However, for Peru, the lack of intervention on behalf of LGBTQ students appears

to be inconsistent with the normative family-school relationship, and may be more indicative of specific challenges for LGBTQ students vis-a-vis reporting victimization to their families.

Presence, implementation, and effectiveness of school-level interventions

As discussed in Part Two of this report, there are differences in the degree of control or oversight that the various national governments have regarding the education systems. With regard to our current research on LGBTQ students, this factor could particularly affect school-level policies on bullying and harassment and curricular inclusion of positive LGBTQ content. Having more national influence may benefit LGBTQ students more when there are national policies or laws specifically addressing the needs of that population. Colombia, for example, has a national law about school climate, that includes specific mention of sexual orientation and gender identity, and we see some evidence of its benefits in their data on LGBTQ students. Brazil also has a national education system and passed a national anti-bullying law in late 2015. However, the law does not include specific protections regarding sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. Given the timing of the legislation, coming at the end of the 2015 school year, it would not have had an effect regarding Brazil's current data in this report. Nevertheless, it would be important to assess the effectiveness of the law for students in general, but also for LGBTQ students specifically given the lack of inclusion of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression in the law.

Having a more localized education may benefit LGBTQ students if it allows local policies to provide protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression if there is no national law or policy doing so. However, in Argentina, which has more local control over education, we did not find significant differences with the presence of protective school policies regarding bullying and harassment from most of the other countries, but we did find that having a school policy was not related to the level of victimization students experienced. It is possible that these findings are, in some way, reflective of local decision-making about education and less national oversight. More research is needed to understand how student protections are implemented in more localized education systems.

Social expectations about "traditional" gender roles

Across all seven countries, the majority of LGBTQ students reported frequently hearing negative remarks about gender expression and experiencing victimization based on gender expression. However, there were differences across populations in these gender-related experiences. In Argentina and Colombia, LGBTQ students were more likely than LGBTQ students in other countries to be victimized because of their gender expression. In Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and Uruguay, the majority of LGBTQ students commonly heard negative remarks about transgender people, whereas it was a minority of LGBTQ students in the other three countries. Some of these differences may be related to differences among the countries in cultural beliefs about gender norms and what is traditionally expected. However, it is also possible that negative experiences related to gender expression and identity are more prevalent in countries where there are more students being open about their "non-traditional" gender identities/expressions. Further research is needed to better understand the relationship between countries' cultural norms and students' school experiences.

Religion and religiosity

As discussed in the introduction to this report, many of the LGBTQ communities in the countries represented in this study have reported backlash from religious and conservative movements with regard to LGBTQ rights and LGBTQ inclusion and protections in the educational systems. Thus, it is important to consider variations across the seven countries in this report with regard to religiosity and the involvement of religion in education. In certain countries, such as Brazil, Colombia and Peru, religion can be taught in public schools, while the opposite is true for Mexico, Uruguay, and many parts of Argentina.[93] Although positive inclusion of LGBTQ content in the curriculum was low across the seven countries in the region, LGBTQ students in Peru reported some of the lowest percentages and were more likely to report being taught negative content about LGBTQ issues than positive content. In contrast, students in Argentina, Chile, Mexico, and Uruguay were more likely to have been taught positive content than negative content. Although we cannot truly know how rules about religious instruction affect

teaching about LGBTQ issues, it is possible that there is some relationship for the countries in this study.

Of the seven countries, Uruguay has been considered to be one of the least religious countries, and the majority of Uruguayans report that they believe that religious leaders should not have any influence in political matters.[94] In fact, we found that LGBTQ students in Uruguay were among the lowest reporters of homophobic remarks and anti-LGBTQ victimization. Nevertheless, we would still consider these rates in Uruguay to indicate a strong prevalence of anti-LGBTQ behaviors. Although LGBTQ students in Uruguay were more likely to report positive inclusion of LGBTQ information in their curriculum, they were not more likely than those in several other of the countries to report that school staff intervened when hearing homophobic remarks, to report victimization to school personnel, or to believe that staff intervention regarding victimization was effective. It is possible that some of the more positive findings for Uruguay may be, in part, due to more liberal social attitudes or less influence from conservative religious movements, even though many LGBTQ students in the Uruguay do report very negative school climates. In contrast, Colombia has been considered one of the more religious countries.[95] LGBTQ students in this country were more likely to feel unsafe because of their gender expression than those in all other countries, and they were more likely to hear negative remarks about masculine gender expression (i.e., males not "acting masculine enough") from other students in all other countries but Mexico. It is possible that religiosity in this country is related to more conservative attitudes and gender and gender roles, thus explaining some of these findings. Yet LGBTQ students in Colombia were most likely to report that they had an inclusive school anti-bullying/harassment policy, and our results indicate that having this type of policy had the greatest effect regarding victimization at school. Some of the countries, such as Brazil and Colombia, have had religious opposition to some of the positive national interventions for creating safer and affirming schools. In addition to the potential for direct negative effects on implementation of positive efforts regarding the experience of LGBTQ students, such opposition may also affect public opinion and, in turn, the norms for tolerance for diversity in the school community. Clearly, cultural norms, religiosity, and official laws and policies interact in complex ways that influence school resources and student experiences. Further research on the relative and compounding influence of these factors on schools across the region is warranted.

General conditions regarding school violence

Although the rates of victimization reported by LGBTQ students across the seven countries in the region were alarming, there were some significant differences in their rates. As discussed in Part One, it may be that some of these differences were related to cultural variations regarding violence in general and school-related bullying and harassment specifically. Research using data from UNESCO's SERCE study has shown that that 6th grade students in Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Panama were most likely to report knowing someone in their class who suffered abuse at school, and students in Colombia were more likely to have experienced some type of theft in the prior month.[96] Similarly, the research from the SERCE data showed that 6th grade students in Argentina were most likely to report insults or threats at school, and LGBTQ students from Argentina in our study were also more likely to hear homophobic remarks than most other students. These findings, in part, support the findings from this study with regard to Argentina and Colombia — LGBTQ students in these countries were more likely to report physical victimization than LGBTQ students in the other five countries. Thus, the cross-national differences in anti-LGBTQ remarks or behaviors in our study may, in part, be due to cultural and national differences with regard to school bullying and harassment in general.

Public attitudes about LGBTQ people

Recent public opinion research on Latin America has provided some indication that there may be significant differences across the seven countries in this study on attitudes toward LGBTQ people. Pew Research Center, for example, found that survey respondents in Colombia and Peru had less favorable attitudes toward homosexuality and same-sex marriage than in the other countries (see Appendix).[97] In our study, we found that the freuqency of some anti-LGBTQ behaviors were, in fact, higher in both these countries. However, LGBTQ students in Peru reported lower frequencies of verbal harassment because of sexual orientation than Argentina and Brazil, which have more

favorable LGBTQ-related attitudes according to the public opinion reearch. However, results from IEA International Civic and Citizenship Education Study 2016 of 8th grade students in Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Mexico, and Peru, indicate that students in Colombia have somewhat favorable attitudes toward LGBTQ people — similar to students in Chile and Mexico (see Appendix).[98] For example, 80% of students in Colombia believed that all schools should accept homosexuals, compared to 84% in Chile, 85% in Mexico, and 71% in Peru.[99] Thus, these other data on attitudes toward LGBTQ people alongside the results from our study indicate that differences across the seven countries in negative indicators of school climate for LGBTQ students cannot be simply attributed to differences in public attitudes toward LGBTQ people, although it remains an important consideration for understanding school climate. In addition, in light of our discussion above regarding general norms about school climate, it is difficult to discern how LGBTQ-related attitudes and norms about school violence work in concert to explain the experiences of LGBTQ student in that country.

Language and translation

Issues related to translation and semantics are clearly challenging when assessing school climate for LGBTQ students. With regard to homophobic language, although all countries used a question that asked about homophobic remarks, *comentarios homofóbicos* (Spanish) or *comentários homofóbicos/lesbofóbicos* (Portuguese), many of the terms used to illustrate the concept were not wholly the same across countries. Most of the countries using a Spanish language survey included the words *maricón*, *puta*, and *torta*, but additionally some countries included terms such as *rosquete* (Peru) and *marimacho* (Uruguay). Whereas in the Portuguese language survey from Brazil, the homophobic terms used were *bicha, sapatão,* and *viado*. We presume, given the surveys were created by native language speakers in each of the countries, that these terms are relatively equivalent. Yet it is possible that any phenomenon assessed in these surveys, in this case homophobic remarks, may manifest itself differently in different country contexts. Similarly, with regard to sexuality and gender identity across the region, there may be cultural similarities to one another, but there may be more similarities among certain countries than others. Nanda (2014) wrote: "significant cultural variation occurs in what is considered appropriate sexuality—desire, orientation, practices—for different genders and in the presumed relation between sex/gender diversity, sexuality, and gender identity" (p. 5).[100] Thus, future research must carefully consider the presumed population of interest and whether it is comparable across nations—what the LGBTQ community of students is in one Latin American country may not necessarily be the same as in another in the region or even worldwide.

Considering the possible and actual cultural variations discussed above, there is clearly a need for further research on LGBTQ students that can further explore how structural and cultural differences and differences in public attitudes across countries with regard to education affect the student experience.

Conclusion and Recommendations

LGBTQ students in the seven countries in the region commonly feel unsafe in school because of their sexual orientation and their gender expression (i.e., how they express their gender) and avoid spaces in their schools because of feeling unsafe. Further, many LGBTQ students in all seven countries miss days of school because they feel unsafe to attend. Hearing anti-LGBTQ remarks in school can be a major factor in creating unsafe and unwelcoming school environments for LGBTQ students. Across the countries, the vast majority of LGBTQ students commonly hear homophobic remarks and negative remarks about gender expression in their schools. Furthermore, school staff did not often intervene when such language is used in school, thereby condoning such behaviors. More concerning is the fact that it was not uncommon for LGBTQ students to hear anti-LGBTQ remarks from their teachers and other school staff, especially negative remarks about gender expression. In fact, in many of the countries, comments about gender expression from teachers appear to be more common than homophobic remarks. Thus, this may be indicative of the "policing" of gender expression and that the reinforcement of "traditional" gender roles is seen as normal for education staff in these countries and perhaps the region.

LGBTQ students in the seven countries also experienced high levels of harassment and assault, which can have even more serious consequences

on the lives of these students. In most countries, the vast majority of LGBTQ youth have experienced verbal harassment because of their sexual orientation and gender expression, and a disturbing number have also experienced physical harassment and assault for these reasons as well. And most LGBTQ students do not report victimization to school staff or even to family members, and when they do, they do not feel that it helps their situation. Overall, we found that victimization can lead to poorer well-being, less welcoming schools, and more negative educational outcomes for LGBTQ students. These findings may also explain, in part, how LGBTQ students in each of the seven countries reported lowel levels of school belonging in comparison to the levels from the general population of secondary school students in the respective countries from PISA.

Across all seven Latin American countries, there is a consistent lack of supportive and affirmative resources for LGBTQ students at school. LGBTQ students in the seven countries report a low incidence of being taught positive information about LGBTQ people, history, or events in class, and a significant percentage of students report being taught negative content. Furthermore, few students report that their schools have anti-bullying or harassment policies that include protections based on sexual orientation and/or gender expression. Nevertheless, the majority of LGBTQ students across the countries report that they have at least one teacher or school staff person who is supportive of LGBTQ students.

Positive supports for LGBTQ students in Latin America, or likely any region, are shown to be related to better educational experiences and student well-being. By including positive LGBTQ-related content in the curriculum, LGBTQ students feel like more valued members of the school community, and may promote more positive feelings about LGBTQ issues and persons among their peers, thereby resulting in a more positive school climate. LGBTQ students who have more supportive school staff also feel a greater attachment to their school, and one would assume, their education in general. Inclusive anti-bullying/harassment policies provide school staff with the guidance such that they can more appropriately intervene when students use anti-LGBTQ language and when LGBTQ students report incidents of harassment and assault. These policies can also instruct students regarding their rights to a safe education and provide instruction on how to report incidents of violence.

In order to ensure that LGBTQ students are afforded a supportive learning environment and educational opportunities, community and school advocates should work to prevent and respond to in-school victimization. Each country has outlined specific recommendations for their own national context, and we would encourage readers to examine these in detail.[101] There were significant commonalities across the seven countries with regard to their recommendations, and thus, likely have regional significance, and are still relevant given the findings of this multinational study:

Laws, policies and their local implementation

Enact and enforce laws and/or policies that prevent and address the problem of discrimination and violence in schools that include specific protections for LGBTQ students and other marginalized groups, such as laws related to the promotion of a culture of *convivencia* (coexistence), one free of discrimination and equal treatment for all in schools. However, it is not sufficient to simply enact laws and/or policies, and measures must be implemented that ensure the implementation of the laws and monitoring of progress and success, including monitoring, prevention efforts, and funding. Such measures must also address and hold accountable educators with regard to their making biased remarks in schools, including homophobic, transphobic, and gender-biased remarks.

Procedures and practices for reporting school-based harassment

Develop a protocol of procedures and practices for detection and attention to forms of violence and discrimination in educational institutions nationally in order to facilitate the response to this problem. These practices and procedures should include clear guidance for students for reporting discrimination, harassment, and violence at school, as well as clear follow-up mechanisms for educators to ensure that these problems are effectively addressed, and they should be specifically mindful of forms of biased based discrimination and violence, including sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

Policies and practices regarding discrimination & inclusion

Ensure that school policies and practices, such as those related to dress codes and school dances, do not discriminate against LGBTQ students, and eliminate policies and practices that discriminate against these students, including those that treat LGBTQ couples differently, censor expressions of LGBTQ identities, enforce traditional gender norms, needlessly separate students by gender, or maintain different rules or standards for male and female students.

School-based programs to address discrimination and violence

Design specific intervention strategies and promote better school coexistence (convivencia), and that specifically address anti-LGBTQ harassment and violence, including those that: a) generate awareness in the educational community in order to eliminate prejudices about different sexual orientations and gender identities and expressions, as well race/ethnicity, disability, and cultural, political, and religious differences; b) meet the needs of and ensure access to education for LGBTQ students; c) include guidance and instruction for students and family members on how and when to act when witnessing or learning about harassment or violence at school that specifically call out acts related to the student's sexual orientation and gender identity, and that include procedures for recourse when incidents are not being addressed at all or effectively.

Comprehensive sex education

In order to ensure that all our youth are provided with the most accurate and relevant health information, comprehensive sex education that is inclusive and accessible to all students should be provided throughout schools in the region. The content of comprehensive sexuality education curricular materials must also be reviewed to not only ensure medically accurate and age-appropriate information, but that it does not contain content that marginalizes people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities.

Professional development for educators

Implement training programs for all educators to improve rates of intervention, increase the number of supportive teachers and other staff available to students, and promote the inclusion of diversity in the classroom. In addition, enact regular supervision of teaching practices to ensure that curriculum content on promoting respect for sexual and gender diversity is effectively implemented.

Pre-service teacher education

Require curricula for undergraduate and graduate training courses to have specific content on respect for sexual orientation, and gender identity/expression and the experiences of LGBTQ students in their country so that they are prepared to be effective supports for LGBTQ students and to intervene in anti-LGBTQ incidents when they are in the classroom.

Parental involvement, information, and protections

Provide education for families in the school community on the experiences of LGBTQ students in order to create a broader inclusive school community, including information about the rights of students and any related protective school policies regarding school climate.

Public awareness

Develop campaigns on respect for diversity and the rights of all people, including LGBTQ people, allowing for the general student population to recognize the importance of the diversity in their schools with regard to culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, and race/ethnicity. In addition, develop campaigns that also raise awareness of the effects of discrimination and bullying against LGBTQ students.

Research

Conduct as well as fund research that continues to examine the experiences of LGBTQ students in each country that evaluates interventions and practices regarding school climate for these students and allows for tracking of progress in improving schools nationally with regard to safety and inclusion.

These recommendations are consistent with those put forth by international and regional bodies, including UNESCO and the Inter-American Council on Human Rights of the Organization of American

States as to what nations should do in order to prevent anti-LGBTQ violence and discrimination in schools and to promote better learning environments for LGBTQ students:

> *The IACHR calls on OAS Member States to fulfill their obligations to respect, guarantee, and adopt measures at the domestic level to fully guarantee the rights of LGBT children, or those perceived as such, to a life that is free from discrimination and violence, both within the family and school.*[102]

UNESCO's Call for Action by Ministers, which was signed thus far by 15 Latin American countries, including all 7 countries represented in this report, commits these officials:

> *...to reinforcing efforts to prevent and address violence including that based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, within the broad framework of a comprehensive education sector response to school-related violence including bullying and while taking into account the specificities of different legal and socio-cultural contexts, ensuring the cooperation between countries to share best practices.*[103]

In addition, the World Bank and UNDP recommend funding to develop an infrastructure for LGBTQ research and data collection through capacity building and partnership development among governments, multilateral institutions and civil society.[104]

Thus, we call on these multilateral organizations to monitor and hold accountable their member states in order to ensure implementation of these measures on behalf of LGBTQ students. Further, we also call to action civil society organizations, including us at GLSEN and Todo Mejora, the other NGOs in Latin America who participated in this report, and all others around the globe whose interest and passion is to create the best learning environments for LGBTQ students so that these students can achieve their highest potential, to join forces and work together to support our national efforts in our own individual countries and in our regions, but also to hold global leaders accountable for their recommended actions as they, in turn, hold national governments and their members states accountable.

Endnotes

1 Some of the countires specifically stated that their survey was also for intersex youth, in addition to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth. However, these surveys included no or few questions specifically about the intersex experience, and the representation of youth identifying as intersex was very low. Other countries did not specifically include intersex youth in their survey sampling. For these reasons, we do not specifically include discussion of intersex youth and use the acronym LGBTQ and not LGBTQI.

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UNESCO (2012). Education sector responses to homophobic bullying. Paris: UNESCO.

3 UNESCO (2016). Out in the open: Educator sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. Paris: UNESCO.

4 The "Call for Action" can be found: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/Ulis/cgi-bin/ulis.pl?catno=246247&set=005803E64C_1_59&database=ged&gp=Use&mode=e&lin=1&ll=c (ENG FRA SPA). The Latin American countries that have currently signed on to this call are: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, and Uruguay.

5 Badgett, M. V. L & Crehan, P. R. (2016). Investing in a research revolution for LGBTI inclusion (English). Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group.

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21 Gobierno de la República. "Un México sin homophobia, un #MéxicoIncluyente". Gob.mx: portal oficial del gobierno de México. June 14, 2017. Accesed on May 20, 2018. Available at: https://www.gob.mx/gobmx/articulos/un-mexico-sin-homofobia-un-mexicoincluyente

22 Secretaría de Educación Media Superior. "Presenta Nuño Mayer Modelo Educativo y propuesta Curricular para la Educación Obligatoria. Secretaría de Educación Pública. June 29, 2017. Accesed on May 20, 2018. Available at: http://cosdac.sems.gob.mx/portal/index.php/noticias/27-noticias-sems/258-presenta-nuno-mayer-modelo-educativo-y-propuesta-curricular-para-la-educacion-obligatoria-que-seran

23 Orozco, A. & Jorge Herrera. "Escuelas Incluyentes: una tarea urgente". November 10, 2017. Accesed on May 20, 2018. Available at: https://www.animalpolitico.com/blogueros-blog-invitado/2017/11/10/escuelas-incluyentes-una-tarea-urgente/

24 From the official website of the Catholic Archdiocese of Montevideo: http://icm.org.uy/estar-atentos-rezar-juntos-apuro-anunciar-cristo-jesus/

25 In Colombia, there are two different academic calendars: 1) from March to December, and 2) September to June. Given that the majority of schools use the former calendar, data was collected at the end of 2015/beginning of 2016.

26 See: www.glsen.org/nscs

27 To comply with national laws on research with children that limits the lower age allowed for participation at 14 years of age.

28 The national report from each country can be found:

Argentina: https://100porciento.files.wordpress.com/2016/12/informe-encuesta-bullying.pdf

Brazil: http://www.grupodignidade.org.br/projetos/acao-na-educacao/

Chile: https://todomejora.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Encuesta-de-Clima-Escolar-2016-Fundacion-TODO-MEJORA.pdf

Colombia: https://sentiido.com/informe-encuesta-nacional-de-clima-escolar-LGBT/

Mexico: http://www.fundacionarcoiris.org.mx/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Reporte-Encuesta-Bullying-2017-final.pdf

Peru: http://promsex.org/publicaciones/estudio-nacional-sobre-clima-escolar-en-el-peru-2016-2/

Uruguay: http://ovejasnegras.org/es/encuesta-nacional-del-clima-escolar-en-uruguay-2016/

29 For differences in the frequencies of feeling unsafe because of sexual orientation, we tested mean differences across countries with a series of analyses of covariance (ANCOVA), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The univariate effect was significant, $F(6, 4122) = 19.59$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .03$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p< .01$: AR: >UR, <CH; BR: >MX,UR; CH: >AR,MX,UR; CO: >MX,UR; MX: <All but AR,UR, >UR; PE: >AR; UR: <All.

30 For differences in the frequencies of feeling unsafe because of gender expression, we tested mean differences across countries with a series of analyses of covariance (ANCOVA), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The univariate effect was significant, $F(6, 4122) = 24.22$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .03$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p< .01$: AR: >All but BR & CO, <PE; BR: >CH,PE, <CO; CH: <All but PE; CO: >All; MX: >CH,PE, <AR,CO; PE: <All but CH; UR: <AR,CO, >CH,PE.

31 For differences in the frequencies of feeling unsafe because of gender identity, we tested mean differences across countries with a series of analyses of covariance (ANCOVA), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The univariate effect was significant, $F(6, 4122) = 7.27$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .01$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p< .01$: AR: >All but BR & CO, <PE; BR: >CH,PE, <CO;; CH: <All but PE; CO: >All; MX: >CH,PE, <AR,CO; PE: <All but CH; UR: <AR,CO, >CH,PE.

32 We tested mean differences across countries in the overall likelihood that students avoid any space in school using analyses of covariance (ANCOVA), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The univariate effect was significant, $F(6, 4878) = 11.48$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .01$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p< .01$: AR: >MX,CO; BR: >CO,MR,UR; CH: >MX; CO: <AR,BR,PE; MX: <All but CO, UR; PE: >CO,MX; UR: <BR.

33 Estimated means of any missed days of school are shown for illustrative purposes. We tested mean differences across countries in the frequency of missing school for safety reasons using an ANCOVA, controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The univariate effect was significant, $F(6, 4872) = 12.45$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p< .01$: CO: <All but MX; MX: <All but CO & PE.

34 For frequency of hearing homophobic remarks; we tested mean differences in the frequencies across countries using analyses of covariance (ANCOVA), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. For negative gender remarks, we used a multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) with the two variables, using the same covariates mentioned above. Homophobic remarks: The univariate effect was significant, $F(6, 4887) = 66.30$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .08$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p< .01$: AR: > all; BR: <AR,CO,UR; CH: <AR,CO,PE,UR; CO: > All but AR; MX: <AR,CO,PE,UR; PE: >CH,MX, <AR,CO; UR: >BR,CH,MX, <AR,CO. Transgender remarks: The Mexican survey did not ask this question and was not included in the analysis. The univariate effect was significant, $F(5, 3423) = 88.45$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .11$. AR: >All; BR: >All but AR; CH: <All but PE; CO: >CH,PE, <AR,BR; PE: <AR,BR,CO,UR; UR: >CH,PE; <AR,BR. Gender Expression: The multivariate effect was significant, Pillai's Trace = .05, $F(12, 9566) = 22.28$, $p<.001$. Resulting univariate effects and pairwise comparisons were considered at $p<.05$., Masculinity Remarks AR: >UR; <CO, MX; BR: >UR; <CO, MX; CH: >UR; <CO, MX; CO: >All but MX; MX: All but CO; PE: <CO,MX; UR: All but PE. Femininity Remarks AR: >BR,PE,UR, <MX; BR: >PE,UR, <AR,MX; CH:>BR,PE,UR, <MX; CO: >BR,PE,UR, <MX; MX: >All; PE: <All but UR; UR: <All but PE.

35 For homophobic remarks from school staff, we tested mean differences in the frequencies across countries using analyses of covariance (ANCOVA), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The univariate effect was significant, $F(6, 4886) = 21.49$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .03$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p< .01$. AR: >CH,UR; <BR,CO,PE; BR: >AR,CH,UR, <CO,PE; CH: <all but UR; CO: >all but PE; MX: >CH, <CO,PE,UR; PE: >all but CO; UR: <all but CH.

36 For negative remarks about gender expression from school staff, we tested mean differences in the frequencies across countries using analyses of covariance (ANCOVA), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The univariate effect was significant, $F(5, 4466) = 54,26$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p<.01$. AR: > UR, <MX; BR: > UR, <MX; CO: >UR, <MX; PE: > UR, <MX; UR: <All. The Chile survey did not include this question and was not included in these analyses.

37 For all countries but Mexico, students were asked to report frequency on a 4-point scale, from "Never" to "Always." In Mexico, students were asked to report frequency on a 5-point scale, from "Never" to "Frequently." For comparison purposes, we created a variable reflecting high intervention using the mean split within each country. We tested mean differences across countries using analyses of covariance (ANCOVA), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The univariate effect was significant, $F(6, 3572) = 23.04$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p<.01$.

AR: >BR,CO,MX,PE,UR; BR: <AR,CH,CO,PE; CH: >BR,MX,UR; CO: >BR,MX, <AR; MX: <AR,CH,CO,PE PE: >BR,MX, <AR; UR: <AR,CH.

38 Note: In the Mexico survey, students were asked a combined question about physical harassment and physical assault. Based on the comparison with other countries, we have included the responses to this question in the "physical harassment" analyses. Thus, one must exercise some caution in reviewing these comparisons.

39 Means are shown for illustrative purposes. We tested mean differences across countries in the frequency of harassment and assault due to sexual orientation using a series of ANCOVAs, controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation.

40 For verbal harassment due to sexual orientation, the univariate effect was significant, $F(6, 4861) = 16.78$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p< .01$: AR: >CH,MX,PE,UR; BR: >CH,MX,PE,UR; CH: <AR,BR,CO,MX,PE; CO: >CH,UR MX: >CH,UR, <AR,BR; PE: <AR,BR, >UR; UR: <AR,BR,CO,MX,PE.

41 For physical harassment due to sexual orientation, the univariate effect was significant, $F(6, 4820) = 14.18$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p< .01$: AR: >BR,CH,CO,MX; <AR,CO; BR: >CH,MX,PE,UR; CH: <AR,CO; CO: >All; MX: <AR,CO; PE: <CO; UR: <CO.

42 For physical assault due to sexual orientation, the univariate effect was significant, $F(6, 4861) = 16.78$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p< .01$: AR: >BR,CH; BR: <AR,CO,PE; CH: <AR,CO,PE; CO: >BR,CH; PE: >BR,CH; UR: No differences.

43 Means are shown for illustrative purposes. We tested mean differences across countries in the frequency of harassment and assault due to gender expression using a series of ANCOVAs, controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation.

44 For verbal harassment due to gender expression, the univariate effect was significant, $F(6, 4753) = 11.26$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .01$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p< .01$: AR: >CH,MX,PE; BR: >CH,PE; CH: <All but PE; CO: >CH,PE; MX: >CH,PE, <AR; PE: <All but CH; UR: >CH,PE.

45 For physical harassment due to gender expression, the univariate effect was significant, $F(6, 4861) = 11.65$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p< .01$: AR: >All but CO, <CO; BR: <AR,CO; CH: <AR, CO; CO: >All; MX: <AR,CO; PE: <AR,CO; UR < CO

46 For physical assault due to gender expression, the univariate effect was not statistically significant at $p<.01$.

47 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. We tested mean differences across countries in the frequency of reporting victimization to school staff using ANCOVA, controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. Given that students who have more frequent experiences of victimization may also have more opportunities to report victimization to school staff, we also included frequency of verbal harassment regarding sexual orientation and gender expression as covariates The univariate effect was significant, $F(6, 2776) = 4.18$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .01$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p< .01$: AR: >All.

48 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. We tested mean differences across countries in the effectiveness of reporting victimization to school staff using ANCOVA, controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The univariate effect was significant, $F(6, 1223) = 19.95$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .09$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p< .01$: AR: >BR, <CH,CO,MX; BR: All but UR; CH: All but MX; CO: >AR,BR, <CH; MX: >AR,BR,UR; PE: >BR, <CH; UR: <CH,MX.

49 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. We tested mean differences across countries in the frequency of reporting victimization to family members using ANCOVA, controlling for age, gender, locale, sexual orientation, and verbal harassment re: sexual orientation and gender expression. The univariate effect was marginally significant, $F(6,2764) = 2.80$, $p<.05$; $\eta_p^2 = .01$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p< .01$: AR: >PE,UR.

50 The relationship between missing school and severity of victimization was examined through Pearson correlations. Victimization based on sexual orientation: r = .36, $p<.001$; victimization based on gender expression: r = .31, $p<.001$. Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes.

51 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. To examine the relationship between verbal harassment based on sexual orientation and missing days of school by country, we conducted a two-way ANCOVA, with two independent variables (high/low victimization and country), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The main effect for country was significant, $F(6, 4847) = 9.85$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .01$, and the main effect for verbal harassment was significant, $F(1, 4847) = 392.99$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .08$.

52 Goodenow, C. & Grady, K. E. (1993). The relationship of school belonging and friends' values to academic motivation among urban adolescent students. Journal of Experimental Education, 62(1), 60–71.

Murdock, T. B. & Bolch, M. B. (2005). Risk and protective factors for poor school adjustment in lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) high school youth: Variable and person-centered analyses. Psychology in the Schools, 42(5), 159–172.

Wormington, S. V., Anderson, K. G., Schneider, A., Tomlinson, K. L., & Brown, S. A. (2016). Peer Victimization and Adolescent Adjustment: Does School Belonging Matter? Journal of School Violence, 15(1), 1–21.

Wang, W., Vaillancourt, T., Brittain, H. L., McDougall, P., Krygsman, A., Smith, D., & Hymel, S. (2014). School climate, peer victimization, and academic achievement: Results from a multi-informant study. School Psychology Quarterly, 29(3), 360–377.

53 Items assessing school belonging were taken from the 2012 survey of the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment.

54 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. The percentages reflect the average belonging score of each country within each dataset (NGO climate surveys and PISA national data). The scores were compute by dividing the mean belonging score by a constant of 4, given the response set ranged from 1 to 4.

55 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. To examine the relationship between sense of school belonging by country and by population (LGBTQ vs. general population), we conducted a two-way ANOVA, with two independent variables (country and population). In that PISA is administered only to 15 year olds, we used only that age of students from the LGBTQ population samples. The main effect for country was significant, $F(6, 55647) = 22.96$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .00$, and the main effect for population was significant, $F(1, 55647) = 681.90$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .01$. The interaction was significant, $F(6, 55647) = 2.96$, $p<.01$; $\eta_p^2 = .00$, $p<.00$. Because the PISA data did not allow for gender identities other than male/female, we also conducted the same analyses on only the cisgender students in the LGBTQ population samples and controlled for gender, which yielded similar statistical results.

56 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. We tested mean differences across countries in the sense of school belonging using ANCOVA, controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The univariate effect was significant, $F(6, 4850) = 13.04$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p<.01$: AR: <CH,CO,MX,UR; BR: <CH,CO,MX; CH: >AR,BR,PE; CO: >AR,BR,PE; MX: >AR,BR,PE; PE: <CH,CO,MX; UR: >AR.

57 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. To examine the relationship between verbal harassment based on sexual orientation and school belonging by country, we conducted a two-way ANCOVAs, with two independent variables (high/low victimization and country), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The main effect for country was significant, $F(6, 4822) = 13.98$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .02$, and the main effect for verbal harassment was significant, $F(1, 4822) = 485.47$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .09$. The interaction was not statistically significant, $p>.05$.

58 Depression was measured using the 20-item Likert-type CES-D depression scale (Eaton et al., 2004), which includes such items as "During the past week, I felt hopeful about the future." Higher levels of depression are indicated by a cutoff at the mean score of depression: students above the mean were characterized as "Demonstrating Higher Levels of Depression."

59 Self-esteem was measured using the 10-item Likert-type Rosenberg self-esteem scale (RSE; Rosenberg, 1989), which includes such items as "I am able to do things as well as most people." Positive and negative self-esteem are indicated by a cutoff at the score indicating neither positive nor negative feelings about oneself: students above this cutoff were characterized as "Demonstrating Positive Self-Esteem."

60 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. To examine the relationship between verbal harassment based on sexual orientation and depression by country, we conducted a two-way ANCOVAs, with two independent variables (high/low victimization and country), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The main effect for country was marginally significant, $F(4, 3635) = 2.62$, $p<.05$; $\eta_p^2 = .01$, and the main effect for verbal harassment was significant, $F(1, 3632) = 85.37$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .08$. The interaction was marginally significant, $F(4, 3632) = 2.34$, $p<.05$; $\eta_p^2 = .00$, $p<.05$.

61 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. To examine the relationship between verbal harassment based on sexual orientation and self-esteem by country, we conducted a two-way ANCOVAs, with two independent variables (high/low victimization and country), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The main effect for country was significant, $F(4, 3632) = 10.03$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .00$, and the main effect for verbal harassment was significant, $F(1, 3632) = 291.27$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .02$. The interaction was marginally significant, $F(4, 3632) = 2.93$, $p<.05$; $\eta_p^2 = .00$, $p<.05$.

62 The effect sizes for each country were determined through an additional series of within-country ANCOVAs: BR: $\eta_p^2 = .04$; CH: $\eta_p^2 = .07$; CO: $\eta_p^2 = .01$; MX: $\eta_p^2 = .03$; PE: $\eta_p^2 = .04$. An eta of .01 is considered a small effect, an eta of .06 is considered a moderate effect. See Cohen, J. (1988). Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

63 UN Office on Drugs and Crime's International Homicide Statistics database via World Bank, data.worldbank.org/

64 Note: The survey in Uruguay did not include this question in their survey.

65 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. We tested mean differences across countries in peer acceptance using ANCOVA, controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The univariate effect was significant, $F(5, 4472) = 22.42$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p<.01$: AR: >PE, <CH,MX; BR: >MX, <PE; CH: >AR,CO,PE; CO: >PE, <CH,MX; MX: >All but CH; PE: <All others.

66 Note: the surveys in Mexico and Uruguay did not ask questions about program or group availability and attendance.

67 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. We tested mean differences across countries in the percentage of youth who had an LGBTQ youth group or program in their area using ANCOVA, controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The univariate effect was significant, $F(4, 3019) = 20.79$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .01$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p<.01$: AR: >CH; BR: >AR,CH,CO,PE; CH: <AR,BR,CO; CO: >CH, <BR; PE: <BR.

68 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. We tested mean differences across countries in the number of supportive school staff using ANCOVA, controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The univariate effect was significant, $F(6, 4824) = 25.92$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .08$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p<.01$: AR: >PE, <BR,CH,CO,UR; BR: >AR,CO,MX,PE; CH: >AR,CO,MX,PE; CO: >AR,PE, <BR,CH; MX: <BR,CH,PE,UR; PE: <All others; UR: >AR,MX,PE.

69 Each country asked a set of questions about comfort speaking with school staff about LGBTQ issues. However, each country adapted the questions to reflect the common types of staff. Furthermore, each country may have used a different term, specific to their cultural context, for a type of staff that was a different term for the same or similar staff role in another country. Thus, we worked collaboratively with staff from the seven NGOs to find common terms for these staff roles.

70 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. There were only three types of school staff that all seven countries asked about. The Brazilian survey did not include a question about mental health professionals and the Peruvian survey did not ask about school librarians. Thus, in order to examine differences in the comfort level speaking with different types of staff among the seven countries, we conducted a series of two-way repeated measures ANCOVAs controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. In the first, we examined all five types of school staff (teachers, directors, other administrators, mental health professionals, and librarians) with five countries. in the second, we examined the three types of staff (teachers, directors, and other administrators) across all seven countries. In the first analysis, the main effect for differences across the type of educator were significant $F(4,12685) = 7.69$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .002$, and the interaction of type x country was also significant: $F(16,12685) = 21.37$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .026$. In the second analysis, the main effect for differences across the type of educator were not significant. However, the interaction of type x country was significant: $F(12,9286) = 13.05$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .017$. These analyses indicate that there are significant differences across the countries in the ratings of comfort that varied by the type of staff. However, given the nonsignificant finding in the second analysis, overall differences among the total sample in comfort with the different types of staff may be driven by the inclusion of mental health professionals and librarians, but particularly the mental health professionals because, in general, LGBTQ students had significantly higher comfort levels with these staff.

71 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. To examine the relationship between number of supportive educators and school belonging, we conducted a two-way ANCOVA, with two independent variables (high/low number of supportive educators and country), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. For the purposes of these analyses, the number of supportive educators was split into "None," "1," and "2 to 5" as "low" and "5 to 10" and "More than 10" into "high." The main effect for country was significant, $F(6, 4786) = 16.51$ $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .02$, and the main effect for number of supportive educators was significant, $F(1, 4786) = 385.58$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .08$. The interaction was not significant at $p<.05$.

72 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. To examine the relationship between number of supportive educators and missing school for safety reasons, we conducted a two-way ANCOVA, with two independent variables (high/low number of supportive educators and country), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The main effect for country was significant, $F(6, 4811) = 12.39$ $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .02$, and the main effect for number of supportive educators was significant, $F(1, 4811) = 58.96$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .01$. The interaction was marginally significant, $F(1, 4811) = 2.12$, $p<.05$; $\eta_p^2 = .00$.

73 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. We tested mean differences across countries in the likelihood of being taught positive LGBTQ content using ANCOVA, controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The univariate effect was significant, $F(6, 4885) = 19.83$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p< .01$: AR: >PE, <BR,CH,CO,UR; BR: >AR,CO,MX,PE; CH: >AR,CO,MX,PE; CO: >AR,PE, <BR,CH; MX: <BR,CH,PE,UR; PE: <All others; UR: >All but MX.

74 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. We tested mean differences across countries in the likelihood of being taught negative LGBTQ content using ANCOVA, controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The univariate effect was significant, $F(6, 4859) = 35.74$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .04$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p< .01$: AR: <CO,MX,PE;BR: >CH,UR, <CO,MX,PE;CH: <BR,CO,MX; CO: >AR,BR,CH,UR; MX: >AR,BR,CH,UR; PE: >AR,BR,CH,UR; UR: >BR,CO,MX,PE.

75 Differences in the likelihood of being taught positive versus negative content were conducted through a series of paired t-tests within each country. Comparisons were considered at $p< .01$.

76 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. To examine the relationship between positive curricular inclusion and school belonging, we conducted a two-way ANCOVA, with two independent variables (any vs. no positive inclusion and country), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The main effect for country was significant, $F(6, 4841) = 7.97$ $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .01$, and the main effect for positive curricular inclusion was significant, $F(1, 4841) = 241.80$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .05$. The interaction was not significant at $p<.05$.

77 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. To examine the relationship between positive curricular inclusion and missing school for safety reasons, we conducted a two-way ANCOVA, with two independent variables (any vs. no positive curricular inclusion and country), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The main effect for country was significant, $F(6, 4871) = 7.92$ $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .01$, and the main effect for positive curricular inclusion was significant, $F(1, 4871) = 47.24$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .01$. The interaction was not significant at $p<.05$.

78 The effect sizes for each country were determined through an additional series of within-country ANCOVAs: AR: $\eta_p^2 = .02$; BR: $\eta_p^2 = .02$; CH: $\eta_p^2 = .02$; CO: $\eta_p^2 = .00$; MX: $\eta_p^2 = .01$; PE: $\eta_p^2 = .01$. All effects were statistically significant at $p<.05$, except for Colombia, which was not significant, and Mexico, which was marginally significant at $p<.10$. An eta of .01 is considered a small effect, an eta of .06 is considered a moderate effect. See Cohen, J. (1988). Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

79 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. We tested mean differences across countries in the likelihood of having any type of school policy about bullying and harassment using ANCOVA, controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The univariate effect was significant, $F(5, 4471) = 29.90$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p< .01$: AR: >MX, <CO; BR: >MX, <CO; CH: >MX, <CO; CO: >AR,BR,CH,MX,PE; MX: <AR,BR,CH,CO,PE; PE: >MX, <CO.

80 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. We tested mean differences across countries in the likelihood of having a school policy about bullying and harassment that specifically included sexual orientation and/or gender identity using ANCOVA, controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The univariate effect was significant, $F(5, 4471) = 5.87$, $p<.001$; eta = .01. Pairwise comparisons were considered at $p< .01$: AR: <CH,CO; BR: <CO; CH: >AR; CO: >AR,BR,MX,PE; MX: <CO; PE: >CO.

81 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. To examine the relationship between inclusive policy and homophobic remarks, we conducted a two-way ANCOVA, with two independent variables (presence of inclusive policy and country), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The main effect for country was significant, $F(5, 4463) = 29.43$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .03$, and the main effect for policy was significant, $F(1, 4463) = 15.52$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .00$. Although, the interaction was not significant at $p<.05$, the effect sizes for each country, which were determined through an additional series of within-country ANCOVAs, were lowest in Argentina, Mexico, and Peru: AR: $\eta_p^2 = .002$; BR: $\eta_p^2 = .009$; CH: $\eta_p^2 = .017$; CO: $\eta_p^2 = .014$; MX: $\eta_p^2 = .003$; PE: $\eta_p^2 = .000$.

82 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. To examine the relationship between inclusive policy and verbal harassment based on sexual orientation by country, we conducted a two-way ANCOVA, with two independent variables (presence of inclusive policy and country), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The main effect for country was significant, $F(5, 4445) = 5.93$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .007$, and the main effect for policy was significant, $F(1, 4445) = 12.17$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .003$. The interaction was marginally significant, $F(5, 4445) = 3.77$, $p<.01$; $\eta_p^2 = .002$, $p<.10$. The effect sizes for each country were determined through an additional series of within-country ANCOVAs: AR: $\eta_p^2 = .00$; BR: $\eta_p^2 = .004$; CH: $\eta_p^2 = .008$; CO: $\eta_p^2 = .009$; MX: $\eta_p^2 = .019$; PE: $\eta_p^2 = .00$. The within-country effect sizes for Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Mexico would be considered a small effect (.01), and the effect sizes for Argentina and Peru would be considered to be no effect. See Cohen, J. (1988). Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

83 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. To examine the relationship between having an inclusive policy and student reporting of victimization by country, we conducted a two-way ANCOVA, with two independent variables (policy and country), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The main effect for country was significant, $F(5, 2661) = 3.21$, $p<.01$; $\eta_p^2 = .006$, and the main effect for policy was marginally significant, $F(1, 2661) = 6.05$, $p<.05$; $\eta_p^2 = .002$. The interaction was also marginally significant, $F(5, 2661) = 2.79$, $p<.05$; $\eta_p^2 = .005$. When we conducted within-country analyses, there was a statistically significant relationship only for Colombia and Mexico., $p<.05$.

84 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. To examine the relationship between having an inclusive policy and intervention regarding homophobic remarks by country, we conducted a two-way ANCOVA, with two independent variables (policy and country), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The main effect for country was significant, $F(5, 3349) = 3.11$, $p<.01$; $\eta_p^2 = .005$, and the main effect for policy was significant, $F(1, 3349) = 14.03$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .004$. The interaction was not statistically significant at $p<.05$.

85 Percentages are shown for illustrative purposes. To examine the relationship between inclusive policy and the effectiveness of staff intervention regarding reported victimization, we conducted a two-way ANCOVA, with two independent variables (policy and country), controlling for age, gender, locale, and sexual orientation. The main effect for country was significant, $F(5, 1155) = 9.32$, $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2 = .039$, and the main effect for policy was significant, $F(1, 1155) = 8.62$, $p<.01$; $\eta_p^2 = .007$. The interaction was not statistically significant at $p<.05$.

86 The consultation, Consulta sobre Violencia Homofóbica y Transfóbica en las Instituciones Educativas en América Latina y el Caribe, was held in Bogotá, Colombia, 28-31 October 2014 organized by the UNESCO Office in Santiago de Chile - Regional Bureau for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean and National Office to Chile.

87 Kosciw, J. G., Greytak, E. A., Giga, N. M., Villenas, C. & Danischewski, D. J. (2016). The 2015 National School Climate

Survey: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer youth in our nation's schools. New York: GLSEN.

88 Kosciw, J. G., Greytak, E. A., Giga, N. M., Villenas, C. & Danischewski, D. J. (2016). The 2015 National School Climate Survey: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer youth in our nation's schools. New York: GLSEN.

89 Regional Bureau for Education in Latin-America and the Caribbean (OREALC/UNESCO Santiago) (2006). Second Regional Comparative and Explicative Study (SERCE) [Dataset]. Led by the American Laboratory for the Assessment of the Quality of Education (LLECE). Retrieved from: http://www.unesco.org/new/en/santiago/education/education-assessment-llece/perce-serce-databases.

90 Using SERCE data from 6th grade students (see citation above), preliminary analyses examined differences across the seven countries with the single item "Most teachers really listen to what I have to say"L ("La mayoría de los profesores realmente escucha lo que yo tengo que decir.") We conducted simple one-way analysis of variances on each item by the six countries with no covariates or weighting.

91 Regional Bureau for Education in Latin-America and the Caribbean (OREALC/UNESCO Santiago) (2006). Second Regional Comparative and Explicative Study (SERCE) [Dataset]. Led by the American Laboratory for the Assessment of the Quality of Education (LLECE). Retrieved from: http://www.unesco.org/new/en/santiago/education/education-assessment-llece/perce-serce-databases.

92 Using SERCE data from parents (see citation above), preliminary analyses examined differences across the six countries with parent involvement data (AR, BR, CH, CO, PE, UR) on three items: Item_15_1 This year, have you participated in activities that take place in the school (sports, cultural, fairs, etc.)?; Item_15_2 "This year, have you participated in meetings of all the parents of the class convened by the teacher?", and Item_15_3 "This year, have you participated in meetings that the director calls about the operation of the school?" We conducted simple one-way analysis of variances on each item by the six countries with no covariates or weighting.

93 Davis, D. & Miroshnikova, E. (2013). The Routledge International Handbook of Religious Education. New York: Routledge.

94 Pew Research Center (2011, November 13). Religion in Latin America: Widespread change in a historically Catholic region. Retrieved from: http://www.pewforum.org/2014/11/13/religion-in-latin-america.

95 Pew Research Center (2011, November 13). Religion in Latin America: Widespread change in a historically Catholic region. Retrieved from: http://www.pewforum.org/2014/11/13/religion-in-latin-america.

96 Román, M. and Murillo, J. (2011). América Latina: violencia entre estudiantes y desempeño escolar. Revista Cepal, 104, 37-54. Román, M. and Murillo, J. (2011). América Latina: violencia entre estudiantes y desempeño escolar. Revista Cepal, 104, 37-54.

97 Pew Research Center (2011). Religion in Latin America: Widespread change in a historically Catholic region. Retrieved from: http://www.pewforum.org/2014/11/13/religion-in-latin-america

98 Source: Schulz, W., Cox, C., Ainely, J., & Friedman, T. (2018). Young People's Views of Government, Peaceful Coexistence, and Diversity in Five Latin American Countries: iEA international Civic and Citizenship Education Study 2016 Latin American Report. (Amsterdam: International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement).

99 Schulz, W., Cox, C., Ainely, J., & Friedman, T. (2018). Young People's Views of Government, Peaceful Coexistence, and Diversity in Five Latin American Countries: iEA international Civic and Citizenship Education Study 2016 Latin American Report. (Amsterdam: International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement).

100 Nanda, S. (2014). Gender diversity: Crosscultural variations. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

101 See Endnote 15.

102 Inter-American Commission on Human Rights - IACHR (2015). Violence against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Persons in the Americas. Washington, DC: Organization of American States. http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/reports/pdfs/ViolenceLGBTIPersons.pdf, p. 179.

103 UNESCO (2016). Out in the open: Educator sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. Paris: UNESCO, p. 2.

104 Badgett, Mary Virginia Lee; Crehan, Philip Robert (2016). Investing in a research revolution for LGBT inclusion (English). Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group.

Appendix

Table A1: Selected Public Opinion Data							
	Argentina	**Brazil**	**Chile**	**Colombia**	**Mexico**	**Peru**	**Uruguay**
Importance of Religion (% who say religion is very important in their lives)[a]	43%	72%	41%	77%	44%	72%	28%
Attitudes toward Homosexuality (% who say homosexual behavior is morally wrong)[a]	45%	61%	40%	67%	57%	73%	34%
Attitudes toward Same-Sex Marriage (% strongly favor/favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally)[a]	52%	45%	46%	28%	49%	26%	62%
Homosexuals should have the same rights as all other citizens (% agree/strong agree)[b]	--	--	86%	85%	88%	61%	--
All schools should accept homosexuals (% agree/ strong agree)[b]	--	--	84%	80%	85%	71%	--

[a]Source: Pew Research Center (2011). *Religion in Latin America: Widespread change in a historically Catholic region*. Retrieved from: http://www.pewforum.org/2014/11/13/religion-in-latin-america

[b]Source: Schulz, W., Cox, C., Ainely, J., & Friedman, T. (2018). *Young People's Views of Government, Peaceful Coexistence, and Diversity in Five Latin American Countries: iEA international Civic and Citizenship Education Study 2016 Latin American Report*. (Amsterdam: International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement).

Table A2: Relevant Laws or Policies by Country

	Argentina	Brazil	Chile	Colombia	Mexico	Peru	Uruguay
Criminalization of homosexuality[a]	Never criminalized[b]	Never criminalized[b]	Decriminalized in 1999	Decriminalized in 1981	Never criminalized[b]	Decriminalized in 1924	Decriminalized in 1934
Same-sex marriage[a]	Passed in 2010	Passed in 2013	No legal recognition	Passed in 2016	Legal recognition only in certain states	No legal recognition	Passed in 2013
Gender-affirming name change[c]	Possible without prohibitive requirements, as of 2012	Possible without prohibitive requirements, as of 2018.[d]	Possible, including if given name is "injurious," but not due to gender identity.	Possible via a public deed, as of 1988. Transgender citizens, in particular, may change their name up to two times, as of 2014.	Possible only in Federal District of Mexico City, as of 2014	Possible via judicial process, as of 2016	Possible without prohibitive requirements, as of 2009
Changing gender identity on official government documents[c]	Possible without prohibitive requirements, as of 2012	Possible without prohibitive requirements, as of 2018.[d]	Not possible	Possible without prohibitive requirements, as of 2015	Possible only in Federal District of Mexico City, as of 2014	Possible via judicial process, as of 2016	Possible without prohibitive requirements, as of 2009
Bullying laws	Law 26,892 (passed in 2013) establishes a system to promote harmonious coexistence and intervene on social conflict in schools.[e]	Law 13,185 (passed in 2015) creates a program to combat bullying in schools.[f]	Law 20,536 (passed in 2011) establishes the responsibility of the State to prevent school violence and promote harmonious coexistence in schools.[g]	Law 1,620 (passed in 2013) establishes a system to promote human rights and harmonious coexistence, and combat violence and discrimination in schools. This law also includes language about gender identity and sexual orientation specifically.[h]	No federal anti-bullying legislation	No federal anti-bullying legislation	No federal anti-bullying legislation

[a]Carroll, A. and Mendos, L.R.. (2017). *State Sponsored Homophobia 2017: A world survey of sexual orientation laws: criminalisation, protection and recognition* (Geneva: ILGA).

[b]"Never criminalized" indicates that the nation's first official federal penal code did not outlaw homosexuality or sodomy. It is important to note, however, that other local and federal laws (e.g. those regulating morality or vice) have also been historically used to persecute and incarcerate LGBTQ people in these and other nations.

[c]Chiam, Z., Duffy, S. and González Gil, M.. (2017). *Trans Legal Mapping Report 2017: Recognition before the law* (Geneva: ILGA).

[d]https://www.conjur.com.br/dl/cnj-regulamenta-alteracoes-nome-sexo.pdf

[e]https://www.boletinoficial.gob.ar/#!DetalleNorma/10344383/20160703

[f]http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_Ato2015-2018/2015/Lei/L13185.htm

[g]https://www.bcn.cl/leyfacil/recurso/violencia-escolar

[h]http://www.secretariasenado.gov.co/senado/basedoc/ley_1620_2013.html

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