

ARE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES FAILING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE
TRANSGENDER AND GENDER NON-CONFORMING COMMUNITY BY FAILING TO
MEET THE NEEDS OF SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS?

By

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THESIS

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ABSTRACT

Are Colleges and Universities Failing to Meet the Needs of the Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Community By Failing to Meet the Needs of Social Work Students?

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With the notable trend for recognition of the transgender and gender non-conforming (TGNC) Community, as well as their having issues that are separate and distinct from the lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) community, the need for social workers specifically trained to meet the needs of this population has become apparent. An absence of qualified social workers in both macro and micro fields has necessitated a review of all Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited programs to ascertain if education on TGNC individuals is being included in curriculum as is outlined in the CSWE diversity and accreditation standards. Currently, both baccalaureate and master's programs are failing to address the TGNC community as a distinct population and due to an absence of education on the LGBT community as a whole, are failing to address them in a larger context. This finding not only impedes social worker's ability to work with this disenfranchised, at-risk community, it may well encumber their employability as major employers such as the United States Veteran's Association, the largest employer of social workers in the nation, is looking for employees who are trained in the unique needs of TGNC service men, women, and retirees. It is imperative that college and university schools of social work assess their curriculum at both the baccalaureate and master's level to ensure that the current and future needs of the TGNC community are, and will continue to be, met by ensuring that their students receive the necessary education to meet these distinct needs.

Keywords: TGNC, Transgender, Transsexual, Gender non-conforming, LGBT, GLBT, Sexual Orientation, CSWE, Social Work Students, Program Assessment

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APA	American Psychological Association
BSW	Baccalaureate in Social Work
CAP	Community and Administrative Practice
CE	Continuing Education
CSOGIE	Council on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression
CSWE	Council on Social Work Education
DOD	Department of Defense
DSM-5	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition
DVA	Department of Veterans Affairs
GLBT	Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender
HBSE	Human Behavior in the Social Environment
IASWR	Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research
IFSW	International Federation of Social Workers
LGB	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender
MSW	Master's in Social Work
NACSW	National Association of Christians in Social Work
NASW	National Association of Social Workers
TGNC	Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming
U.S.	United States
UTA	University of Texas at Arlington
VHA	Veterans Health Administration

Are Colleges and Universities Failing to Meet the Needs of the Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Community by Failing to Meet the Needs of Social Work Students?

Chapter 1

Nature of the problem

In the last decade there has been a notable trend for recognition of the transgender and gender non-conforming community (TGNC) as having issues that are separate and distinct from the lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) community (Bryne et. al., 2012). While lesbian, gay, and bisexual populations all relate to those with a homosexual orientation, the TGNC population does not. Instead, TGNC individuals are those whose gender presentation falls outside of the stereotypical male/female binary. Such presentation has led to social issues including the so-called “Bathroom Bill” (Sheppard, 2016), which states that individuals shall use the bathroom and changing facilities of their biological sex as opposed to that of their gender identity. Colleges and universities have been challenged at the federal level to meet the needs of this community by declaring that “Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964” covers discrimination “based on a person’s nonconformity with stereotypes associated with that person’s real or perceived gender” (Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, n.d.).

In addition to advocacy related concerns, there is a lack of mental health care providers for this community. A 2015 article states that a lack of mental health care providers is a barrier for the rising number of adolescents seeking mental health services regarding gender issues (Vance Jr., Halpern-Felsher, & Rosenthal, 2015). Over half of the participants in this study, or 58.3%, specifically identified this as a barrier to care (Vance Jr., Halpern-Felsher, & Rosenthal, 2015). As a result, social workers are being called upon to address the rapidly evolving needs of the TGNC population. However, if social workers are under-educated in the specificity of the TGNC community during their college years, knowing how to proceed with advocacy or mental health care for this population

becomes problematic.

Are Colleges and Universities Addressing TGNC Diversity

The question of colleges and universities meeting the needs of diverse populations through the training social workers is not a new one. As far back as 1997 research claimed that Masters of Social Work (MSW) programs were already “out of touch” with an ever-changing society (McMurtry & McClelland, 1997). Despite diligent effort and changes in academia, in 2009 researchers were still addressing the educational challenge of content relevance based on evolving client needs (Sugawara, 2009). By 2012 educators began looking not solely at curriculum itself, but to students prejudices and biases, to question how to best train students. Hancock, Waites, and Kledaras (2012) write:

“If a goal of social work education is to heighten students’ awareness of structural inequality to prepare them for social justice advocacy, then we need to know students views on the nature of oppression and their willingness to serve and advocate for oppressed populations” (pp. 5-25).

This study found that how both BSW and MSW students view oppression manipulated their “sense of professional responsibility to oppressed groups”, including their idea of working with gay and lesbian clients (Hancock, Waites, & Kledaras, 2012). An informal classroom survey of one cohort of graduate-level social work students by their professor highlights this disparity. Following a class discussion on the “core values” of social work, the professor asked her students to identify a population with which they might have problems maintaining their professional values with (Wahler, 2012). This non-rigorous, impromptu survey identified members of the LGBT community as one of the populations they felt they would have difficulty working with as clients (Wahler, 2012). Hancock, Waites, and Kledaras’ (2012) findings are even more concerning when paired with Wahler’s (2012) classroom results. This may be one reason that Messinger

(2006) state that social workers, which are supposed to be advocating and providing services for members of the LGBT community, often find themselves at a loss as to how to successfully do so.

One way that schools of social work may be failing to address this problem is by neglecting to identify the TGNC community as a community to themselves. It is important to remember that this is a community that has unique obstacles that affect no other section of society, including the LGB community. It is possible that TGNC individuals are not specifically included under the sexual orientation portion of the Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) *Accreditation Standard 3.0—Diversity* (Council on Social Work Education [CSWE], 2015, p. 14). However, the Council on Social Work Education's formation of a Council on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression (CSOGIE), as well as a TGNC scholarship and conference, clarifies their position regarding this population. Still, the TGNC population is easily overlooked as their own group for educational purposes, but this does not preclude this same standard's mandate for students to be taught to "value and respect diversity, and develop a commitment to cultural humility" (CSWE, 2015, p.14).

The CSWE (2015) also calls upon schools of social work to provide a commitment to hiring diverse educators; a call that goes beyond simply having racially diverse staffing to include members of both the LGB and TGNC community. Such dictates not only include hiring LGB and TGNC support staff; colleges and universities should be actively seeking out such individuals to fill educator positions.

"Most social work professionals trained before the mid-1990s had no academic preparation for working with sexual minority populations, and many social workers trained since then have had minimal, if any, academic exposure to these populations" (Morrow, 2006, p.1). While today it may be assumed common for schools of social work to include curriculum on the

LGBT community, many studies have suggested the inclusion of more LGBT inclusive curriculum within schools of social work is needed to fully prepare social work students (Woodford, Brennan, Gutiérrez, & Luke, 2013; Martin et al., 2009; McPhail, 2008; Hylton, 2005). Even in this call we see the lumping of the TGNC community under the LGBT umbrella, a place we have previously discussed as a group cluster they clearly do not belong. Further, it is a distinction that should be addressed with students before they have a TGNC individual sitting across the desk from them seeking services.

In their 2007 article titled “Evaluating the Phobias Attitudes and Cultural Competence of Master of Social Work Students Toward the LGBT Populations”, Logie, Bridge, and Bridge state: “The inadequate preparedness of MSW students regarding the needs of the LGBT populations and competence in their practices is a call to action for educators” (216). If we understand that TGNC individuals are not part of the sexual minority population, rather the gender expression population, the question that begs to be answered is are we in the same educational position as Messinger outlined in 2006, and that Logie, Bridge, and Bridge stated in 2007, a decade later with the TGNC population?

One answer to this question comes from Lori Messinger, who while still a Ph.D. student, reflected on her own field education (2013). Despite being a member of the LGBT community herself, Messinger (2013) was left unsure how to handle herself when dealing with members of the LGBT community, including the appropriateness of admitting her sexual orientation to clients, when asked. If this member of the LGBT community had difficulties due to lack of specific training, how can we expect those who are not members to feel adequately trained? Further, are LGBT social work students being taught how to answer questions about their sexual orientation, relationship status, etc., before being sent to field placements or on job interviews?

As one article in the Journal of Social Work Education puts it: “If the profession is to close the gap between its purpose and performance, social work educators must make a deliberate commitment to train students to be experts in social change” (Abramovitz, 1993, pp. 6-11). This same article goes on to clarify that without doing so schools of social work may inadvertently become what they have been accused of in the past: “handmaiden(s) of the status quo” (Abramovitz, 1993, pp. 6-11).

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

This study seeks to determine if CSWE accredited baccalaureate and master's programs include education on the TGNC population. Having determined an increasing need due to ever evolving changes in the visibility and acceptance of TGNC individuals, the necessity for micro, mezzo, and macro social workers to be prepared to meet the needs of this community is apparent. What is not as easily ascertainable is the extent to which colleges and universities are preparing their students to meet such needs. While much research has been done on attitudes towards the LGBT community in general, the climate for LGBT students, and even the inclusion of non-discrimination policies at both the university and department level, less has been done to specifically assess LGBT inclusion into social work curriculum. Even less research has specifically targeted the TGNC community. While some research has shown limitations in the ability of a single class to reduce homophobia (Swank & Rais, 2007), it remains to be seen if a consistent pedagogy across an entire BSW or MSW program could be the missing connection.

The TGNC Community

Definition of TGNC, transgender and transsexual. Whereas the expression “transgender” is an umbrella term that covers all TGNC individuals, the term “transsexual” is a medically diagnosed condition, meeting the DSM-5 criteria for “gender dysphoria” (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2013). The DSM-5 provides diagnostic criteria for gender dysphoria for adults as well as children and adolescents (APA, 2013). It is imperative to understand gender identity, as well as those who fall on the TGNC spectrum, as a diverse group of individuals. Roen (2001) points out in “Transgender Theory and Embodiment: the Risk of Racial Marginalization”, we must not look at the

TGNC community through a “perspective of whiteness”. TGNC individuals are found in all cultural and ethnic populations thus, this is a complex and varied community. Further, the way an individual manifests their TGNC status is wholly unique. For example, cross-dressers and those who are gender fluid are not seeking the sex-realignment surgical procedures that those who are transsexual may. For the purpose of this study is important to note that those who fall on the TGNC spectrum do so via self-identification, such as the style of dress or when seeking medical care for transitional needs, or therapeutic care. As such, we are addressing the entire TGNC population as opposed to those with the DSM-5 diagnosable condition of gender dysphoria.

TGNC standards of care verses guidelines. While the American Psychological Association (APA) does not have a standard of care, which they define as a mandate all psychologists must follow, in 2015 they published their first ever guidelines for working with TGNC individuals (APA, 2015). They define "guidelines" as "aspirational" for all "psychological practice (e.g., clinical work, consultation, education, research, and training) rather than treatment" (APA, 2015, p. 833). The guidelines included an acknowledgement that psychologists should "seek to understand how gender identity intersects with the other cultural identities of TGNC people", understanding that one's personal attitudes and knowledge base may affect the care they give, and to "recognize how stigma, prejudice, discrimination, and violence affect the health and well-being of TGNC people" (APA, 2015, pp. 862-864) among other guidelines.

Challenges of the TGNC population. The TGNC community is clearly a misunderstood population as despite their more publicly vocal recent advancements they still face opposition to issues as simple as where they can legally go to the lavatory. Because of this specific concern, bathroom usage is one of the first things determined in the Department of Defense's (DOD) recent announcement of lifting the ban on transgender service personnel (Under Secretary of Defense for

Personnel and Readiness, 2016). Still, the DOD's statement only applies to current service personnel on military facilities (Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, 2016), and could leave active duty personnel in a difficult situation when they are stationed in a location that does not provide a non-discrimination law or ordinance. This means that once a service member steps off facility, the protection of the DOD's policy ends (Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, 2016).

A chapter in the forthcoming "*Trans Studies: The Challenge to Hetero/Homo Normatives*" quotes survey results from the National Transgender Discrimination Survey (NTDS) that outlines disparity concerns within the TGNC population in areas such as health, housing, and public accommodations (Herman, in press), with "expanded versions" of the tables posted on the Williams Institute's website (Herman, 2016). Health disparities due to interactions with mental health professionals are outlined in *Seeking Support: Transgender Client Experiences with Mental Health Professionals* (Benson, 2013). Benson (2013, p.22) found motifs which she states, "challenged the assumption that transgender people seek mental health services because their gender identity is problematic; instead they experience many 'normal life' challenges..." Among these were the quality of life, a wish to "pursue transition", and finances (including those who have insurance that does not cover gender transition). Still, arguably the most troubling were the lack of "transgender affirmative therapy" and care by "uneducated therapists" (Benson, 2013).

It is not uncommon for the TGNC community to be lumped in with the LGB community as one of the myriads of alphabet soup letters assigned to those who fall outside of heterosexual normality. Yet, it must be pointed out that while the LGB of this group address sexual orientation in the same way heterosexual encompasses all of those with opposite gender attraction, sexual orientation has nothing to do with being a member of the TGNC community. In truth, TGNC individuals fall on all ends of the sexual orientation spectrum including heterosexual, homosexual, and bisexual; a fact

leading to potentially more confusion among those who find themselves working with this community. As Deanna F. Morrow and Lori Messinger (2006) point out in their book *Sexual Orientation & Gender Expression In Social Work Practice*, it is imperative not make the heteronormative assumption that all LGB and TGNC individuals have the same needs.

Professional Affiliation, Student and Educator Attitudes

Professional social work affiliation attitudes. When assessing the educational needs of social workers in both undergraduate and graduate programs we need only look as far as the values and codes of the professional organizations that these students may one day join and those that provide accreditation to the universities they attend. While there is an abundance of professional organizations social workers might choose to join, two main groups are the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and The National Association of Social Workers (NASW). For accreditation purposes at institutions of higher learning the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) acts as the vanguard. Each of these agencies clearly outlines objectives for their members and thus what arguably may be believed to be the goal of all social workers. While each agency frames its edicts differently, it is without argument that the IFSW, NASW, and CSWE hold the ability to work with diverse populations as core principals.

The IFSW values include respecting the “values and life decisions” (IFSW, 2016, §4.1) of all individuals regardless of social worker’s personal values and opinions. In 2005 an IASWR symposium report encouraged members of the social work community to “expand its leadership by focusing attention on the importance and the need to further advance social work research related to LGBT issues” (IASWR, 2005). Additionally, this symposium called upon Institutional Review Boards “to understand and support LGBT research” (IASWR, 2005).

As previously mentioned, this objective is reflected in the NASW *Code of Ethics* call to respect

the “dignity and worth of the person” while at the same time charging social workers to “challenge social injustice” (NASW, 2015). As an organization, NASW addresses the needs of the TGNC community by including them in a National Committee on LGBT issues, with each state maintaining their own committee. The NASW also included a section in their 2015 “Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence in Social Work” that addresses discrimination against those who “identify with and/or present as a different sex and gender than assigned at birth”, as well as discussing the privilege given to those who do have a stereotypical alignment of gender and sex (Hibbs, 2014; NASW, 2015).

Additionally, CSWE’s CSOGIE hosts conventions and offer a scholarship for TGNC research (CSWE, 2015). Further, they issue a mandate to “value and respect diversity, and develop a commitment to cultural humility” (CSWE, 2015). CSWE’s call to educational institutions is clear by their *Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards*, which calls for social workers to keep their personal values in check with their professional responsibilities while practicing "personal reflection and self-correction to assure continued professional development" (CSWE, 2015, p. 7).

It is clear that not all professional social work organizations agree with the position NASW, IFSW, and CSWE holds towards the TGNC community. At their 2014 National Convention, the North American Association of Christians in Social Work (NACSW) presenters Helen Harris and Jon Singletary presentation titled *Ethical Social Work Practice With LGBT Clients* showed a clear anti-LGBT bias. This included not only addressing members of the LGBT community as “sinners” but also tips for providing conversion therapy in cities and states where it is banned (Harris & Singletary, 2014). This makes it clear that when a school of social work fails to provide some form of training regarding the TGNC community, their alumni may have missed their only opportunity to understand the importance of incorporating diversity into their career.

Student attitudes and biases. Despite the overwhelming direction of professional social work

organizations towards TGNC inclusiveness and support, and notwithstanding joining such professional groups, many students still have problems accepting and working with those in the TGNC community. Wahler's (2012) previously mentioned student's classroom admission that they may have trouble working with the LGBT community, may be due to a lack of educational training or it may well be due to student biases; she does not clarify. Either way, it is safe to assume that there are students whose schemas and biases are discriminatory in nature. Clearly, a certain percentage of both bachelor's and graduate level social work students arrive at their class with either a healthy respect for the LGB and even the TGNC community or at least a willingness to learn about them. Messinger (2006) expressed concern that openness to these communities does not necessarily translate into the skills one needs to work with them professionally.

A 2007 study by Logie, Bridge, and Bridge found that social work students' attitudes were overwhelmingly homophobic in nature, but that they were far more likely to be transphobic. To complicate matters, they found that academia seemed to be ill equipped and apprehensive to address this situation (Logie, Bridge, & Bridge, 2007; McCarty-Caplan, D. 2015). This led them to state that subjugation within the social work community must be addressed and places the responsibility for this on educators (Logie, Bridge, & Bridge, 2007).

Faculty attitudes and biases. Many studies propose that training social work students about marginalized groups is at the core of changing biases and attitudes (Booth, 1999; Jamrozik, 2009; Mlcek, 2013). Thus, addressing biases and attitudes of social work students early in their academic career is key to improving educational outcome as well as ensuring culturally sensitive professional social workers. As social work students come to masters programs from a broad range of undergraduate fields, it is as imperative to address this at the master's level as it is at the undergraduate level. Mlcek (2013) encourages applying critical thinking skills as a way to circumvent the possibility

of social workers “unknowingly” passing along their biases and prejudices to their clients.

Despite Mlcek’s 2014 work, *Are We Doing Enough to Develop Cross-Cultural Competencies for Social Work*, there is no mention of the LGB or TGNC community in her discussion of the cross-cultural framework for university social work programs. Mlcek’s (2013) critical thinking skill recommendation for master's level students to prevent inadvertently passing biases to clients, is also needed by educators as a way to sidestep that same possibility of “unknowingly” passing along their biases and prejudices to their students. According to Woodford, Brennan, Gutiérrez, and Luke (2013), slightly more than fifteen percent of predominately PhD-level social work professors surveyed were found to have prejudiced opinions toward members of the LGBT community. There were, however, some positives in these findings. Ninety-eight percent of this same group of Ph.D.’s acknowledged that transgender individuals face discrimination; still, this leaves two percent who cannot concede even this. As this study goes on to point out, faculty with biased perspectives may well either overtly or covertly forward such perceptions to students (Woodford, Brennan, Gutiérrez, and Luke, 2013). To prevent students from carrying learned overt and covert mindsets and actions into their social work careers, Logie, Bridge, and Bridge (2007) call for educators to address their own prejudices and biases toward LGBT individuals and the population as a whole as an initial move in assisting students in acquiring the skill set they need for this populations. As Lisa M. Johnson (2014) states, social work educators are the “gatekeepers” (p. 748) for presenting social work students with new values as they are asked to set aside personal schemas and biases and adopt diverse professional ideals.

Classroom to professional translation. A 2014 study sought to determine if what MSW students learned during their education was retained once they began professional practice in the child welfare field (Deglau et al., 2014). The finding across a cohort of former MSW students was that they could “apply to their work in child welfare what they learned in the classroom” (Deglau et al., 2014, p.

305). This has potential implications for the inclusion of education regarding the TGNC population. If schools of social work provide TGNC training, it is quite probable that the same educational outcome can be expected with students maintaining the same retention ability.

Engagement with at-risk populations is a core part of social work and should be predictable for social work students. At least one article states that it should be expected that social work students anticipate increasing their level of social action from the moment they join MSW programs and continue once they become degreed professionals (Han, & Chun-Chung Chow, 2010). The National Transgender Discrimination Study found that thirty-eight percent of transgender respondents were parents (Gates, 2013). When added to the Williams Institute's (Gates, 2011) citing an approximate "9 million LGBT Americans" and at least 270,000 transgender Americans, it becomes safe to assume that all social work students will eventually be working with a member of these communities.

Despite a complex web of theoretical perspectives regarding working with TGNC individuals, a lack of knowledge often hinders qualified professionals in finding ways to ameliorate both the psychological and daily obstacles faced by this population. Erin R. Markman (2011) goes so far as to claim that social workers have an ethical obligation to the TGNC community and that we are "obligated allies" of the TGNC population. While some providers, such as the United States Veteran's Administration (VHA Train, 2014), are already developing ways to meet the distinct needs of the TGNC population, trained staff is needed to administer care.

Theoretical Background

In "Ideas for Teaching Social Work Practice", Sheafor and Horejsi (2008) state that the bedrock of courses should be CSWE's policies, which as previously stated, clearly mandate the inclusion of education on the TGNC community (CSWE, 2016). Currently, social work educators achieve CSWE's policies through teaching the biopsychosocial approach and via social policy courses.

This method, arguably, embraces the social pedagogical teaching style. Juha Hamalainen (2003) states that social pedagogy derives from this idea and the combination of educational solutions for social problems. Thus, social pedagogy is at the heart of this thesis. In acknowledging that accreditation agencies offer direction for educational institutions, Carolyn Campbell (2012) states that educators are challenged to go beyond this and develop curricula that envelops both their own experiences as well as those that meet the needs of the communities they serve.

Holoskio and Skinner (2015) describe the CSWE's stance on "cultural competency" (CSWE, 2010) as a modern translation of the "holy educational trinity of knowledge, values, and skills" (p. 275). They go on to place the obligation of clarifying both what pedagogical style and specific content on educational institutions, noting that at some facilities educators themselves are responsible as they may have the ability to influence change (Holoskio & Skinner, 2015). While this study is directed at incorporating concepts into field education, they outline that a "signature pedagogy" (p. 276) must be derived in connection with both BSW and MSW curricula (Holoskio & Skinner, 2015).

In determining how best to prepare social work students for the field, Wayne, Bogo, and Raskin (2010) looked at varying degree path's approaches. Among those detailed was the legal field's use of Socratic case-dialogue, the medical field's use of first-hand observation techniques, and even nursing's use multiple teaching styles (Wayne, Bogo, & Raskin, 2010). While all styles of degree specific educational pedagogy were praised for their specific fields, their suggestion is that signature pedagogies foster the development of students in both "active and interactive" ways (p. 332), and should be developed within social work institutions (Wayne, Bogo, & Raskin, 2010).

Mumm and Kersting (1997) state that critical thinking skills should be introduced to MSW students at their initial class and developed from there on, but adds that such skills should also be introduced to BSW students early in their program. Suggested methods include small group

discussions surrounding values and ethics (Mumm & Kersting, 1997). Part of their suggested follow-up discussion includes having students provide rationales for their conclusions of such exchanges (Mumm & Kersting, 1997). Cohen (n.d.) suggests this technique as a way to bring about self-awareness and allow students to place themselves in the position of their clients. In line with this perspective, Joelle Ruben (2015) confers that working to assist students in developing empathy will help them learn to relate more effectively towards different cultures.

Sophie Goldingay (2012) points out that we find an incredibly diverse group of students in the social work field, necessitating the expansion of educational materials and techniques to be more inclusive of the overall population. It is from this perspective she concludes that the lack of a unified pedagogy leads to lack of diversity inclusion, as well as a failure to value “diverse epistemologies” (Goldingay, 2012). Research also states that it is not enough to avoid blatant discrimination towards the LGBT community, students must come from a strength perspective to “recognize, affirm, and support the identities, experiences, and rights of LGBT clients” (Swank & Rais, 2007, p. 259; Van Den Bergh & Crisp, 2000).

In directing his staff in teaching techniques, Professor and Dean Emeritus Lawrence Shulman (2016), intentionally encourages discussion topics in such a manner as to allow structured controversy. In this written and video series, he directs his staff to create a safe space to address topics that range from the uncomfortable to typically taboo subjects (Shulman, 2016). Transsexual individuals are included in his series (Shulman, 2016). The mention in this 2016 training series is in contrast to a 1989 article in the *Journal of Social Work Education* that gives direction on including lesbian and gay issues but not TGNC, or even bisexuals issues (Newman, 1989). Newman comments on CSWE’s curriculum mandates from the time merely suggest the inclusion of curriculum on sexual orientation, but do not require it (Newman, 1989).

Today the CSWE has the CSOGIE, which “Promotes the development of social work curriculum materials and faculty growth opportunities relevant to sexual orientation and gender identity and expression, and the experiences of individuals who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or two-spirit” (CSWE, 2016). Additionally, CSOGIE hosts “Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE) Scholarship Award, and conference sponsored in 2016 by five Universities including Barry University, North Carolina State University, Rutgers School of Social Work, University of Southern California School of Social Work, and the University of Toronto (CSWE, 2016).

Previous CSWE Research on the TCNG Population and Social Work Students

In 2009 a study was conducted by the CSWE and Lambda Legal titled “Sexual Orientation and Gender Expression in Social Work Education: Results From a National Survey” (Martin et al., 2009). In this study, researchers sought to review available curriculum to ensure the future needs of LGBT individuals would be met by social workers (Martin et al., 2009). Program directors and faculty were surveyed using an internet-based survey, with program directors referring researchers to faculty in their programs with the most knowledge about “curriculum in five areas: “field education, HBSE, policy, practice, and research” (Martin et al., 2009). However, not all CSWE programs were invited to participate. Of the 299 survey invitations sent out 157 responded, with well over half of those being master’s level programs, and when program directors referred to faculty members the response was reduced further to 55.4% of the 157 (Martin et al., 2009). The self-reported findings from universities most frequently reported courses included “gender identity development” at 97% and “LGB identity development at 96%, with the least included topic being “LGBT history” at 44% (Martin et al., 2009). The results given by university staff in this study imply that if university course catalogs, bulletins, and syllabi are reviewed today students should be able to find an assortment of LGBT and even TGNC

courses easily assessable.

More recently, a 2015 CSWE study by the Council on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression surveyed LGBT social work students to ascertain their experiences in social work programs (Craig, McInroy, Dentato, Austin, & Messinger, 2015). Findings concluded that 30% of LGBT social work students were unaware if their colleges or universities had a non-discrimination policy (Craig et. al., 2015). As with the CSWE – Lambda Legal study, only a fraction of CSWE accredited programs participated. When participant's location was broken down by state, many states had as only one or two participants, while still more had as few as ten (Craig et al., 2015).

In order to glean a universal picture of TGNC education within all CSWE programs, this thesis will look at all CSWE programs themselves, at both the baccalaureate and master's level. By directly assessing each program we will gain a more accurate reflection not only of what colleges and universities are offering social work students, but clarify many of the questions previously raised in CSWE studies, or that are ambiguous. It is with this perspective that this thesis seeks to ascertain whether CSWE accredited schools are fulfilling their mandate of TGNC inclusion and to assess the current state of readily assessable TGNC education for social work students at both the BSW and MSW level.

Chapter 3

Methods

Participants

A web search of all CSWE accredited programs was employed including both masters level programs and baccalaureate programs. While CSWE does offer a hard copy list of accredited schools for a nominal fee, in order to ensure the most up-to-date results the list of programs was taken directly from the CSWE website (CSWE, 2016). Colleges and Universities websites were individually viewed based upon the CSWE alphabetical website list (CSWE, 2016). As of June 2016, the CSWE website cites a total of 787 accredited programs, listing institutions with both a master's and baccalaureate programs separately. The 787 total includes 247 graduate programs and 511 baccalaureate programs (CSWE, 2016). At the graduate level, the CSWE accredits both MSW and MSSW programs, but for the purpose of this thesis no distinction between the two has been made (CSWE, 2016). Included in the 787 total accredited programs are 13 baccalaureate and 16 master's social work programs currently in candidacy (CSWE, 2016). No distinction was made of programs that were in the accreditation process at the time of this study, as CSWE includes them in their total of accredited programs (CSWE, 2016). Three programs' course information (one master's and two baccalaureates) were unavailable online at the time of this study and as such were not included in totals. For clarification purposes, one of the unavailable baccalaureate programs was religious in nature, while the remaining and master's course were secular in nature. Finally, an independent researcher did random co-coding.

Design and Procedure

For the purpose of this thesis a cross-sectional descriptive design using content analysis was utilized. Curriculum descriptions were obtained from schools of social work themselves as well as university and program course catalogs and bulletins. Complete course descriptions were looked at as

often as possible, with less than five programs failing to provide full descriptions online. For programs that did not list full course descriptions online, the researcher made the decision to utilize course name and whatever information each program did provide with each individual course title. In such cases, if obtainable, individual course syllabi was reviewed to obtain actual course descriptions as opposed to solely using course names.

In all cases, the most recent catalog available online was utilized. If available, each institution's 2016/2017 catalog was employed, but not all universities had their fall 2016/17 catalog posted at the time of review. In such cases, the researcher decided to use the most recently dated catalog available on each university's website. In no case was a catalog used that pre-dated the 2015-2016 academic years. That said, one university's website stated that the 2011-2012 catalog was to be used for 2015-2016 academic year and as such was considered to be the most recent (Savannah State University, 2016).

Each college or university graduate or baccalaureate program was reviewed individually utilizing the following keywords: transgender, transsexual, gender identity, LGBT, GLBT, lesbian, and sexual orientation. There is confusion in some social work programs as to which acronym to use for this community. In some instances, GLBT and LGBT were both used in social work programs, while in some institutions the term was consistent within the SW department, but varied from what the rest of the university utilized. For university websites that referenced on their home page that their target student population is Native American, the additional keywords of "two-spirit" and "Berdache" were used. Finally, for universities whose website was in Spanish, a Spanish interpreter was utilized.

All information was entered into Microsoft Excel and a coding system was utilized including distinguishing baccalaureate and master's programs by marking each with a "B" for baccalaureate and "M" for master's programs. Coding of specific course data was as follows:

- 1 – A Specific TGNC course was offered
- 2 – No Specific TGNC course was offered
- 3 – An LGBT, GLBT, or “Sexual Orientation” specific course was offered
- 4 - LGBT, GLBT, or “Sexual Orientation” was mentioned in a course
- 5 – A unique identifier was present necessitating closer researcher attention
- 6 – Gender Identity or TGNC mentioned
- 7 – No specific TGNC or GLBT course was offered

The distinction between TGNC courses and LGBT, GLBT, lesbian, or sexual orientation is a crucial one. While TGNC individuals are often grouped within the LGB community, their uniqueness is habitually overlooked. Further, while LGB are distinctions based upon sexual orientation, TGNC individuals are based upon gender identity or gender presentation. This is a dissimilarity that is not always presented when TGNC individuals are presented as part of the LGBT community. Furthermore, while transgender individuals may be included in the LGBT acronym, not all TGNC individuals are. Thus, while keywords for LGBT, GLBT, lesbian, and sexual orientation were utilized in an effort to be inclusive this thesis makes a clear distinction in their difference to the TGNC community.

Chapter 4

Results

A total of 787 CSWE Baccalaureate and Masters programs were assessed for this thesis, including 524 Baccalaureate and 263 Masters programs (See Chart 1). Included in this number, is one master's program and two baccalaureate programs that did not provide online information at the time of this study, thus they were excluded from the study. No distinction was made between MSW and MSSW programs. Further, no distinction was made for programs that are in candidacy, as they are included in CSWE's Directory of Accredited Programs (CSWE, 2016).

Table 1 shows the breakdown of each level of program based upon TGNC specific courses, TGNC course mention, LGBT specific course, LGBT or sexual orientation mention or absence of TGNC and LGBT/sexual orientation specific class or mention in a course. Chart 3 shows the breakdown in Master's programs, while Chart 4 shows the breakdown in Baccalaureate programs. In CSWE accredited Baccalaureate programs, no TGNC courses were found however, 30 courses were found that did mention TGNC individuals in their course descriptions. In addition to finding 28 LGBT specific courses at this level, 91 courses mentioned either LGBT or sexual orientation as part of their course descriptions. Finally, there were 363 remaining programs that had no TGNC specific course, TGNC mention, LGBT specific course, or LGBT/sexual orientation mention. Based on overall numbers of each researched category, except for specific TGNC courses and LGBT Specific courses, Baccalaureate TGNC programs outnumbered Master's programs (Table 2). However, when looked at by degree level and percentage of programs, Table 2 shows findings that overall Master's programs had higher percentage of all research categories of TGNC mention or course.

CSWE Accredited Master's Programs Findings

Within the 262 evaluated CSWE accredited master's programs three were found to have a

specific TGNC course, 259 with no TGNC specific course, and seven programs specifically mentioning TGNC individuals in their descriptions (Table 1). There were 28 programs that offered a specific LGBT course, and another 91 mentioned either LGBT or sexual orientation in their descriptions. Finally, the remaining 160 programs, or 61.07% of all CSWE master's programs offering no TGNC specific course, TGNC mention, LGBT specific course, or LGBT/sexual orientation mention (Table 2).

CSWE Accredited Baccalaureate Programs Findings

Within the 522 evaluated CSWE accredited Baccalaureate programs, none offered a TGNC specific course, but 13 programs specifically mentioned TGNC individuals in their descriptions. There were 21 programs that offered a specific LGBT course, and another 144 that mentioned either LGBT or sexual orientation in their descriptions. Finally, the remaining 363 programs, or 69.54% of all CSWE Baccalaureate programs offered no TGNC specific course, TGNC mention, LGBT specific course, or LGBT/sexual orientation mention (Table 2).

Course Breakdown by Percentage

As is reflected in Table 2, 1.15% of CASW accredited master's programs and 0.00% of accredited baccalaureate programs had a specific TGNC Course, while 2.67% of master's and 5.75% of baccalaureate programs specifically mentioned the TGNC community in course descriptions. Chart 3 gives a specific breakdown of master's programs, while Chart 4 gives a breakdown of baccalaureate programs. The numbers increased when we looked at LGBT courses and LGBT mention. LGBT specific courses were offered in 10.69% CSWE accredited Masters programs and 4.02% of CSWE accredited Baccalaureate programs (Table 2). These numbers jumped tremendously when we looked at the mention of LGBT or sexual orientation within course descriptions. At the Master's level, 34.73% courses mention LGBT or sexual orientation, as do 27.59% of Baccalaureate courses (Table 2). The

absence of TGNC courses, or even LGBT courses or mention, is also reflected in Table 2. Overall, 61.07% of master's courses and 69.54% of baccalaureate programs fail to offer any specific TGNC or LGBT specific courses, mention the TGNC or LGBT communities, or sexual orientation.

CSWE Religious Institutions Findings

Among the 784 CSWE accredited institutions included in this study 20.28%, or 159, specifically state on their website that their institution is religious in nature (Table 3). Chart 5 reflects the distinction of religious based institutions compared to overall CSWE accredited institutions. Religious institutions stem from a variety of Christian faiths as well as one Jewish institution. As reflected in Table 3, there are no religious institutions that have a specific TGNC course, however three institutions do offer an LGBT specific course. Additionally, 45 programs mention either LGBT or sexual orientation, with three mentioning gender identity (Table 3). Overall, 111, or 69.81%, of all CSWE accredited programs that are religious in nature, make no mention of either TGNC or LGBT populations, nor do they mention sexual orientation in their social work programs (Table 3).

Chart 8 reflects a side-by-side comparison of CSWE accredited institutions that professed to be religious in nature, as well as CSWE accredited institutions that are secular, or who made no mention of religiosity on their website. Table 4 reflects the breakdown for secular institutions. Out of 625 institutions three have specific TGNC course, 622 have no specific TGNC course, and 17 specifically mention TGNC individuals. Within secular institutions, 46 offer a LGBT specific course, 190 mention LGBT or sexual orientation in their course descriptions, and 411 have no mention of TGNC or LGBT individuals, or mention sexual orientation (Table 4). Overall findings are that secular institutions do a better job at both offering specific TGNC courses, and at the overall percentage of TGNC and LGBT courses and mentions (Tables 3 & 4). Overall, 214 secular institutions (34.24%) and 48 religious (30.18%) offer TGNC, LGBT or sexual orientation courses and mentions.

Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Findings

Overall, the LGBT community was not as well represented in social work programs. Chart 6 breaks down LGBT and sexual orientation curriculum within masters level programs. Out of 262 CSWE accredited programs, 10.68% had a specific LGBT/Sexual Orientation Course, while 91 (34.73%) mentioned LGBT or sexual orientation (Chart 6). Overall, 61.06% (160) programs offered no course of mention of those who are LGBT or of sexual orientation (Chart 6).

Baccalaureate programs do not appear to do any better than masters programs in some areas, and slightly better in others. Chart 7 breaks down LGBT and sexual orientation curriculum within baccalaureate programs. Out of 524 CSWE accredited programs, 21 (4.02%) offer a specific LGBT/Sexual Orientation course (Chart 7). This figure is below the 10.68% they are offered at the master's level (Chart 6). While lower than masters programs 27.58% of baccalaureate programs did mention LGBT or sexual orientation. Overall, 69.54% of all CSWE accredited baccalaureate social work programs offer no mention of LGBT individuals, or even of sexual orientation.

Spanish Speaking Institutions

Among the 784 institutions researched, 14 had websites that were exclusively in Spanish. To gain an overall picture of such institutions, this study did break them down by both religious and secular, as well as overall inclusion or absence of TGNC, LGBT, and sexual orientation specific classes or mentions (Table 5). Of the 14 Spanish-speaking institutions, 11 were religious and three were secular (Table 5). When assessing their inclusion of TGNC, LGBT, and sexual orientation specific classes or mentions, only one institution offered even a mention of these communities, with 13 not even mentioning them (Table 5). This means that 92.85% of social work students at predominately Spanish speaking institutions do not have access to TGNC or LGBT course, or even a mention of such communities.

TGNC and LGBT Findings Outside of Schools of Social Work

A review of course catalogs found that many universities, even those that did not offer a specific TGNC or LGBT course within the social work department, did offer them in other departments. While not the focus of this study, TGNC courses were found within, or mentioned in the following departments: English, Literature, Sociology, Psychology, History, Women's & Gender Studies, Environmental Studies, Communications, Education, Theater Arts, Sports Management/Medicine, American Culture Studies, German, Spanish, Nursing, and Gerontology. The information from these programs was not assessed as the approach each takes to presenting the information varies based on a field's specific needs. Thus, while social work students may be able and willing to take them as electives, the education they receive from them will not be from the biopsychosocial perspective of social work, potentially limiting their usefulness in professional settings.

Chapter 5

Discussion

As shown in Table 1, more than half of all baccalaureate and master's programs do not address the unique needs of not only the TGNC population, but that of the LGBT community as well. While findings show that master's programs address the distinctiveness of both the TGNC and the LGBT communities in greater numbers than baccalaureate programs, it is still shocking to find over 60% of master's programs failed to even mention these communities (Chart 6). The fact that even fewer baccalaureate programs address either community is troubling (Chart 7). Overall, TGNC and LGBT individuals were predominately mentioned at the master's level in direct practice course, while at the baccalaureate level they are mentioned more in HBSE courses. Whereas it was expected to find low numbers of TGNC specific courses, the overall absence of courses addressing the needs of this community indicates how ill prepared future social workers will be in addressing the unique needs of this population in their professional careers. The fact that not only is education on the TGNC population missing, but that over 60% of all social work students at both the BSW and MSW levels are in an educational program devoid of training regarding the entire LGBT population, is disturbing. Such findings indicate that social workers are not trained on the needs of 1.4 million, or 0.6% of the population of the United States (U.S.) (Flores, Herman, Gates, & Brown, 2016). This figure merely accounts for adults in the U.S. and does not include the emerging field of TGNC adolescents (Flores et al., 2016). The findings regarding the lack of courses on LGB individuals meant that the 3.5% of the U.S. population (as of 2011) that identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, are not having their needs met either (Gates, 2011). Further, those social work students who look towards either religious institutions or Spanish speaking institutions for their BSW or MSW will almost certainly not have their educational needs met (Tables 5 & 3). While, such findings are disconcerting, there are questions left

unanswered by this study.

It is possible that schools of social work are offering classes on either TGNC or LGBT/sexual orientation and simply do not have them listed in their university's course catalog/bulletin or in the classes listed by the school of social work themselves. There may also be a disconnect between a university's course catalog or bulletin, and what their school of social work mentions on its web page. An example of this would be Smith College. While Smith College's specific TGNC course can be located on their social work web site (Smith College, 2016), it cannot be found in their university course catalog (Smith College School of Social Work, 2016). If accessibility is not readily available to researchers, it may not be easily accessible to an institution's own students either. Further, some institutions may offer a minor in LGBT studies that while promoted by their school of social work, are designed and implemented by other degree paths, such as their women's studies department. There are two problems with this scenario: pedagogic perspective and the optional nature of such courses.

The first concern is that courses presented in different disciplines are not offered from the biopsychosocial perspective from which social work programs approach understanding individuals. Social work students need more than a historical background or understanding of TGNC, or even LGBT, oppression. While these are important, they do nothing to outline micro, mezzo, or even macro social needs of this community from a social work approach. As one study frames the problem, "Interdisciplinary research involves bringing together people and ideas from different disciplines to jointly frame a problem, agree on a methodological approach, and analyze the data" (Golde & Gallagher, 1999, p. 281), but this does not happen when a class is presented solely from one discipline's approach. This study goes on to state that "Trying to intergrade two disciplines often means resolving conflicts between research paradigms and methods" (Golde & Gallagher, 1999, p. 283), again, something that does not happen when the perspective is presented from one department

standpoint.

Second, such certificate programs are traditionally optional. This means that social work students must not only know that there is a TGNC or LGBT option, but they must find time to fit such options into their academic schedule. For a micro social worker, using extra credits for such a program may well mean passing up a class on brain and behavior, or a specific therapy technique. Obviously, both of these concerns are problematic.

The three courses found to be specific for the TGNC population including “Social and Cultural Issues of Gender: Clinical Implications” (Widener University, 2015, p. 21), “Gender, Gender Identity and Sexuality” (University of Washington, 2016), and “Transgender Studies: Theories, Practice and Advocacy” (Smith College School of Social Work, 2016). Each specific TGNC course is presented at the master’s level, thus leaving baccalaureate students completely devoid of TGNC education. Further, each of these universities is secular in nature and English speaking, leaving Spanish speaking students, as well as those at religious institutions, bereft of knowledge on TGNC individuals and their community, and therefore their needs. Smith College (2016) and Widener University (2015, p. 21) clinical offerings are a shift from the CSWE and Lambda Legal 2009 (Martin et al.) study, whose HBSE findings included focuses such as “gender identity development”, “LGB identity development”, and “LGBT history” (p. 7). Those courses that mentioned TGNC individuals in this study overwhelmingly did so, 16 out of 20, in HBSE courses.

Another consideration when assessing the findings of this thesis is the uncertainty of which TGNC, or even LGBT specific courses, are required curriculum and which are electives. For the purpose of this thesis, no distinction was made between required and elective course within a social work department. Instead, the focus was solely on the availability of curriculum. If the majority of these courses are elective in nature, then it may be surmised that the number of social work students

actually receiving the education is dismal.

Beyond this, even though a course may be listed in a university's course catalog it may not be available each semester. An example of this is the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA). While at the Masters level UTA's course catalog offers a course that addresses sexual and gender identities, it is not on the fall 2016 list of available course (UTA, 2016). When contacted, UTA's School of Social Work Masters' advisor stated not only were the courses not available, she had no know idea when the last time it was actually offered to students, or why it was not offered (J. Malone, personal communication, July 27, 2016). It is possible that the situation at UTA and other institutions are due to the lack of staff trained in this area, or even due to rotating course schedules. As such, it is plausible that a social work student could complete their entire academic career at one of the colleges or universities that meet the parameters of this thesis as having a specific TGNC or LGBT course, yet never actually have access to such courses.

These findings are troubling in that so few masters students, and no baccalaureate students, have access to a TGNC course, and only <3% of masters and <6% of baccalaureate (Table 2) students are currently enrolled in a program that provides them with even a mention of the TGNC population. Also problematic is that slightly more than 34% of master's students and almost 28% baccalaureate student's receive generic information on the TGNC community via it being lumped in with the LGB/Sexual orientation community (Table 2). This also means that those same figures apply to the entire LGB community, thus leaving a larger percentage of a marginalized community to be underserved, or not served at all by social workers. It is possible that courses with the inclusion of TGNC individuals, or even LGB individuals, are offered but not listed in the university course catalog due to their last minute addition. However, this would mean that many students are left unaware, or may already have their schedule set, and thus still do not have full access to such educational

opportunities.

Despite Logie, Bridge, and Bridge's (2007) "call to action for educators" (pp. 201-221), it is possible that a lack of qualified educators, or even educators willing to teach such classes, is the reason for such glaring deficiencies as found in this study. Understanding that 15% or more of Ph.D.-level social work professors have prejudiced views of the LGBT community may shed light on this possibility (Woodford, Brennan, Gutiérrez & Luke, 2013).

As previously stated, courses mentioning the TGNC community were found in a variety of departments outside of CSWE social work programs. Such programs include among others: English, Literature, Sociology, Psychology, History, Women's & Gender Studies, Environmental Studies, Communications, Education, Theater Arts, Sports Management/Medicine, American Culture Studies, German, Spanish, Nursing, and Gerontology. Select programs may overlap social work programs and social work students may choose to look at such courses to fulfill elective requirements. With the emerging trend of developing interdisciplinary working relationships, it is possible we will see more social work students taking courses outside of their discipline. Aside from the fact that this ideology leaves it up to individual students to find such courses, each discipline's pedagogy, as well as how and if they prepare students for working with the TGNC and LGBT communities is distinct. From this, we can surmise that it is improbable that students will obtain social work's disciplinary-specific perspectives.

There are a variety of ways that this gap in education could be addressed. Such possibilities include interdisciplinary courses offering credit in dual disciplines, from a multi-faceted pedagogical approach. Encouraging the hiring of TGNC educators would open a unique door in student education, allowing some social work students their first opportunity to work with a TGNC and LGB individuals. By offering certificates in TGNC or even LGBT studies specifically designed for social workers,

social work students may be more likely to select at least one course as an elective, even if they chose not to fulfill the requirements of obtaining a certificate.

The addition of a concentration in TGNC studies for social work students, or at the very least a concentration in LGBT studies offering specific courses on the TGNC community, would provide access for social workers to look at this population as one that they might have a specific interest in serving. This would open the door to all social work students to learn about a disenfranchised population that they may have limited, or no, previous exposure too. Further, it would expand even non-concentration student's access to such courses, thus advancing their comprehension of TGNC and LGBT individuals. Beyond these, colleges and universities that are religious in nature or are predominately Spanish language institutions must address the unmet educational needs of their students towards the TGNC and LGBT communities. Reflection and action is required by institutions to change the current dismal curriculum climate towards these communities. Both institutions and researchers must look the intersectionality and attitudes of Spanish speaking individuals, religiosity, and both Hispanic student and professor mindset towards the GLBT and LGBT communities.

Not addressed in this thesis is how, and if, continuing education (CE) programs are addressing the needs of post-graduate degreed professionals in their communities. As some programs are ran by their university and some by the school of social work itself, future studies should look at how CE departments are providing training on both the TGNC and LGB populations. Further, research is needed to look at how social work department ran CE programs compare to university ran programs in terms of both pedagogy and inclusion of information on disenfranchised and at-risk populations such as the TGNC community.

Finally, it may be assumed that professors will fit TGNC and LGB education into the classroom setting. Yet even the most willing professor may find it difficult to incorporate education on

such populations into an already packed syllabus. Further, this is a dangerous view as it assumes that all professors are at the best allies, or at the least that they do not hold biases and negative schemas regarding the TGNC and LGB populations. Reflecting back on Woodford, Brennan, Gutiérrez, and Luke (2013) findings that more than 15% of PhD-level social work professors hold prejudicial views towards the LGBT community, and that 2% will not acknowledge that TGNC individuals face discrimination, the potential for conflict is clear. This dilemma could be addressed by the CSWE requiring the specific inclusion of TGNC and LGBT education in their Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards.

Based on the findings of this thesis, it is clear that across the board CSWE programs are failing to prepare both baccalaureate and master's level social work students to meet the distinctive needs of the TGNC and LGB communities. Such education is imperative if social work students are to become culturally sensitive to both at-risk populations. Just as the CSWE's stance has evolved to include education regarding TGNC and LGB individuals, so too must CSWE accredited institutions rise to meet the needs of this ever more visible population.

Chapter 6

Implications for Social Work

As previously addressed, social work students need more than a historical background or understanding of TGNC, or even LGBT, and the oppression they face. While these are important, they do nothing to define the micro, mezzo, or even macro needs of this community from a social work methodology. Social work students need to be prepared for the distinctive needs of the TGNC community so that their first experience does not emanate when they sit across from them as clients. Regardless of a student's, or even universities, firmly held religious and personal convictions, all social workers will be faced with clients who are TGNC, LGB, or who are the children, family members, or friends of TGNC and LGB clients. Further, the CSWE's *Accreditation Standard 3.0—Diversity* clarifies the expectation of all baccalaureate and master's programs accredited by their agency to meet the needs of diverse populations (CSWE, 2016). The CSWE's formation of the CSOGIE, which specifically addresses the needs of the TGNC community, further elucidates their expectations of accredited programs. The finding of this study, that CSWE programs are not meeting the educational needs of social work students regarding the TGNC and LGB populations, have far-reaching implications for both of these communities and social work students.

The Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research (IASWR) symposium report encouraged members of the social work community to advance social work research on LGBT issues specifically include education for social workers and those in a direct practice setting (IASWR, 2005). The symposium called upon Institutional Review Boards to encourage LGBT research (IASWR, 2005). Social work research on the distinct needs of the TGNC community and the distinct needs of the LGB community is needed to develop treatment goals, as well as institute a uniform pedagogy for social work programs for each population.

Lack of TGNC and LBT education suggests that social work Community and Administrative Practice (CAP) students may find themselves lacking in ability when required to address this population's needs at both the academic level and when promoting social policy after graduation. While colleges and universities navigate topics affecting TGNC students, social work CAP students will be called up to intervene in areas such as bathrooms, housing, social work organizations, and even policies regarding gender pronoun preference both in the classroom, as well as on forms, up to and including certificates and diplomas.

Some universities do offer post-graduate continuing education courses in this area. For example, California State University, Chico provides some continuing education courses on TGNC issues, including a social work training on "Creating Integrated Healthcare Services" (Humphrey-Straub, 2015). This type of training is pivotal for social workers that are already in the field but never benefited from learning about the TGNC community during their time as a student. However, for current students and practitioners who may fall on a lower income scale, the cost of such programs may be prohibitive.

Colleges and universities have been challenged at the federal level to meet the needs of this community through interpretation that "Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964" covers discrimination "based on a person's nonconformity with stereotypes associated with that person's real or perceived gender" (Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, n.d.). School social workers are often included in policy-making decisions such as bathroom use, gender markers on public records, staff training in pronoun use and of course, to address bullying. Messinger (2006) note in a chapter in the book "Sexual Orientation & Gender Expression in Social Work Practice" that the "school environment can be among the most dangerous places for GLBT (gay, lesbian, straight, bisexual, transgender) youth" (p. 181), and that even "teachers and administrators" do not correct "pejorative words like fag, dyke,

queer, lezzie, and homo” (p. 14). They go on to state that many GLBT students face harassment not only from students but by “teachers and school administrators” (Morrow & Messinger, 2006) as well, which places potentially untrained school social workers in the position of addressing situations with students, as well as with their own peers and supervisors. To complicate matters, de Jong (2015), comments on the lack of research currently available to school social workers, that would assist them understanding how to work with TGNC students.

Even the United States Veterans Administration, the largest employer of social workers in the United States (Create a Career, 2016), issued a directive that all Veterans Affairs hospitals provide care for transgender veterans (Petzel, 2013). Further, in 2014, in preparation for opening its first gender clinic, they provided online training to all VA Staff (Department of Veterans Affairs [DVA], 2014b). However, a lack of education on target populations such as TGNC individuals may well become an impediment to future employment opportunities for new social workers wishing to enter this field.

Outside of the academic setting social workers are undoubtedly called upon in all settings to address the specific needs of TGNC individuals and their families. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the fact that in 2015 the United States Veterans Health Administration opened a clinic at their Tucson Campus that specifically addressed the needs of those who identify as “transgender, transsexual...gender variant, question your gender identity,” etc., up to and including weekly support groups (USVA, 2016a). Further, an organizational directive was issued by the Department of Veterans Affairs in 2013, followed up by a “Transgender Mental Health Services Program” training that targeted, among other employees, social workers (VHA, 2014a). This “Clinical based course” was accredited by the Association of Social Work Boards for continuing education credits (VHA, 2014a). This is crucial as the VA employs 12,000 social workers, and is celebrating their “90th Anniversary of

VA Social Work” in 2016 (DVA, 2016b). While many such agencies will undoubtedly begin to offer such training, preparing social work students during their time in academia allows them to be better-qualified candidates for positions within such governmental agencies. It would be three years past the original directive before a “Core Curriculum for VHA Providers” (Shipherd et al., 2016) was published, specifically addressing the addition of social workers as members of interdisciplinary teams, and again confirming the necessity of colleges and universities to provide training on addressing the needs of the TGNC community. Yet, social workers in all areas of practice are already being called upon to address TGNC client’s needs.

Messinger (2006) discuss the alarming statistic that 30-40% of GLBT students will attempt suicide and that transgender youth may be particularly vulnerable to depression due to their inability as a minor to control the decision-making regarding their own care. But, it is not only TGNC youth that are at risk, TGNC adults face many of the same risks as youth and more. Adults who are TGNC may have difficulty on the job, or even finding employment. Further, dating and relationship concerns affect their mental health status, and this may be particularly evident when an individual comes out as TGNC later in life, or is involved in a relationship with a partner who is unaware of their TGNC status when they began their relationship. While each of these situations and more will cross the desk of many direct practice social workers, such concerns will peak for social workers in the gerontology field, as elderly TGNC clients may not have a spouse, children, or support system in their final hours. As such, it is imperative that social work gerontology programs develop culturally sensitive TGNC and LBG education. Just as potentially problematic is when considering those with clinical licensure, as the general public is left with a gap in the mental health services available to TGNC individuals.

Staff training on TGNC and LGB communities is only one area law enforcement social workers will be called upon to address. In such settings social workers will tackle TGNC and LGB

domestic violence situations, as well as child custody disputes. Further, every jail and prison will be faced with the daunting task of determining how to house TGNC inmates for both short-term, and long-term incarceration. Thus, the same issues concerning gender pronouns and more that arise within other areas of social work will inevitably need to be addressed by social workers that chose to work in a law enforcement setting. In such situations, social workers are called upon to address the intersectionality of an inmate population about whose needs they know little.

Social workers who are culturally sensitive to the needs of Spanish-speaking TGNC and LGBT individuals are escalating. As the number of Spanish-speaking individuals in this country rise, combined with the fact that we know all cultures have both TGNC and LGBT individuals, the necessity for social workers to address the intersecting needs of these members of society becomes apparent. This is even more obvious when we add the additional intersection of religion to this community. Regardless of if a TGNC or LGBT individual is a native-English or native-Spanish speaker, they will turn to social workers for both macro and micro services.

Finally, social work researchers are and will continue to be called upon to find resolutions for the myriad of complexities surrounding the TGNC population in general. Not only must social workers look for solutions to concerns facing the TGNC population, they will also be called upon to dig into resiliency factors within this community. As science continues to evolve, social workers will be called upon to look at the cognitive aspects of those who are TGNC, and help society to understand how such individuals fit into majority heteronormative communities. All of these have the potential to influence not only public policy, but to improve the daily lives of TGNC individuals both locally, and globally. Yet, without a solid education base regarding TGNC individuals, or even a mention of such individuals, social workers cannot rise to the increasing demands thrust upon them in the field.

Currently, colleges and universities are in a state of flux, with some offering non-

discrimination policies that include TGNC individuals, while others do not. Whereas several universities offer LGBT programs, primarily in their women's studies departments, few focus on the specific idiosyncrasies of TGNC students and their community. When looking at academic counseling centers, only a select few advertise services for the TGNC community. Currently, only the University of Arizona offers a specific transgender studies degree program (Erbentraut, 2015), again in the women's studies department. For many marginalized groups such as the TGNC and LGB communities, social workers are their only system of support, education, and mental health care. Yet, today's schools of social work are failing both communities by not addressing the related educational needs of social work students. The call for social workers to become allies to the TGNC and LGB communities has never been stronger. Research has found that as non-LGBT individuals become allies to this community, the more social acceptance increases (Ji, Du Bois, & Finnessy, 2009). Those institutions that train social workers must educate their students both on the TGNC and LGB populations, as well as how to become their allies. As social workers are called upon to meet the needs of this ever-changing diverse population, most will find their knowledge lacking as they face tasks and populations for which their colleges and universities failed to prepare them. If tomorrow's social workers are expected to meet the needs of the TGNC and LGB populations, colleges and universities that provide social work education must rise to the challenge of providing the curriculum that will allow graduates of their programs to do their jobs.

Table 1

Table 1		
<i>Program Breakdown</i>		
	Masters Programs	Baccalaureate Programs
Total Number of Programs	262	522
TGNC Specific Course	3	0
TGNC Mention	7	30
LGBT Specific Course	28	21
LGBT/Sexual Orientation Mention	91	144
No TGNC/LGBT/Sexual Orientation Course/Mention	160	363

Table 2

Table 2		
<i>Program % Per Degree Level</i>		
	% Masters	% Baccalaureate
TGNC Specific Course	1.15%	0.00%
TGNC Mention	2.67%	5.75%
LGBT Specific Course	10.69%	4.02%
LGBT/Sexual Orientation Mention	34.73%	27.59%
No TGNC/LGBT/Sexual Orientation Course/Mention	61.07%	69.54%

Table 3

Table 3	
<i>Religious Institutions</i>	
<i>(Total)</i>	159
Religious w/TGNC Specific Course	0
Religious w/No TGNC mention	159
Religious w/LGBT Specific Course	3
Religious w/LGBT/Sexual Orientation Mention	45
Religious w/Gender Identity Mentioned	3
Religious w/No TGNC or LGBT Course or Mention	111

Table 4

Table 4	
<i>Secular Institutions</i>	
<i>(Total)</i>	625
Secular w/TGNC Specific Course	3
Secular w/No TGNC Mention	622
Secular w/LGBT Specific Course	46
Secular w/LGBT/Sexual Orientation Mention	190
Secular w/Gender Identity Mentioned	17
Secular w/No TGNC or LGBT Course or Mention	411

Table 5

Table 5	
<i>Spanish-Speaking Institutions (Interpreter Used)</i>	14
Spanish W/No TGNC/LGBT/Sexual Orientation Mention	13
Spanish W/No TGNC/LGBT/Sexual Orientation Mention	1
Spanish and Religious	11
Spanish and Non-Religious	3

Chart 1

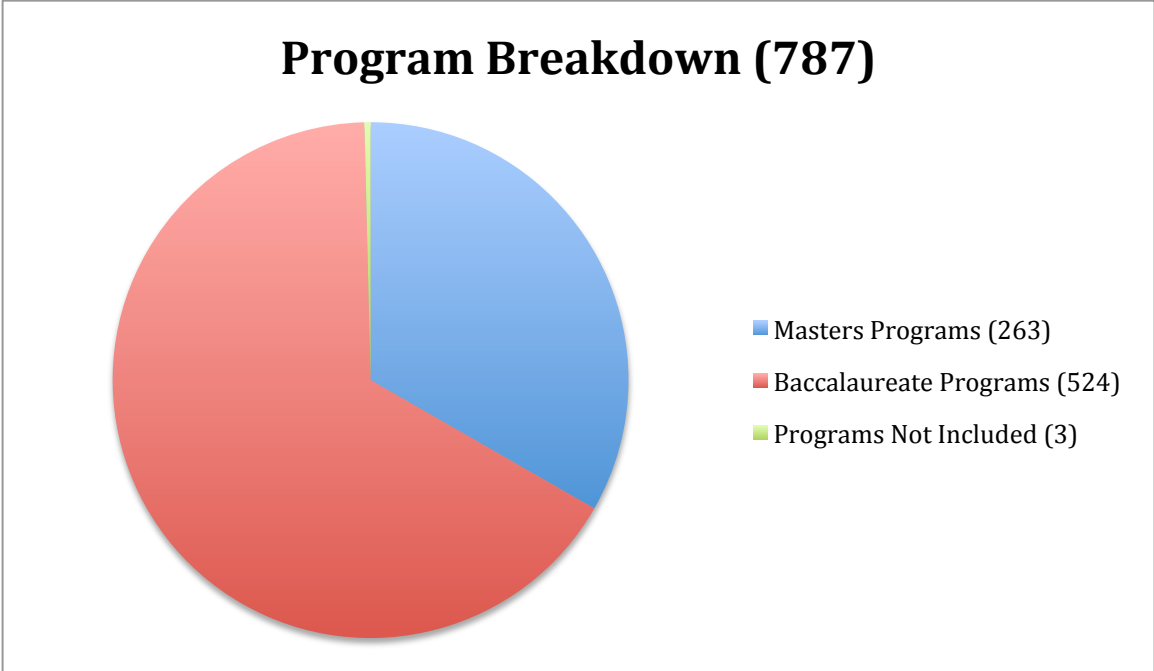


Chart 2

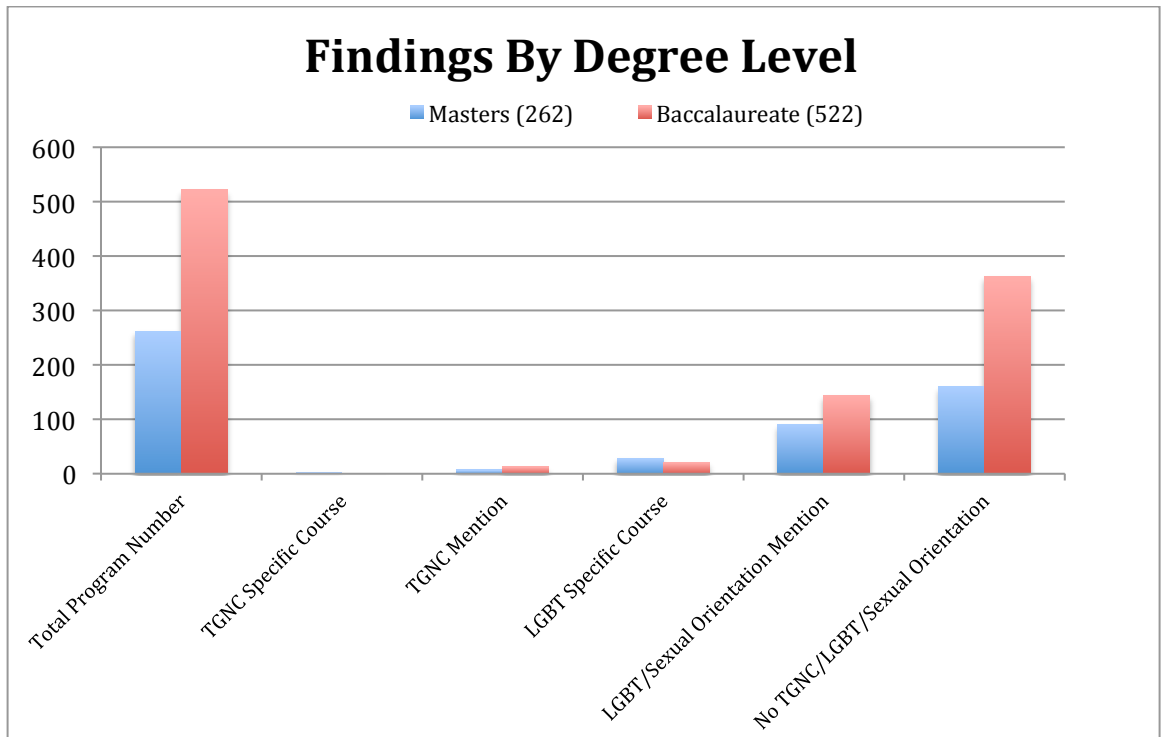


Chart 3

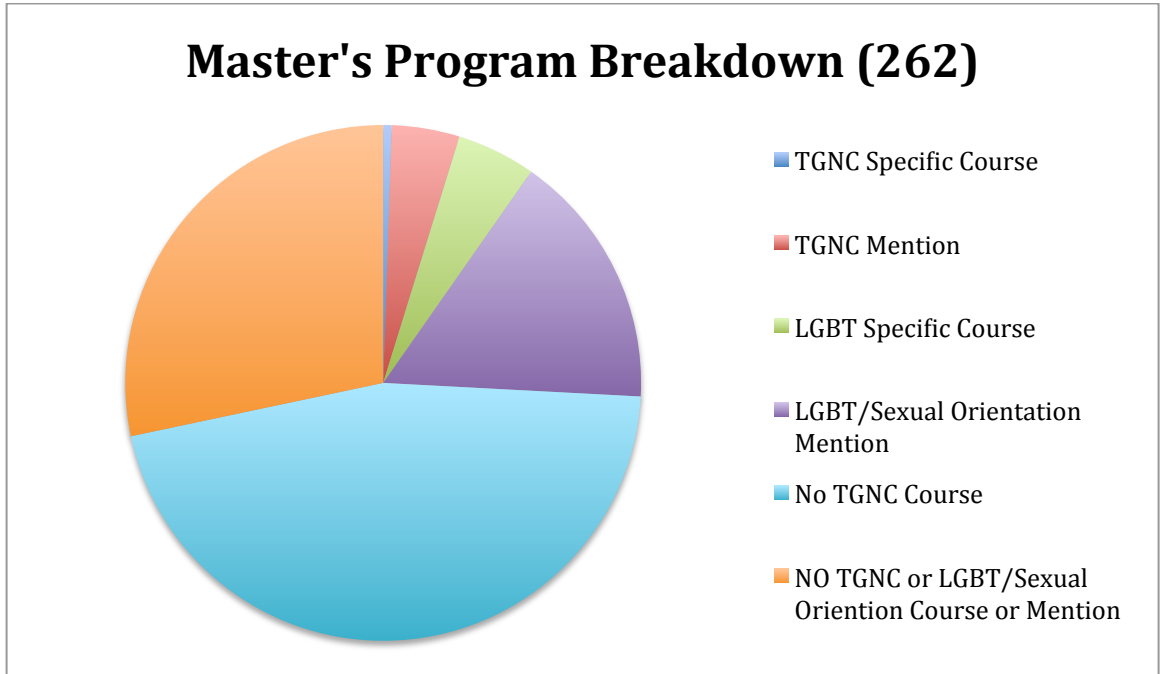


Chart 4

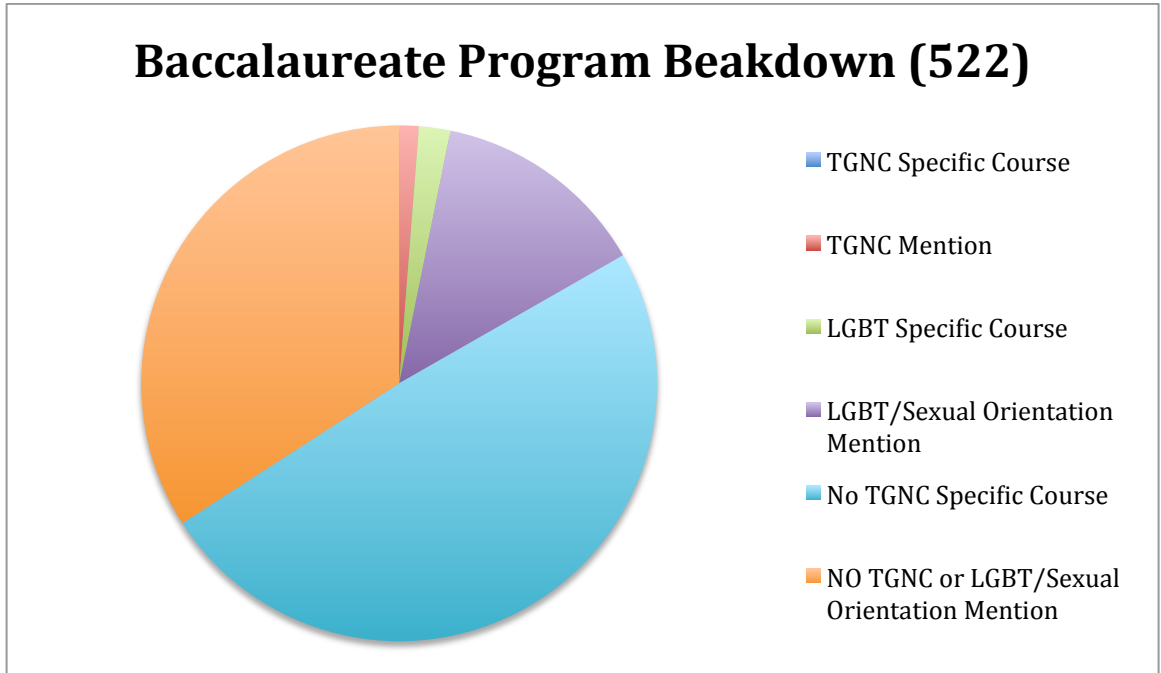


Chart 5

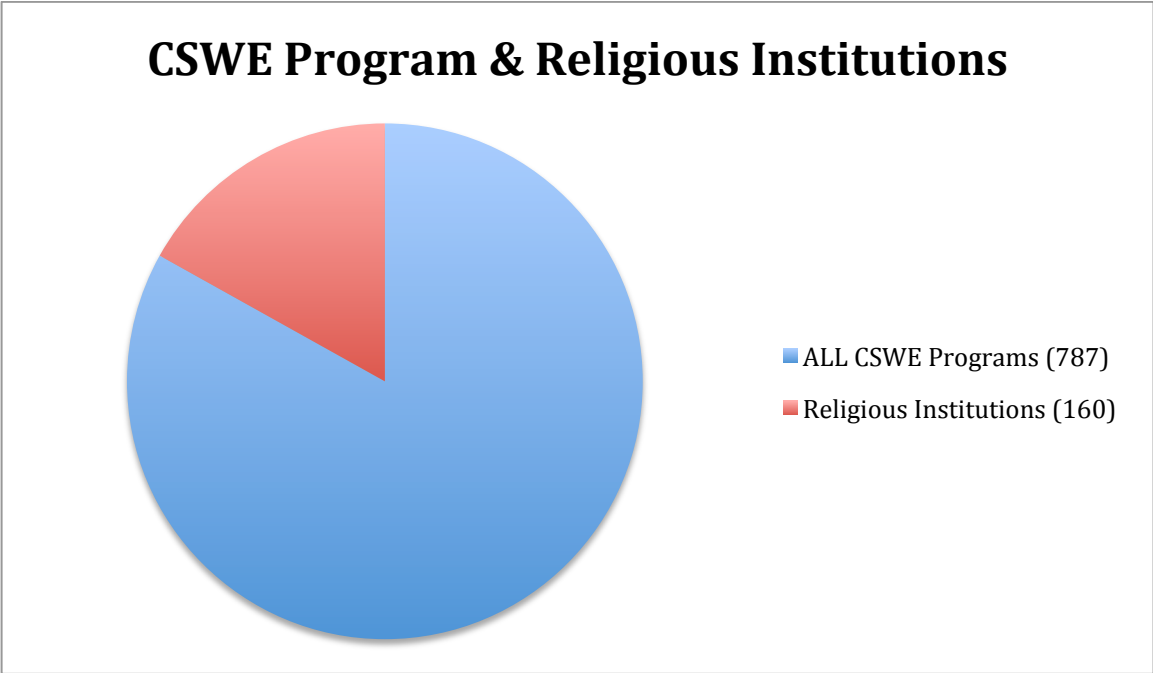


Chart 6

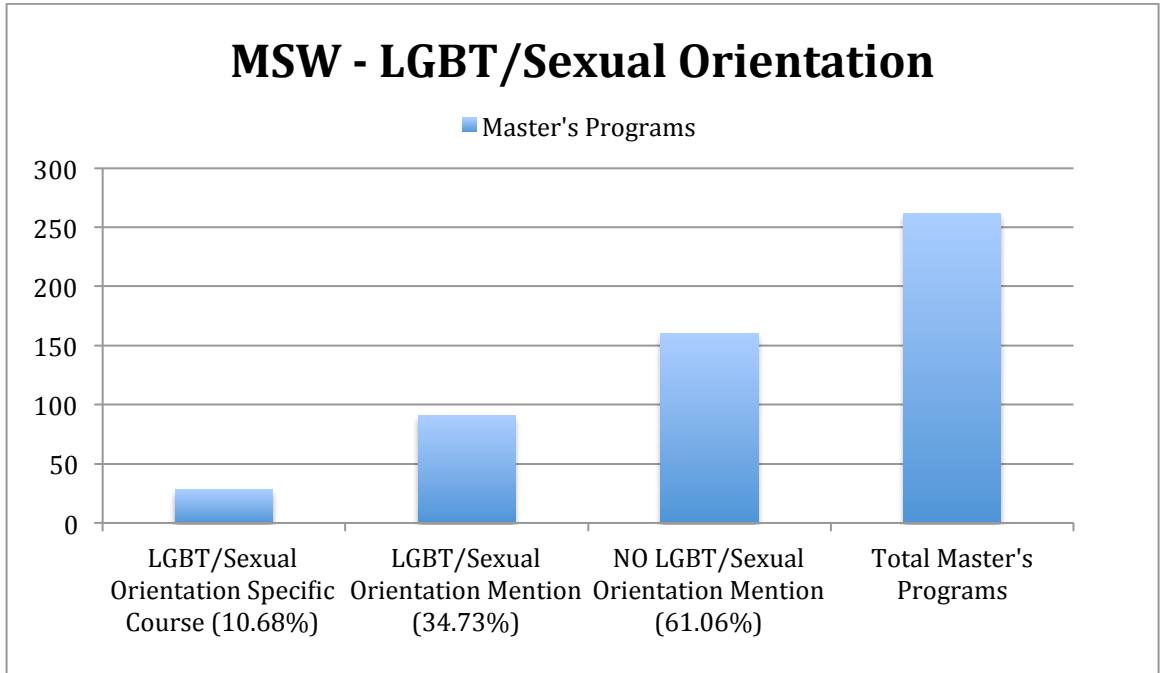


Chart 7

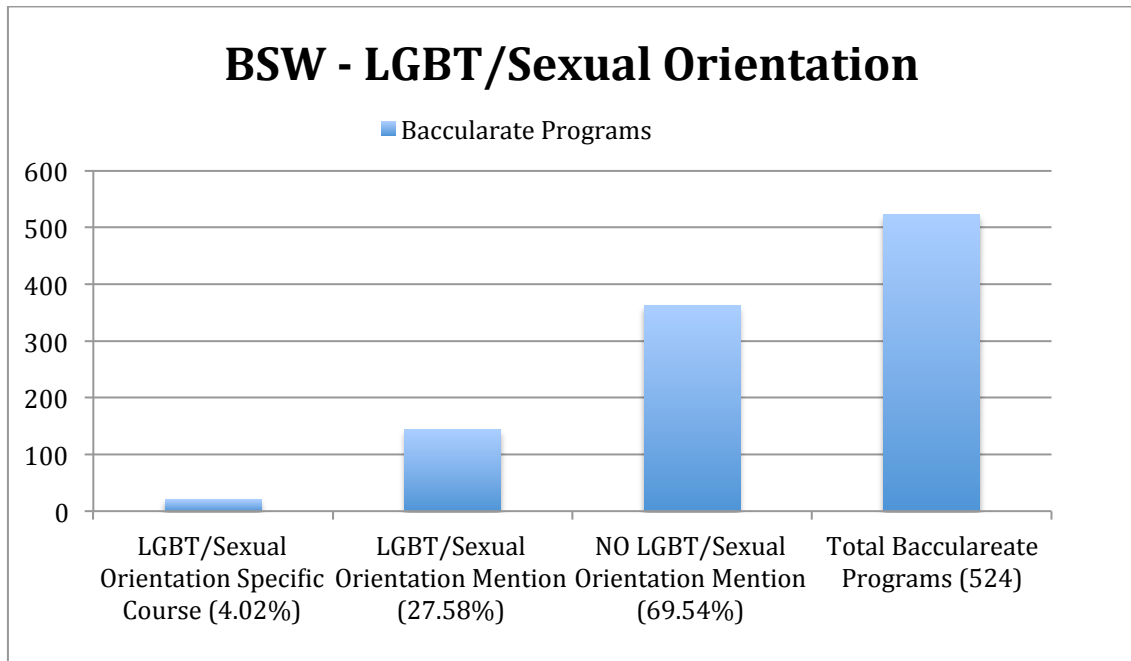
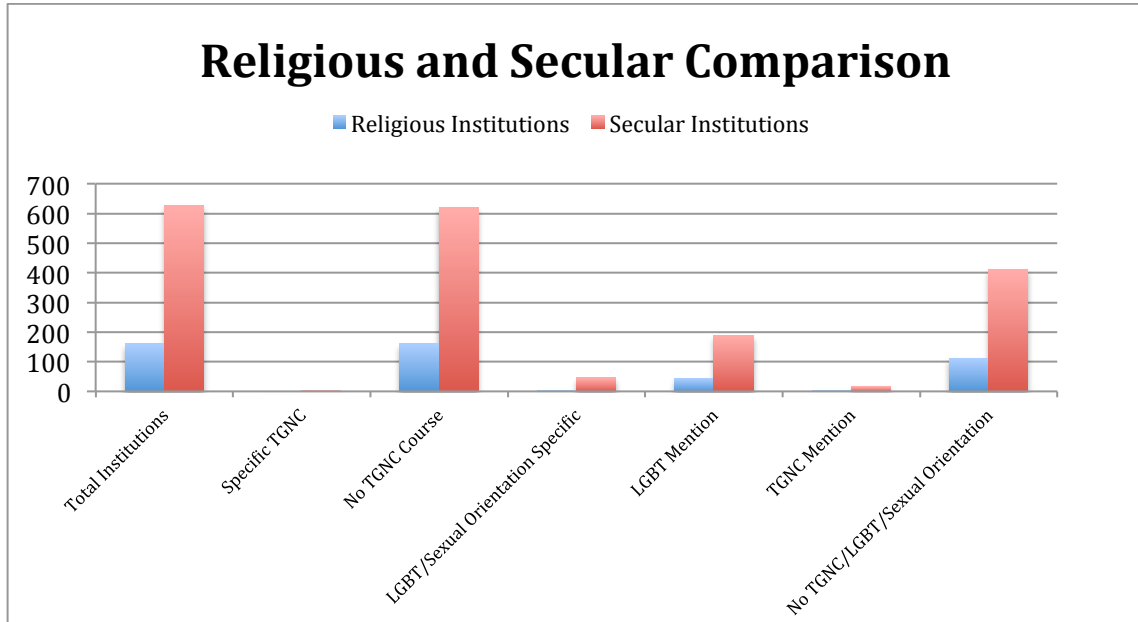


Chart 8



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