Good afternoon. My name is Jo Foy. Today I will share some of the quantitative results with you from my dissertation research.
Dr. James Banks and colleagues visualized multiple dimensions of diversity, including gender, sexual orientation, religion, abilities and disabilities, language, racial group, ethnic identity, geographic region, and socio-economic class. We could also add military affiliation. As professional educators, we are charged with preparing our students for global citizenship. Banks and colleagues emphasized that unity and diversity must be taught in the context of local communities, the nation, and the world; through fostering student understanding of the economic, political, cultural, environmental, and technological interdependence of communities, nations, and regions; and by not only teaching about human rights but providing “opportunities to practice democracy”—this is my beginning point: the necessity of comprehending the multiple identities of ourselves and our students, including gender and sexual variance.
My quantitative phase focuses on beliefs and attitudes of pre-service and in-service teachers toward gender or sexually variant adults. Just to make sure we are all on the same page about what I mean by gender and sexual variance, I have some definitions.

(Read down to transgender) Transgender was not a specific focus of my quantitative phase in that the survey questions only focused on lesbians and gay men. This limited focus might be considered a limitation of this phase of the study.

### Definitions

- **Biological sex** refers to the anatomy of the reproductive organs; when “gender” is asked for on a job application, what is really being asked is biological sex; sex is initially assigned by the midwife or nurse who delivers the baby; for ambiguous genitalia, this assignment of sex may conflict with gender identity.

- **Gender is socially constructed** at birth by pink blankets for girls and blue blankets for boys; gender continues to be constructed by parents, teachers, and other adults through expected gender roles.

- **Gender identity** refers to which gender a person relates to inside themselves.

- **Gender expression** refers to how a person dresses, walks, talks and how those behaviors relate to, or disturb, gender roles.

- **Transgender** refers to a person who identifies with a different gender from that assigned at birth.
Heterosexual privilege is similar to White privilege in that most heterosexuals never even question the default notion: that all of their students are heterosexual, will be attracted to students of the opposite sex, will marry someone of the opposite sex, and produce heterosexual children.

**Definitions**

- **Sexual identity development** refers to the process by which an individual comes to understand their sexual orientation; refers to heterosexual identity development and to non-heterosexual identity development.
- **Sexual minority** is a sociological term that refers to non-heterosexual individuals (LGBTQQI: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit, queer, questioning, intersex).
- **Sexual orientation** refers to which gender you are attracted to (heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual; asexual is also a sexual orientation).
- **Sexual prejudice** refers to the socially constructed negative beliefs and attitudes toward non-heterosexuals; confers a type of privilege when used to separate heterosexuals from non-heterosexuals.
Of those adolescents who took the 2009 National School Climate Survey administered by the Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network,

**Background — GLSEN findings (2010)**

- 90% heard “gay” used negatively
- 72% heard other homophobic remarks frequently or often
- As a result of real or perceived sexual orientation by others
  - 85% were verbally harassed
  - 40% physically harassed
  - 19% physically assaulted
Background — GLSEN findings (2010)

- Of those who reported on the survey being verbally harassed and/or physically harassed or assaulted
  - 62% did not report the incident to the school in the belief that either the harassment would get worse
  - Or that school staff would not take the report seriously

- Of those who did report an incident to the school
  - 34% said that school staff did nothing
Background — GLSEN findings (2010)

- As a result, sexual minority students who felt unsafe in public school environments tended to
  - Miss school more often and more than one day a month
  - Have lower grade point averages
  - Be less likely to plan to pursue post-secondary education

- Sexual minority students who were victimized were more likely to experience
  - Increased levels of depression and anxiety
  - Decreased levels of self-esteem
Background — Robinson & Espelage (2011)

• Sexual minority students in middle school and high school
  ◦ Experienced lower levels of school belongingness
    • Bisexual and questioning students had the lowest levels of belongingness
  ◦ Thought about suicide more frequently
  ◦ Attempted suicide more frequently
    • Particularly bisexual students
Purpose of my dissertation research

In light of the research on bullying of sexual minority students in middle schools and high schools based upon real or perceived gender or sexual variance, I want to know whether sexual prejudice among K-12 public school teachers differs by demographic, educational, or personal characteristics of those teachers.
The demographic independent variables were gender, race/ethnicity, age, and geography. The educational independent variables were completed college courses in multicultural education, completed college courses that included sexual orientation content, educational license sought, and disciplinary or content area.
The personal independent variables were political viewpoint toward multiculturalism; religious affiliation; the number of non-heterosexual friends, coworkers, or family members; participant sexual orientation; and finishing the survey.
Overall, I took a mixed methods approach where the quantitative phase was followed by a qualitative phase. I am only reporting on a small portion of the quantitative results today. Student information was gathered from the print directory in order to deliver a survey through the AXIO survey system.

Methodology

- Mixed methods research
  - Quantitative and Qualitative phase
  - Only reporting a portion of the quantitative results today

- Student information gathered from the print directory
  - Degree sought, e-mail address, content area

- Survey offered to 948 students through AXIO
  - 92 students actually took the survey
  - 24 self-selected to be interviewed for the QUAL phase

- IRB application number 6445
Methodology

• The dependent variable, PREJUDICE, was estimated as the mean score across a set of Likert items.

• Survey items were taken from four different measures
  ◦ Modern Homophobia Scale (Raja & Stokes, 1998; as modified by Aosved, Long, & Voller, 2009)
    - Measures beliefs and attitudes toward both lesbians and gay men
    - Measures both subtle and overt prejudice

(read first bullet) A total of 24 Likert items were utilized: five items from the MHSG, four from the MHSL, 10 from the Overt prejudice scale and 5 from the Subtle prejudice scale.
Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the PREJUDICE scale was 0.945. In the results I am presenting today, group means of the PREJUDICE scale were tested as a function of each independent variable (demographic, educational, or personal characteristic).
Levels of sexual prejudice as estimated by the PREJUDICE scale were not significantly different; that is, the p-value was greater than .05; for gender, race/ethnicity, age and geography.
In addition, levels of sexual prejudice as estimated by the PREJUDICE scale were not significantly different by teacher education status, educational license sought, multicultural education courses completed, sexual orientation content, or content area.
However, levels of sexual prejudice as estimated by the PREJUDICE scale were significantly different by political views toward multiculturalism, by religious affiliation, by the number of non-heterosexual friends and family members (but not non-heterosexual coworkers), by participant sexual orientation and by whether or not the participant finished the survey.
The majority of the variance in the PREJUDICE scale was accounted for by political viewpoint toward multiculturalism and the number of non-heterosexual friends. Other refers to random effects, interactions among variables, and other variables not measured.
There are some limitations to these results. There was less than a 10% return of the survey. Therefore, any conclusions we might draw are contingent on sampling more teachers in the future. In addition, we can only talk about relative differences with a Likert scale from 1 to 5; we can’t say that 21-year-old Mary Smith with a PREJUDICE score of 3.5 is significantly more prejudiced than 50-year-old Joe Shepard with a PREJUDICE score of 1.0; we can only say that Mary’s score is greater than Joe’s; but we don’t know deterministically what that really means. One of the more interesting conclusions is that neither demographic nor educational characteristics accounted for statistically significant differences in group means in this sample. That means that there were no significant differences in PREJUDICE scores whether a participant reported taking five multicultural courses or none; whether they took three courses with sexual orientation content or none. For me, that is extremely curious and I look forward to doing more work on this specific finding in the future.
In teacher education programs, our teaching cannot focus only on race or skin color. With the politics and understanding of gender changing so dramatically, gender must be taught explicitly, along with sex education for all teacher education candidates. We have to keep in mind the multiple identities of our students. In addition, more work needs to be done to understand how politics and religion limit our students’ understanding of gender and sexual variance. Finally, the sexual identity development of pre-service and in-service teachers may begin with making friends with non-heterosexual adults. That preparation then must be extended to preparing for non-heterosexual and/or gender variant youth in the classroom. Thank you.
References


