Creating Safe Schools for LGBTQIA+ Displaced Migrant Youth: A Journey Towards Anti-Oppressive Pedagogy

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Abstract

According to research, abuse and harassment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/transsexual, two-spirit, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) youth in US-based schools continues to rise despite the media's attention. Although often grouped under one community, the LGBTQIA+ community is vastly diverse. As a result of laws that persecute individuals based on sexual orientation and gender identity, LGBTQIA+ displaced migrant youth are among the world's most vulnerable populations. Post-migration stressors such as marginalization, isolation, oppression, and microaggressions by staff and students against LGBTQIA+ displaced migrant youth in schools, will be discussed. This article proposes queer theory and intersectionality theory as frameworks to inform the implementation of anti-oppressive, school-based practices in support of LGBTQIA+ displaced migrant students under the age of 21. A case composite example illustrating the experiences of a displaced migrant student identifying as a gay male is included. The role of school administrators, policy landscape, professional development, and reform to education curricula will be addressed as factors that may have significant influence in the development of anti-oppressive and safe schools.

Keywords: LGBTQIA+, Displaced Migrant Youth, Safe Schools, Anti-Oppressive Pedagogy, Intersectionality

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INTRODUCTION

Although often grouped under one community, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/transsexual, two-spirit, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) youth community is vastly diverse, including racial, cultural, and ethnic diversity. They are among the world's most vulnerable population as a result of laws and systems (family, church, community) that persecute them and violate their human rights based on sexual orientation and gender identity (Alessi et al., 2016; Cheney et al., 2017; NCTE, 2014; U.S. Department of State, n.d.; Messih, 2017). Due to exposure to traumatic events experienced in childhood, LGBTQIA+ displaced migrant youth have been identified as a group at risk for depression, drug and alcohol use, verbal and physical violence, suicide, and dropping-out of school at higher rates when compared to their heterosexual counterparts (Alessi et al., 2016, Griffin et al., 2004; Hernandez & Fraynd, 2014; Lee, 2002; Mayberry et al., 2013; Messih, 2017; Roberts et al., 2010, p. 2433).

Despite measures to protect sexual minorities, many regions outside of the United States, such as Central America, Asia, Africa, and some former Communist countries, offer little to no protections to LGBTQIA+ youth, thus making them susceptible to a host of human rights violations (Stewart, 2009). These conditions result in forced displacement for LGBTQIA+ youth. In addition to oppressions experienced in their native countries, LGBTQIA+ displaced migrant youth are often victims of homophobia, transphobia, marginalization, isolation, oppression, and microaggressions in their resettlement countries, specifically by staff and students in US-based schools. Although the literature on the experiences and needs of LGBTQIA+ displaced migrant youth is scarce (Alessi et al., 2016), this article explores school safety and climate in service of LGBTQIA+ displaced migrant youth under the age of 21 in US-based schools to address gaps in research and practice. Because of the dearth in the literature, the author will be drawing from and expanding on research that addresses the needs of non-migrant LGBTQIA+ youth in schools. Queer theory and intersectionality theory are used as frameworks to inform the implementation of anti-oppressive, school-based practices. The case composite of Santiago will illustrate the events that act as drivers for forced exile and the need for anti-oppressive school culture and climate. These theories will be used to direct the role of school administrators, policy landscape, professional development, and reform to education curricula as factors in the development of anti-oppressive schools.

Factors in Forced Migration for LGBTQIA+ Youth

According to Massaquoi (2015), "queer subjects and their nonconforming sexual behavior have been historically persecuted by state-sanctioned legislation and resulting in discrimination" (p. 766). Every year the number of LGBTQIA+ individuals seeking refuge or asylum because of state-sanctioned violence increases despite global reform in legislation (Massaquoi, 2015). The Williams Center, UCLA School of Law (2013) estimates that roughly 904,000 LGBT adult immigrants are living in the United States today, 30% (about 267,000) of whom are undocumented, and 49% are individuals estimated to be under the age of 30 (Englert, 2014; Gates, 2013; Messih, 2017). Gates (2013) posits that "undocumented immigrants under age 30 are twice as likely as all other undocumented immigrants to identify as LGBT" (p.3). However, there is little to no available data for LGBTQIA+ displaced migrants in the United States or in many host countries (Ocamb, 2019). In keeping with this notion, reports by Amnesty International (2017) indicate that "it was only in 2015 that US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, known as the ICE, stated that it would gather information on the gender identity of those detained" (p. 19). Consequently, it is necessary to note that these numbers may be higher than those reported in this article. It is equally important to understand the conditions that force LGBTQIA+ youth to flee from their native countries.

Drivers of International Forced Migration

In 2019, the murder of LGBTQIA+ youth around the world reached alarming levels resulting in forced displacement (Moloney, 2019). Forced displacement, or forced migration, is a term "used by social scientists and others as a general, open-ended term that covers many kinds of displacement or involuntary movement - both across international borders and inside a single country" (UNHCR, 2016). Some of the causes for displacement may be related to environmental disasters, conflict (UNCHR, 2016), or persecution. In 2006, human rights experts met in Yogyakarta, Indonesia and drafted the Yogyakarta Principles, a universal guide to human rights. In 2007, the Jurisprudential Annotations of the Yogyakarta Principles expanded on the importance of protecting LGBTQIA+ children, stating that "LGBT children and youth are at risk of sexual exploitation, HIV/AIDS, social exclusion, and discrimination by school officials" (Sexuality Policy Watch, 2009). The Yogyakarta Principles were supplemented in 2017 to "outline international principles relating to sexual orientation and gender identity" and their application to international human rights law (The Yogyakarta Principles, n.d., para. 3).

Protections and rights for individuals who identify as or are perceived to be LGBTQIA+ are slowly increasing (Cheney et al., 2017; Messih, 2017). However, Moloney (2019) reports that 1,300 LGBTQIA+ were murdered in Latin America in 2019, "with Colombia, Mexico, and Honduras accounting for nearly 90 percent of all deaths" (para. 2). Most of these victims were gay men between the ages of 18 and 25 and transgender women (Moloney, 2019, para. 6). In Latin America, groups such as family members and gangs often target LGBTQIA+ youth (Alessi et al., 2016; Messih, 2017; Moloney, 2019). Transgender women in Central America are often the target of violence and death threats (Amnesty International, 2017; Resendiz, 2020). In 2016, Amnesty International (2017) interviewed a 19-year-old Guatemalan transgender woman who reported having been deceptively recruited into a trafficking ring and held against her will for several months along with other transgender women from Central America (p. 10). Schools outside of the United States can also be a source of persecution and abuse of LGBTQIA+ youth. In schools in Mexico, microaggressions against identified or perceived LGBTQIA+ youth may begin as early as primary school by students and staff (Cheney et al., 2017). Some of these abuses include having rocks, trash, and food thrown at them for being identified or perceived as a sexual minority (Alessi et al, 2016; Cheney et al., 2017). In many cases, LGBTQIA+ youth outside of the United States are sexually abused by teachers and other school staff (Alessi et al., 2016; Cheney et al., 2017).

Similarly, Savage (2020) reports a rise in hate crimes, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes, across Europe. A similar trend has been identified in other parts of the world. Hylton and Politzer (2019) add that "homosexuality is illegal in 34 of Africa's 54 countries – four countries employ the death penalty – so lesbians, gay men, and transgender people flee their homelands in search of safety" (para. 2). According to Tang (2015), many countries in Asia are regions where homophobic and transphobic laws support family violence against individuals who identify as LGBTQIA+.

In-Journey and Post-Migration Hardships

LGBTQIA+ youth from all over the world arrive in the United States every year seeking asylum due to persecution and credible fear. Many of LGBTQIA+ displaced migrant youth may be suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, and complex trauma by the time they arrive to the host country (Alessi & Khan, 2017). The journey to the host country can create additional hardships for these young people which often result in psychological sequelae. For example, LGBTQIA+ migrants who flee to the United States through the U.S.-Mexico border may be subjected to sexual assault, robbery, and physical and verbal assault. Transgender migrants are often the target of abuses by smugglers, gangs, and government officials along the migration journey (Del Real, 2018). According to the literature, LGBTQIA+ refugees, specifically transgender women in

detention, are exposed to sexual assault, injury, and death by other detainees and guards (De Real, 2018; Herrera, 2019; Human Rights Watch, 2016; Messih, 2017; Solomon, 2005). Upon arrival, anti-immigration and persecutory laws in the host country serve to exacerbate pre-existing trauma and acute stress symptoms and expose LGBTQIA+ migrants to homophobic and transphobic assaults (Fernandez, 2018; Franco, 2020a; Messih, 2017). Many of these youth arrive in US-based schools that are often not prepared to provide supports from an anti-oppressive and intersectional framework, tailored to their experiences as displaced and persecuted sexual minorities.

LGBTQIA+ Displaced Youth in US Schools: "Double Minorities"

LGBTQIA+ youth are disproportionately at higher risk for mental health issues and for harassment when compared to heterosexual, straight, and/ or cisgender (gender identity corresponds to birth sex) peers (Smith-Millman et al., 2019; Wilson & Cariola, 2019). Homophobic and transphobic behaviors and attitudes, including verbal and physical microaggressions are often the source of stress, isolation, and marginalization for LGBTQIA+ youth. These young people are subjected to verbal insults, physical and sexual assaults, stigmatization, anti-gay language, and bullying (De Pedro et al., 2018). Despite recent advocacy measures, research indicates that LGBTQIA+ youth are still an invisible, underrepresented, and marginalized minority due hostile school climates (Abreu et al., 2018; Griffin et al., 2004; Lee, 2002; Watson et al., 2010). Sexual minority youths continue to experience poor academic performance related to higher levels of victimization when compared to their heterosexual or straight counterparts, given that abuse and harassment in schools have adverse effects on academic achievement, including school attendance (De Pedro et al., 2018; McCormick, 2015, p. 71). Similar research has reported that school staff and administrators are often the source of bullying, abuse, and hostility against these young people (Fetner et al., 2012; Mayberry et al., 2013; Poteat et al., 2015). In their interviews with school staff and students, Fetner et al., (2012) noted that teachers were often the source of abusive behaviors in the form of antigay harassment. Other research indicates that these young people hear homophobic remarks and/or are directly harassed and assaulted by school personnel for their identified of perceived LGBTQIA+ identity (Abreu et al., 2018). LGBTQIA+ displaced migrant youth are vulnerable to further victimization. As Fuks et al. (2018) posit, "LGBT immigrants find themselves in 'double jeopardy,' identifying with at least a double minority status" (p. 297) because of their identities as both migrants and members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

ANTI-OPPRESSIVE PEDAGOGY

According to Englert (2014), LGBTQIA+ migrant youth endure the same 'coming out' process as their U.S. citizen counterparts, with the added stressor of living as an undocumented youth and the possibility of being deported if rejected by their families (p. 1013). This leaves these young people susceptible to a host of abuses and oppressions. Oppression is defined as repeated harm that targets a group or members of a group while privileging or benefiting other groups in society (Dumbrill & Yee, 2019; Kumashiro, 2000). To address and dismantle oppression in schools, Kumashiro (2000) emphasized the necessity for anti-oppressive education. Anti-oppressive education affirms that traditional pedagogical strategies and approaches to education reform often contribute to oppression in schools in many ways. Although schools are intended to be safe havens that provide academic and social-emotional supports for youth, oppression in schools may manifest as racism, classism, nativism, transphobia, and homophobia. Anti-oppressive pedagogies draw on social justice approaches, proposed by critical theorists, to inform actions and interactions in the classroom and assumptions embedded in the curriculum (Zynga & Styres, 2018, p. 5). Kumashiro (2004) adds that for anti-oppressive reform in education to take place, educators must critically analyze pedagogies by challenging stereotypes and misrepresentations in the curriculum, questioning and rethinking teaching strategies, and addressing structural oppression rooted in the school culture and climate. Thus, in keeping with tenets of anti-oppressive education, school staff and leadership must critically analyze frameworks used in support of LGBTQIA+ displaced migrant youth through the lens of queer theory and intersectionality theory.

Queer Theory and Intersectionality: Frameworks for Anti-oppressive Pedagogy

Queer Theory

Drawing from feminism and post-structuralism, queer theory emphasizes the practice of challenging "normative knowledges and identities" (Sullivan, 2003, p. 44) by rejecting "traditional categories to question the way we understand sexuality, gender, and other related phenomena" (Dumbrill & Yee, 2019, p. 363). Queer theory also "investigates sexuality by exploring themes of history, marginalization, exclusion, normalcy, social location, and political agency, all of which are crucial in the investigation of lives that stand outside any dominant culture" (p. 766). In alignment with this concept, queer theory allows school staff to analyze pedagogical strategies, including the delivery of social-emotional services, by understanding the lived experiences of LGBTQIA+ displaced youth through a historical lens that takes into consideration the youths' identities across various contexts. However, queer theory has been critiqued of *race blindness* or solely problematizing what it means to exist as a queer person and fight for equality, without taking into consideration experiences of oppression and discrimination by racialized queer individuals (Massaquoi, 2015, p. 767; Sullivan, 2003) as is necessary when working with LGBTQIA+ displaced youth in schools. This race blindness may result in invisibility for the LGBTQIA+ individual both in the country of origin and in the host country (Massaquoi, 2015, p. 769).

Intersectionality

Intersectionality, first coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, is a framework used to explain the experiences of oppression, violence, poverty, and marginalization by Black women, as these were not accounted for in the civil rights movement and in the women's movement (Dumbrill & Yee, 2019; Franco, 2020b, p. 4). Intersectionality explores ways in which multiple, interlocking oppressions intersect and often compound each other without creating a hierarchy of oppressions (Dumbrill & Yee, 2019; Franco, 2020b, p. 4; Massaquoi, 2015). Thus, intersectionality provides a framework for understanding how factors such as racism, ableism, classism, and nativism can intersect in ways to create disadvantages in the life of individuals (Cassidy & Jackson, 2005). Wimberly (2015) contends that extant scholarship has not sufficiently studied how these intersections impact relationships and experiences for students and school staff. Therefore, Massaquoi (2015) proposes intersectional queer theory, a queer theoretical view that centralizes intersectionality as a "framework that enables one to articulate the complexities of the lives produced by intersections of gender, race, culture, identity, and sexuality" (p. 765). This approach would inform school-based supports in addressing the invisibility experienced by the LGBTQIA+ -identified youth to also include pre-migratory narratives.

IMPACT OF SCHOOL CLIMATE AND SAFETY

School-based supports, in general, are significantly important, partly because students spend most of their day in schools. An approach used by schools in combatting heteronormative perspectives and messages to the school community is through the implementation of Gender and Sexuality Alliances formerly known as Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs). Participants in GSAs reported that these student-led clubs served as the only vehicles in school where LGBTQIA+ issues were addressed (Griffin et al., 2004). GSAs are school-based and student-initiated clubs that seek to create safe and supportive environments for LGBTQIA+ youth in addition to cultivating strengths, leadership and advocacy skills (Fetner et al., 2012; Hernandez & Fraynd, 2014; Poteat et al., 2015). GSAs are a reform strategy (Mayberry et al., 2013) that motivate straight youth, or allies, to become social justice advocates and to provide education to other students and staff on human rights (Scheer & Poteat, 2016). Research confirms that GSAs were reported to improve attendance, academic progress, promote positive relationship building and overall feelings of safety and inclusivity (Lee, 2002; Toomey et al., 2011). Mayberry (2012) adds that although GSAs can positively influence the social,

political, and policy decision climates in schools, their visibility alone is insufficient for achieving successful reforms.

Principals in some schools have taken strong positions in support of LGBTQIA+ affirming school-based supports. According to the literature, school leaders often fail to intervene on behalf of LGBTQIA+ students out of fear of parental backlash pertaining to religious values and beliefs (Mayberry, 2012). There are, however, principals in schools who have come forward as strong advocates by using school policy to redirect and address faculty members' homophobic comments (Griffin et al., 2004).

For LGBTQIA+ affirming supports to succeed, the members need to feel and be acknowledged as stakeholders in the political reform process (Mayberry, 2012). These supports do not always take into account cultural, migratory, and linguistic diversity. While inadvertent, this serves to further marginalize and isolate LGBTQIA+ displaced migrant youth. Therefore, queer theory and intersectionality, which explore these previously overlooked factors, may serve as anti-oppressive frameworks to bring about pedagogical reform to academic and social-emotional interventions from a social justice lens. The following case example will illustrate the necessity for anti-oppressive frameworks in schools.

Case Example: Santiago

Santiago is 17-year-old, self-identified gay, cis-gender male, at an urban high school. Santiago migrated from Honduras, his native country, and crossed the US-Mexico border assisted by a *coyote,* or human smuggler, at the age of 16. Like many unaccompanied refugee minors, Santiago migrated without a parent or adult guardian. Four months after admission to the high school, Santiago was referred for social-emotional services when school staff noticed that he was socially disengaged, appeared sad, declining grades, and inconsistent school attendance. Santiago expressed to the social worker the preference for he/him/his pronouns. Santiago indicated to the school social worker that "talking would be difficult" as he had never told anyone his story before. After 3 weeks in counseling, Santiago shared that life in Honduras was "unbearable." Santiago stated that, as a child, people at home and school observed that he "was different." Santiago shared, "ever since I was a young boy, I liked to play with my sisters' dolls. My sisters wouldn't mind it at all. One day, my father caught me playing dolls with my sisters and beat me with his belt. While hitting me he yelled, '*Maricón* (Spanish for faggot)! *I will not have a maricón living in my house and I better not see this again.'* My mother always defended me, but he threatened her that if she continued doing so he would beat her too. One day he followed through on his promise and punched my mother in the face after she, once again, attempted to stick up for me. School did not provide an escape from these abuses. The children called me maricón and threw food at me at lunch time. This went on from elementary to the beginning of high school. One day a male teacher held me back at the end of the school day. He took me in the closet, began to touch me, and forced me to perform sexual acts on him. I cried and said no but it was to no avail. The teacher threatened to hurt me and kill my family if I told anyone. The sexual assaults continued for a year. I was terrified of my father finding out as this would result in another beating or perhaps being kicked out of my house. I decided to leave Honduras, fearing for my life."

Santiago shared that the journey to the United States exposed him to more abuse. Santiago indicated that he and other youth made "several stops" along the way. Santiago stated: "Nights were the worst. So many things happened. Sometimes I was touched by the coyote and other times I was forced to perform oral sex on him. He told me: '*You want to get to the United States Right? So do what you have to do and keep your mouth shut.*' I was in constant fear for my life and my safety." Santiago reported that he was eventually re-united with a maternal aunt in the United States where he was able to enroll in school. While Santiago reported feeling psychologically and physically safe in the counseling office, he reported feeling isolated in this U.S. school due to his immigration status, language, and identity as a sexual minority. Santiago indicated that although some students spoke

Spanish, he did not feel safe to disclose his identity as a gay male and undocumented youth out of fear of harassment and abuse. Santiago also reported that the school did not feel welcoming to students "like [him]." Santiago indicated that he often heard students call each other "gay" and "faggot" openly in classrooms and common areas with little to no interventions from school staff.

DISCUSSION

Santiago's precarious immigration status and identity as a gay male increase his risk for vulnerability in this US-based, urban school. In order to provide anti-oppressive academic and clinical school-based supports this youth, it is important to understand the exposure to trauma in the pre-migratory and in-journey phases in countries such as Honduras (Moloney, 2019). Like many LGBTQIA+ displaced migrant youth Santiago fled to the United States from a socio-political climate that was physically and psychologically dangerous. However, the United States' anti-immigration laws act as stressors that negatively impact the physical and psychological well-being of Latin American migrants (Franco, 2020a). While there are laws in place to protect LGBTQIA+-identified individuals, homophobia and transphobia continue to be the source of high levels of stress and psychological sequelae for these young people in schools (Abreu et al., 2018; De Pedro et al., 2018; Griffin et al., 2004; Lee, 2002; Watson et al., 2010). Although his geographical location changed, the school in the host country mirrors the persecution, invisibility, and lack of safety he faced in Honduras. Santiago is frequently exposed to homophobic language and behaviors by students without intervention and protection from school staff. This oppressive school climate elevates levels of distrust in school staff for youth like Santiago, who have been sexually assaulted and threatened with death by a teacher in their native country. It is not enough for Santiago to feel safe in the school-based, therapeutic space. Santiago should feel included, safe, and welcome in all spaces of the school community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy Landscape and Professional Development

Lack of explicit anti-harassment policies and implementation of said policies can contribute to an unsafe school environment, such as hostile conduct by untrained school staff, administration, and students (Abreu et al., 2018). However, "anti"-policies may only function as mitigative strategies that do not actively dismantle discrimination (Beck, 2017). Schools systems would benefit from policy development that engages all stakeholders (students, school staff/leaders, parents, and community) in disrupting discriminatory and prejudicial actions and language (Beck, 2017). This process, informed by intersectionality, creates an anti-oppressive school climate that affirms the intersections of students' identities and explores experiences between staff, families, and students (Beck, 2017, p. 3).

Consistent emphasis and interest should be placed by State and district leaders to advocate for education reform in the curricula for teachers in training. Teachers report feeling insecure and unprepared to support LGBTQIA+ youth mostly because relevant content is underrepresented in training and professional development (Graybill & Proctor, 2016). Educators may lack resources to improve their own awareness and learning in order to positively create a safe school climate (Abreu et al., 2018; Graybill & Proctor, 2016). Therefore, teacher training would be enhanced by content that affirms LGBTQIA+ and migrant identities through an intersectional queer framework. Anti-oppressive pedagogical strategies calls for action by the instructor to include reflective practice, awareness of biases, mindfulness of positionality, and power and privilege, (Zynga & Styres, 2018). This approach may result in improvement in levels of social justice awareness, acceptance, visibility, and inclusion of the LGBTQIA+ migrant community.

Curriculum Reform: Steps Beyond Training

While staff professional development is important, curriculum reform to support LGBTQIA+ displaced migrant youth in schools would be enhanced by tenets from queer theory, intersectionality, and anti-oppressive pedagogy. Currently, the research shows that LGBTQIA+ youth, specifically migrant youth, are underrepresented in the educational curriculum and therefore feel disengaged and at an educational disadvantage from their straight peers (Lee, 2002). Much of the educational curriculum that has been developed, is centered around disease acquisition that serves to perpetuate stigmatization of LGBTQIA+ individuals (Mayberry, 2012). This perspective contributes to LGBTQIA+ displaced migrant youth feeling unsafe and disengaged from the school community. In keeping with tenets of anti-oppressive pedagogy and intersectional queer theory, the author contends that schools would benefit from fully revising and restructuring curricula across all content areas to eliminate language, assumptions, stereotypes that oppress sexual minorities, undocumented individuals, and People of Color (Kumashiro, 2004; Zynga & Styres, 2018).

Fear and lack of education in the development of LGBTQIA+ inclusive curricula across all content areas, can be counteracted by uniting school staff in creating relevant substitutions in the content and eliminating anti-LGBTQIA+ bias from the curricula (Cianciarulo, 2015; Mayberry, 2012). This collaboration can assist in fighting against homophobic stereotypes and promoting critical thinking and discussions (Mayberry, 2012) in and out of the classroom. Watson et al. (2010) state that during interviews they conducted, staff reported that public policy was the factor that helped "facilitate inclusion of LGBTQIA+ themes in course curricula" (p.108). These gaps can continue to be bridged by the commitment of leaders to promote and develop anti-oppressive curriculum that builds and educates - not one that discriminates or marginalizes (Conway & Crawford-Fisher, 2007).

CONCLUSION

The literature reviewed various challenges faced by LGBTQIA+ displaced migrant youth in their native countries and upon arrival to the host countries. Most of the literature concluded that although awareness of LGBTQIA+ issues has increased, there is a dearth in the professional research, whereby LGBTQIA+ displaced migrant youths' issues are underrepresented in journals. Upon arrival, these young people often face hostile school environments with school cultures that convey implicit and explicit anti-LGBTQIA+ and anti-immigrant messages. School and district leadership may have a direct impact on school culture and climate in promoting anti-heteronormative and culturally responsive messages in support of LGBTQIA+ displaced migrant youth (Abreu et al., 2018; Graybill & Proctor, 2016; Hernandez & Fraynd, 2014). School leaders have an ethical and professional responsibility to implement and improve the policy climate in stopping anti-LGBTQIA+ abuse in schools (Abreu et al., 2018; Graybill & Proctor, 2016; Hernandez & Fraynd, 2014; Macgillivray, 2004). Reform to policy, teacher training, and classroom curricula informed by intersectionality, queer theory and anti-oppressive pedagogy may prove useful in dismantling pervasive institutional silence and harassment of these young people. Ultimately, all stakeholders are charged with a paramount responsibility in developing an anti-oppressive school culture that is safe for LGBTQIA+ migrant youth who fled violence and abuse in search of a new life.

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