The Inclusion of LGTBI Students in Chilean Schools: Between Invisibility and Social Recognition

La inclusión de estudiantes LGTBI en las escuelas chilenas: entre invisibilización y reconocimiento social

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Abstract

This article communicates the results of a multi-case qualitative study that sought to know the meanings and debates present in Chilean schools in relation to LGTBI inclusion. This research gathered information from 8 cases using documentary analysis, interviews, focus groups with different school actors, and non-participant observation. The article raises the question on how justice of recognition finds expression in school communities, understanding justice as the visibility of gender expression and identities, and sexual diversity, as well as the existence of pedagogical practices and experiences that allow LGTBI students to build self-confidence. The results indicate that, in the Chilean school system, there are advances on the recognition of gender identities and sexual diversity, but they are partial and fragile. Respect for diversity is a principle present in the discourses of school actors, but this does not question the hegemony of heteronormativity in the curriculum or teaching practices. Students and principals with greater cultural capital and/or political mobilization, trigger important changes in recognition as educational justice.

Keywords: heteronormativity, justice of recognition, LGTBI, school inclusion

Resumen

Este artículo comunica los resultados de un estudio cualitativo de casos múltiples que buscó conocer los significados y debates presentes en relación con el reconocimiento de los estudiantes LGTBI en las escuelas chilenas. La investigación recogió información mediante análisis documental, entrevistas y grupos focales a diversos actores escolares, y observación no participante en ocho escuelas del país. El artículo indaga en cómo se expresa la justicia de reconocimiento en comunidades escolares, entendida como la visibilización de las expresiones e identidades de género y la diversidad sexual y, además, la existencia de prácticas y experiencias pedagógicas que permitan que las y los estudiantes LGTBI construyan seguridad en sí mismos. Los resultados indican que si bien existen algunos avances en torno al reconocimiento de las identidades de género y la diversidad sexual en el sistema escolar chileno, estos son parciales y frágiles. El respeto a la diversidad es un principio presente en los discursos de los actores escolares, pero ello no significa cuestionar la hegemonía de la heteronormatividad en el currículo ni en las prácticas de enseñanza. Sin embargo, las y los estudiantes y las y los directores, en contextos de mayor capital cultural y/o movilización política, comienzan a gatillar cambios importantes en el reconocimiento como justicia educacional.

Palabras clave: heteronormatividad, inclusión escolar, justicia de reconocimiento, LGTBI

Introduction

In the last two decades, the demand for inclusion has risen in the political agenda and the educational reforms taking place. In the case of Chile, a series of policies have been proposed, which regulate the inclusion of students to the school system (General Law of Education n° 20,370 of 2009 and Law for Education Inclusion Nº 20,845 of 2015), whose purpose and base is the recognition to education as a right for every child, regardless of their social or cultural identities or their socioeconomic position. These public policies respond to the orientation of international organizations that foster a vision in which school learning is not subordinated to the individual characteristics of students. Rather, it responds to the promotion of a culture of diversity based on respect and common life (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, 2017). One of the multiple dimensions of this diversity, and one with which we deal in this article, is related to the gender identities and expressions, and the sexual diversity of male and female students.

In terms of recognition of the LGBTI[1] population, Chile participates in a series of legal measure—national and international—that safeguard the human rights[2] of all subjects. In the educational field, between 2016 and 2017 there were two policies spread about the inclusion of male and female LGBTI children in schools; the first linked to the trans population (Superintendence of Education in Chile, 2017), the second aimed at the teachers and school administrators so that they could incorporate the issues of gender identity and sexual orientation in the country's curriculum (Chilean Ministry of Education, Mineduc, 2017). In this way, the State began to respond to the demands of the civil society organizations and international bodies to foster public policies and practices of recognition in these issues.

This constitutes a fundamental issue for educational justice matters. The international literature gives an account of the existence of a great recognition gap that female and male LGTBI children and teenagers experience concerning the small or null visibility that these topics have in the school curriculum, in the form of regulating the coexistence at schools and social-educational relationships (Harris-Perry, 2011). Besides, this gap impacts on the physical, emotional and affective security of the subjects who lack an identity reference and protected spaces to develop self-assurance and a relationship of trust with their environment (Miller, 2015). As an example, the findings of the *National School Climate Survey* (Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network, GLSEN, 2015) show that 90% of the male and female student listen repeatedly to the word "gay" being used negatively and 75% of them hear regular homophobic

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[1]   Although some of the international literature adds the letter "Q" (which stands for queer), and the symbol "+" which covers the different identities and/or orientations currently recognized (Miller, 2016), this study abides to the categories used in the official documents by the UNESCO (2017).

[2]   In this sense, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Yogyakarta Principles (a more advanced document in its field, as it integrates the categories of "gender identity" and "sexual orientation"), correspond to an international normative framework that allows to think about the LGBTI population as a specific group in society, in which the violation of rights appears in higher frequency and depth.

remarks at school, such as "fag") or "dike" (GLSEN, 2015). In parallel, the *National School Environment Survey* applied by Todo Mejora (It Gets Better) (2016), shows that 70% of the survey respondents feel insecure due to their sexual orientation and more than 50% of the respondents listen to homophobic remarks uttered by the school staff. These findings coincide with the evidence from the comparative study between Guatemala, Peru and Chile, conducted by Cáceres & Salazar (2013), who corroborated how micro-aggressions and homophobic bullying persist in schools as a general norm.

In Chile, the studies related to the LGTBI in the school context are scarce. Currently, there are some incipient improvements in making homosexuality visible in schools with a high cultural capital (Astudillo, 2016); in the teachers' exercise in public schools (Julio, Kaeufer, Riquelme, Silva, Osorio & Torres, 2016); and the initial training for teachers at some universities (Salas & Salas, 2016), in which symbolic discrimination is still present and the questioning of what is considered as "normal" sexuality is still not part of open spaces for discussion.

In this scenario, this multiple-case qualitative study sought to understand and analyze the opinions, practice and experiences around the inclusion of LGTBI people and topics by the diverse educational stakeholders at the different selected schools. The objective was to identify concrete practices and actions, and at the same time to understand the meanings and debates present at schools. Through this, it was expected to contribute to the understanding of the conditions that favor or disfavor the treatment of these topics, and in this way, to reflect on the possible current gaps that prevent the advancement in terms of justice of the recognition of the LGTBI population in the school system.

Theoretical Framework

Educational justice and recognition of LGTBI people

School is a privileged place for socialization, where different processes of identification, subjectivation and participation, but also of violence, exclusion and discrimination have an impact on the individual experience.

Fraser & Honeth (2003) define justice as "parity in participation". This means that justice "requires social adjustments that allow all members of society to interact among each other as peers" (p. 36). Then, two necessary conditions to achieve this purpose are defined: the first is related to objective aspects, that is, the material conditions that negate or allow the means and the opportunities for interacting with others as peers, a condition that is associated with the idea of redistributive justice. The second condition is related to intersubjective aspects, that is, cultural patterns which affect the opportunities to achieve the esteem and social status, a dimension associated with the idea of justice of recognition. From this perspective, it is assumed that injustices are "rooted in social patterns of representation, interpretation and communication" (Fraser & Honeth, 2003, p. 13). In particular, this idea of justice has been defended by LGBTI people as a way to make visible the problematics that they face at a social level, one of which corresponds to the school experience. This, because the access to educational spaces does not ensure fair education if the practices and present discourses do not allow male and female students to interact with each other as peers, from an intersubjective dimension and with full recognition of their identities. This would imply that schools should revise critically how the institutional practices and social relationships within them affect the opportunities of the marginalized communities (McDonald & Zeichner, 2009), which historically have endured a lesser social status, as in the case of female and male LGBTI students.

The gaps of recognition in the school environment

Miller (2016) claims that schools need to defend the right to self-assurance in their students concerning their gender identity—also in relation to their sexual orientation—and to be recognized as safe spaces for their development. When the mechanisms through which others are recognized are not appropriate, the possibility of developing a *good* image about oneself is hampered (Miller, 2016). This means that the dynamic that a school displays to protect the recognition of their members possesses a capital importance for their protection. On the contrary, not doing this undermines the possibility for all bodies and identities are understood as possible and legitimate.

From this point of view, to advance in the recognition of LGBTI people supposes that the educational contexts allow the emergence of new cultural codes that include the bodies and sexualities that are different to what has been socially established as normal. For example, the social recognition of cis-gender[3] people presents fewer challenges, because the systems of comprehension and production of gender and sexuality promote a coherent relationship between the binary system (heterosexual/homosexual, masculine/feminine) and the social forms of recognition (Preciado, 2002). For those whose gender identities are outside this binary construction, the individual recognition becomes complex and unequal. Normally, they are wrongly recognized and misunderstood, suffering from a "recognition gap" (Miller, 2016). At the same time, the possibility to develop a positive self-image is hindered, as the negative or different image that others have about the individual is perceived (Borrillo, 2001; Harris-Perry, 2011).

Toomey, Mcguire & Russell (2012) show that male and female students who understand the school as a less secure place are those who identify themselves as gender non-conforming. Besides, there is a clear association between educational spaces perceived as secure, with those schools that include LGBTI topics in their curricula and establish relationships that render gender identity and expressions visible. These alliances strengthen the construction of school communities that delve into values such as democracy and respect, among others (Griffin, Lee, Waugh, & Beyer, 2004; Poteat, Yoshikawa, Calzo, Russell, & Horn, 2017).

Beyond the body, Ramírez & Henríquez (2016) through in-depth analysis of interviews to LGBTI people, show that the exercise of recognition would need categories that are socially-shared and significant, which are perceived, apprehended and assimilated by female and male children and teenagers. To possess notions, although these can be vague, of what the LGBTI acronym stands for, and besides to count on the history of right violations that this represents, it is fundamental to learn and socialize the ways of identity construction, which are different to the heteronormative logic.

The situations of social injustice that LGBTI people face are, in large, product of the strong adherence to the belief of normal heterosexuality and that the body is either male or female (Butler, 2007; De Lauretis, 1989; North, 2006; Pearce & Comming-Potvin, 2017). Tackling the gap in recognition enables the social dynamics to become more flexible, so that the identities of male and female students have a wider horizon to resolve themselves, which has an influence on the decrease of situations of exclusion. Matus & Haye (2015) signal that inclusion policies should be oriented towards the comprehension of how normality is caused in order to distort the norm and put a strain on it to value and welcome difference. From this perspective, to understand that educational spaces must strive towards issues of the recognition of LGBTI people supposes two aspects. First, not only to rethink the cultural patterns with which we have constructed sex, sexuality and the relationship these have with gender, but also to create and promote spaces in which other identities and orientations, different from heteronormativity, can exist (Sumara & Davis, 1999).

Heteronormativity as a hegemonic discourse at school

The gender roles and sexual orientation of people are subjected to disciplinary logics created by the framework of heteronormative cultures. Although gender does not imply a determined sexual orientation (to say that a person identified as trans does not convey information about their sexual orientation), it is culturally expected that the different "types" of bodies are associated to determined sexual orientations. For example, it is not conceivable that a woman's body—regardless of being a trans woman or not—can desire another woman's body. This example allows to understand how the matrix gender/sex is displayed: a *possible* body has an *expected* desire (De Lauretis, 1987). The social interactions are mediated by the regimen of gender and its material implications, which works based on the binary conception. This culture—and by the way school culture—is ordered in binary pairs that suppose that belonging to a gender defines the subjects (Heritier, 2007; Strathern, 1992)[4]. For example, the bathrooms divided by sex provoke body that are generalized under the masculine/feminine duality (Lorber, 2005; Poggio, 2006).

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[3] Cis-gender "refers to all individual whose gender identity does not differ from the sex and gender assigned at birth; those (male and female) who feel comfortable with the sex as which they were born and the gender that society assigns to them as a social convention (Todo Mejora – It Gets Better, 2017, p. 63).

[4] When we use the term 'trans' we refer to the European tradition of the concept. In this, different political fights are grouped together which have the transvestite, transsexual and transgender body at their center (Missé & Galofre, 2015).

At schools, these beliefs derive from cultural codes that are reproduced and sustained in a stable manner through time. Bansel, Denson, Ovenden, & Davies (2014) & Pascoe (2007) have proven that students who identify themselves as LGBTI or that have different bodies than the expected (male feminized bodies, female masculinized bodies, fat bodies, migrant bodies, etc.) face highly rigid resistance, leading them in many cases to quit school. These disciplinary logics are present at schools supported by a hegemonic heteronormative discourse that constructs bodies, notions of normality –epistemological truths about one type of body (Cruz, 2001)—, be it due to lack of visibility of the plurality of bodies, or because of explicit negation of the people's right to be recognized according to their identities and alternative orientations (Miller, 2015).

In light of the above, this article distinguishes between the notions of gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation. The first is defined as:

The individual and internal gender experience of a person that is felt intimately, which can correspond to the assigned sex at birth or not. This includes the personal sense of the body (which can involve, by free option, modification of the appearance or function of their body by medical or surgical procedures, among others) and other expressions, including clothing, way of speaking and gestures (UNESCO, 2017, p. 10).

On the other hand, the expression of gender corresponds to "how a person expresses their own gender to the world, for example, through names, clothing, walking style, ways of speaking, of communicating, of assuming social roles and their behavior (UNESCO, 2017 p. 10). Lastly, sexual orientation is "the capacity of a person to feel deep sexual and emotional attraction towards others, and to have sexual relationship with individuals from a different gender, the same gender or with more than one gender" (UNESCO 2017, p. 12).

Methodology

This study followed a qualitative scope and a methodological approximation of multiple cases which allowed to gather and analyze information contained in territorial, administrative and culturally limited units. Eight cases were analyzed in total, and each one corresponded to a different school. The selection criteria were geographic location, type of school, body of students (mixed or unisex), their either secular or religious orientation and the existence or absence of experience in the inclusion of LGTBI issues. Concerning this last point, four of the schools were selected as they recognized regulatory modifications or LGTBI-oriented inclusion practices. Each case was constructed from the participation in interviews and focus groups with different agents in the school community: Principal (male or female), management team, psychosocial team, teachers (male and female), other school staff, students from 7th grade onwards and parents (male or female). In addition, the school projects and regulations for cohabitation of each school were reviewed. The techniques used for field work were: non-participant observation in school yards and common spaces inside the school; interviews (n = 70) and 17 one-hour long focus groups of 5 or 6 people (n = 96). A semi-structured interview approach was followed. The information was gathered during 6 months throughout 2017. The unit of analysis was the discourse of the interviewed agents, under the premise that they expressed beliefs, practices and experiences concerning the ways of recognizing LGTBI students in the school environment. In order to process collected and transcribed data, content analysis was used, by distinguishing thematic categories for each case that allowed to identify the importance, the tendency and recurrence of the ideas (Cáceres, 2003).

Table 1
Characterization of the 8 cases

Case	School type	Region	Gender	Administration	Orientacion	LGTBI inclusion practices recognized by the school
1	TVET School	Valparaíso	Mixed	Municipal	Secular	YES
2	Primary School	Magallanes	Mixed	Subsidized	Religious	NO
3	Primary and Secondary School	Metropolitana	Men-only	Private	Religious	NO
4	Primary and Secondary School	Metropolitana	Mixed	Private	Secular	YES
5	Primary School	Tarapacá	Mixed	Municipal	Secular	NO
6	TVET School	Araucanía	Mixed	Subsidized	Secular	NO
7	Scientific-Humanistic School	Metropolitana	Women-only	Municipal	Secular	YES
8	Multipurpose School	Biobío	Mixed	Municipal	Secular	YES

Source: Personal elaboration.

This study incorporated the ethical perspective throughout the investigation. Following the recommendations by UNICEF, referring to research with participant children (Graham, Powell, Taylor, Anderson, & Fitzgerald, 2013) we followed an ethical approach that considers that children have specific rights, acknowledging the right to a voice and to vote, and their right to be heard; understanding that this study contributes to improve children's lives at school. From these elements, we established a principle of confidentiality, a field action protocol created by specialists, informed consents and in the case of male and female children (from 7th grade onwards) we also sought the consent of their parents.

Although the research team foresaw a series of possible situations that could affect the interviews (e.g. emotional breakdowns), we faced contingencies that required a degree of reflection and ethical choices. We want to mention two specific examples. First, the male and female researchers faced overexposure of trans children in the context of this study, because in different opportunities, the school presented these cases as examples of inclusive practices, unnecessarily exposing the students in most cases. Due to this, we reflected to understand why this was happening and what we could do to minimize the exposure. The other instance is about how to deal with homophobic remarks by some agents, especially when these were uttered in front of other people (in group interviews or focus groups). Although this technique allows the same group to find containment mechanism for this, it occurred in a group that homophobic remarks were expressed in front of a homosexual person who, once the focus group was over, publicly declared his sexual orientation to the school for the first time. This situation opened an invitation for reflection in different degrees. First, to consider the consequences that this can have for a participant in the focus group, to the point of deciding to reveal their sexual orientation at the school they work; secondly, to rethink the role of the (male or female) researcher when racist, homophobic or similar remarks are expressed among the participants. Thirdly, to think of the actions that must be followed to contain the potential effects that this can cause. In this particular case, we opted for creating a space for individual interviews with the affected participant, so that they could share their own story. Besides, we later contacted the school to follow-up on the person and to deliver relevant information concerning the ministerial regulations for these issues.

Results and Discussion

In this section, we present some of the transversal and relevant findings of this study for the eight schools analyzed.

The unequal recognition of LGBTI identities

The schools that were analyzed in this study show the social and cultural heterogeneity that is present in the country about LGBTI issues. In this regard, the distinctions in their discourse about what it means to be a LGTBI person are eloquent, according to the cultural and social capital of each school. Likewise, there is discursive heterogeneity within the schools that is mostly expressed in the age difference of the individuals.

The initial question for all agents was if they knew what the LGTBI acronym stood for. The results indicate that the gay and lesbian identities are more known than bisexual, trans and intersexual identities, as these were observed to be confused by the participants. At other schools, the participants mistook gender and sexual orientation. In a more general sense. More globally, the communities that were better informed about these issues are in Santiago and Valparaíso, corresponding to high schools from the middle and upper sectors. On the other hand, the less-informed communities are found in the more isolated zones of the country, and comparatively, they teach students from a low socioeconomic background.

The agents with a higher cultural capital understand that topics of sexual diversity are inscribed in a process of wider cultural changes that can be addressed at schools. Female and male students then expressed a reflective and political dispositions that allows them to have a critical look at their school, family and social environment (cases 3, 4 and 7). Some of these students even criticized the acronym as they considered it incomplete as it did not allude to LGTBIQ+. Knowing the meaning of the acronym is also present in teachers (male and female), managers (male and female) and parents, who access different knowledge sources and networks. This allows to denounce the privilege of heterosexuality and to assert respect towards the sexual and gender differences as an expression of democracy. This does not mean that groups with a lesser cultural or economic capital cannot develop the same perspectives. It means that, considering the segregation that characterizes the Chilean educational system, institutions that concentrate a determined type of individuals have a higher or lower tendency to establish a complex discourse about sexual diversity. This becomes clearer when the groups are more isolated from the big cities and are less selective of their students (cases 2, 5 and 6), when their discourse about sexual and gender diversity admit the existence of "sexually different" people. Nevertheless, they do not mobilize the subtleties and distinctions that the trans, homo, bi and intersexual identities suppose. "They are also people, they are human beings that deserve all of our dignity and respect" (case 5, teachers, focus group).

The use of the concept of "respect" allows to incorporate individuals defines as different, strange, abnormal, without problematizing the intrinsic distinction that defines them as different. The construction of 'them' instead of an 'us' can take two forms: one, to consider the LGBTI identities as part of a 'difference', which joins other axes of distinction such as migrant children, children with special educational needs or priority students. Second, to neutralize any tag through the statement that 'we are all equal', which presumes that the presentation of one self should separate from any mention of personal sexuality. In both cases, the way of producing the difference is left invisible. This situation is common to all the analyzed schools, even those who have implemented inclusive practices for sexual diversity.

I: Do you feel that among your duties, both inside and outside the classroom, you are supporting and contributing to the male and female students closer to sexual diversity?

T1: Yes, by respecting [them?]

T2: Sure, with how we treat them, the mutual respect that one has.

T3: Yes, and demanding from them the same as from other students. Not making a difference because they have a different condition, treating them differently, but there are general rules for harmonious

coexistence that we teach to every student… If somebody treats them, it is like they were segmented, a smaller group and there I would make the difference, I think (case 1, focus group for teachers)[5].

The only exception to this rule is found in case 7 – public school in Santiago—where the use of vocabulary and specific knowledge about LGBTI matters is, mostly by students, accompanied by practices that foster the identification of cis-gender identities and problematize the limits of queer identities.

School "Inclusion Milestones": the presence of trans children

This lack of visibility of the ways to reproduce difference is linked to the way in which LGBTI issues are made visible at school. In fact, most of the times, when schools are mixed, different statements show that homosexuality is made visible predominantly through the identification of "feminine boys". In rare cases – except at women-only schools—there is reference to the case of "masculine girls". In general terms, there are discourses that emphasize the idea that homosexual behavior is something that belongs to the private, in which masculinized or feminized behavior become, in the end, insinuations of something that is not completely visible in the public space.

It is maybe because of this that experiences of gender transition that some students start to experiment during their time at school become a significant milestone for different schools. Systemically, and by different agents, this type of events was presented to the research team as a novel situation, different from the other experiences that previously occurred at the school. A student's transition achieves a central value to structure a series of discourses about how each school works. From this perspective, the cases of trans students are milestones for inclusion practices, which articulate a discourse of tense tolerance: it is politically correct to accept the transition, but this should be treated individually, carefully and without questioning other practices where difference is produced, such as the use of school uniform and the differentiation expected behavior from men and women:

It took me a while that here in the school people realized that Alex was Alex and not Gloria. Because she never liked to wear a skirt, never, it was difficult to dress him… In the second year, I opted for buying him all the men's school uniform, but they complained a lot and I told them: "he feels more comfortable" (case 1, individual interview to a mother).

The cases for gender transition produce a differentiation between schools that have faced these situations and those which have not. The issue of sexual diversity is discussed in other ways, as it is, implies not only to attend to the person in question, but also to surpass a private barrier to transform the public space: here it is possible to mention the use of bathrooms, the participation in artistic and sport-related activities and wearing the school uniform, where somehow schools are forced to adopt a stricter stance on these topics.

The role of the school agents in the development of actions for inclusion

The politization of the LGBTI discourse was only visible in three of the eight cases (cases 1, 2 and 7) where this was seen in the questioning of the structure of discrimination and the asymmetries that arise from the norms of the heteronormative and patriarchal sex/gender system. In other words, the discourse from the students, management team, and some teachers and parents of these schools not only showed an adequate conceptual handling about sexual and gender diversity, but also, promoted spaces of active criticism towards the current gender roles structure:

We are animals, we evolve and in variability, there is the triumph of evaluation…, for me, that there are people who are different is natural and has always happened. Sadly, when societies organize themselves, there is a group who determines what is normal… In the social sphere, there is also the possibility that we develop ourselves and that we continue evolving according to how society is being developed (case 7, parents' focus group).

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[5]   I = Interviewer; T1 = Teacher 1; T2 = Teacher 2; T3 = Teacher 3

That said, the practices proposed by the school to address the topic of LGTBI identities tend to be found outside the classroom and the formal curriculum. Some common practices for inclusion in the analyzed schools are related to adjustments to the school uniforms or restrooms, and although these initiatives still operate under the binary gender framework (man/woman), these are less and less frequently observed, being a result of discussion and/or decision at the institutional level.

In contrast, we observed less advancement in the formal curriculum and classroom practices. For example, the curriculum for Biology addresses gender and sexuality in the section for human reproduction, although there are not major differences between the different analyzed cases. In the words of one of these teachers:

It has been a bit difficult, I explain to them the aspect of reproduction and I explain to them that I have to talk about man and women because it is the possibility that I see for reproduction, I do not speak about gender, because what they identify as, I cannot explain, I can talk about how to maintain the human species o about biological reproduction…, it does not imply a feeling or any of those things (case 1, teacher interview).

Alluding to what Le Mat (2014) states, this implies that the privilege that heterosexuality has is maintained in the curricular dimension. In parallel, most of the times, it was observed that addressing LGTBI identities was subject to initiatives of a more individual character, that is to say, to the specific will of certain teachers. Here, the strategies considered: including, in the Language classes, books that showed LGBTI characters in the starring role; organizing debates around recognizing non-heterosexual sexualities in certain subjects; an artistic intervention in public spaces at the school or increasing the flexibility of separating gender in certain extracurricular workshops and sport-related activities, among others.

The study allowed to identify the existence of profiles of teachers who favor this type of experiences for LGTBI inclusion. In most cases, this corresponds to teachers who are relatively young and open-minded to the requirement of male and female students. Their openness to address these topics in the curriculum can be explained, in part, as they teach subjects like Arts or English, which are perceived to be 'less supervised', compared to other subjects which are assessed in national-scale tests (SIMCE), like Language, Science or Mathematics. Nonetheless, the individual character of practice could affect its stability through time.

Likewise, the repercussions concerning the diversity of gender and sexuality expression that are addressed in these less supervised classes are tensioned by other subject in which the topics are not present, or, openly criticized: for example, in case 5, where there are negative opinions towards LGTBI diversity in the class for Religious studies. Although students acknowledge that there are close male and female teachers, "allies", when they need to express or confide their worries, which always happens in a space that is not related to the formal learning curriculum.

The role of Principal

Despite the challenges that persist when addressing LGTBI topics in the curriculum and in teaching practices, the role of the school directors (male and female) has been crucial, as their presence is an agent that can establish new regulation on these topics inside the school environment. In these cases, there are leaderships that operate under inclusive principles, oriented towards improving the wellbeing and security conditions of their students, and favoring a collegial reflection concerning the rights of female and male children and teenagers. This reading cannot ignore the formal authority that principals have within the schools, characterized by an exercise of hierarchal power. Nonetheless, other factors such as the political training of the individual (for example, case 7) and/or the reflective look about the religious conception of the school (for example, case 2) seem to have a significant influence on this topic. On the other hand, the decisions made by these principals are not a direct consequence of national regulations: most of the times, the (male and female) principals appeal to sort of common sense which prompts them to consider the role of the school as a space that protects:

D: At school, the first thing students look for to feel safe are teachers, but if those teachers are making the same mistake or violent attitudes the classmates are exercising, the child feels devastated inside the

school… when I leave my son at school, I hope he is safe, and that the grownups who are in charge of his education, make him feel safe.

D: we are heading there, we are just starting, in a pretentious way we could call ourselves an inclusive school, and when we really started to analyze everything that implied, we realized… we were not even starting… Here, we have been learning out of common sense and good judgment rather than professional instruction. We voluntarily have been looking for an answer for our students, we have asked for help. We have been looking for training, we have opened the discussion inside the teacher's council, and not only for teachers, but for all of the people who work here, because the problems do not originate from the students, but from the grownups working with them. Because of political and religious tendencies, discrimination exists in a high school whose educational project is inclusion (case 1, principal interview).

Regulations - Anti-discrimination Law N° 20,609 and Circular N° 0768 (Superintendence of Education) - are used to support actions which have been previously launched from the school's administration. These legislations aim to answering the students' requests regarding their personal appearance and respect regarding their social name, instructions for restrooms use, guaranteeing the observation of the school coexistence manual, and encouraging students' organization regarding sexual and gender diversity, among others. Moreover, actions carried out in order to train the school internally (psychologists' team) or external (such as, Fundacion Renacer or Pastoral de la Diversidad Sexual) are remarkable, working the LGBTI topic with teachers, students and/or parents.

Avant-garde schools, in terms of introduction to LGTBI topics in the formal curriculum, have developed alphabetization processes about the subject. Due to the general functioning of the educational system, the possibility of choosing within the frames of the institutional values of each school, raises the question about how there is no guarantee that the matter will be always approached from the same perspective (Palma, Reyes, & Moreno, 2013). For these schools, the approach of the LGTBI topic was carried out by the actor who was in charge of the training process and the networks to which the school had access to. In all cases, school curriculum and classroom practices were seldom posed as an issue. The training process was oriented towards raising awareness in the school community, working with conceptual aspects to modify beliefs and/or to support the school and their professional teams to face any particular situation (sexual abuse, homophobic bullying, gender transition, etc.).

School principals are the main actors when it comes to creating expression and information spaces, supporting teachers for them to be able to incorporate LGTBI topics in the curriculum. However, this illustrates how inclusive policies rely on specific people, and that this leadership leans on individual charisma rather than teaching policies inside each educational institution, which jeopardizes practicability of such practices that, although emergent, are an expression of progress for the LGTBI community.

Conclusions

Results show that the Chilean school system is going through changes in terms of recognition of LGTBI identities, which goes hand by hand with social changes that society has experimented as a whole. Opening towards diversity, as well as inclusion policies have moved school actors who have incorporated reflections about diversity and what is different in their speech. From this perspective, the study evidences moving speeches that, depending on social class, gender, territory, educational background, political experience, religious beliefs and age, possess complex information, more or less close experiences to the topic with very different levels of reflexibility.

However, this progress is not able to transform the most structural bases of the dominant gender system in our societies, which makes reaching deep transformations difficult in regard of recognition and gender identities and sexual orientation as an inconvenient affecting specific individual without problematizing that it reinforces the idea of normality in regards of the sex/gender system. Facing this, inclusion would work as an assimilation process more than as an effective dialogue space to make the difference, that is to say, associated to a redistributive justice approach, and not to a recognition process (Fraser & Honeth, 2003).

This instability of the recognition is clear in the example of the irruption of trans identities in different schools. The experience of having trans children alters the school culture, generating discussion allowing several actors to re-elaborate their speech in front of gender identities, which would assume an estrangement with the current binary system (Butler, 2007). However, we have also observed that in many of these cases, transit experimented by children in order to adequate their gender identify to their biological sex, ends up strengthening the binary system, returning to the feminine/masculine order. Trans category, as an expression which breaks the binary comprehension, s hard to understand, recognize and accept.

With homosexuality and other sexual orientations, a similar process occurs: except for specific situations, the community acceptance is possible only if it remains in the private (Le Mat, 2014). In other words, it is about visible identities, which have become invisible. In this way, the understanding we identified among the actors, regarding the meanings of gender identity and sexual orientation are still confusing and ambiguous in several cases, and do not usually problematize cis and heterosexual identities. Also, a very clear frontier is built between that which is private, and that does not belong in the school space.

Contrarily, different dynamics or agencies amongst high school students are appreciated. On the one hand, a "cultural agency" is recognized associated to the students' social class, expressed in a more universal knowledge, judgeless, which shows comprehension of the gender identities positioning within a more progressive society; and, by a different "political agency", related to the ability of raising organics around gender and LGTBI topics, which is thought collectively questioning the bases of a heteronormative culture. On the other hand, presence of a "passive agency" is also noticed, which is clearly expressed in individuals in exclusion and marginality conditions in relation to Santiago or around the capital, which, despite recognizing sexual and gender diversities between peers, neutralize and experiment aggression and discrimination every day. Nonetheless, in any case, question about how such school agency is able to break the existent inertia is still raised, due to the pedagogical relationships being still supported on a political asymmetry in relation to the adults (Rollin, 2012).

We consider that the difficulties do not prevent from recognizing progress. The four schools who claim to have inclusive practices in LGTBI related topics are the expression of what justice as recognition has begun to provoke in the school actors (Fraser & Honeth, 2003), although the issue remains on now to strengthen these processes. Schools which have made protocols for inclusion of trans students, have managed to establish a network with organizations of the civil society, which have students' communities that pressure for the right to recognition of sexual diversity. However, very often, speeches express individual opinions, or, do not have impact in the transformation of teaching ways, or in criticizing a curriculum which does not show the experiences of diverse bodies and identities.

The importance of moving forward in justice as recognition

From the point of view of educational justice, Connell (2006) points out that equal recognition of the individuals and the way in which "good" behind education is perceived is a basic condition to improve the quality of the whole system. All of us are harmed if we are left behind, says the author. This statement applies to school coexistence and also to the way in which explicit and hidden curriculum is organized in schools. As François Dubet (2013) mentions, the school institution is experiencing the paradox of conceiving its students as equal, when all of the time is differentiating them according to its self-imposed mission of "certifying" the students' merit. Probably because of this, the school space is a proper place for the development of social labeling processes lacking reflection: matters such as gender and sexual identity – both social markers of difference – constitute articulatory categories of the school experience (Ahmed, 2012).

Inclusion policies in Chile have generated conditions to encourage some sort of sensitivity towards the idea of diversity in students, but it coexists with a notion of normality as a pattern of behavior which, in this study, focuses in the hegemony of a heteronormative speech, mainly in adults, accepting sexual diversity as long as its manifestations remain private, not breaking the logic of the masculine/feminine binarism. In this sense, educational policies offer general directions regarding gender and sexual orientation identities, but still in a very abstract discourse which shows some progress in social aspects, without having an impact in teaching practices.

The matter of mutual recognition is, thus, fundamental. Tension between school practices and social changes expressed in educational policies guidelines, implies that still, conditions for students to be able to count with real stories and curricular experiences in order to progress in multiple ways of recognition of themselves do not exist. In this way, the study evidences that informative and formative strategies are needed to progress in the materialization of these demands with the purpose of reaching higher levels of educational justice.

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