

Teacher Education and LGBTIQ+ Subjectivities: International perspectives

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This paper reports on an international project that explores the higher educational experiences of LGBTIQ+ teacher education students in their final year of study, both in university and as they enter the profession. The study draws from data across 5 international contexts: Australia, Canada, Ireland, Sweden, and the USA to document the hopes, anxieties, and fears of LGBTIQ+ educators about to enter the profession. The project examines the extent to which LGBTIQ+ identities and issues are addressed within teacher education programmes in each national context, as well as the equity and diversity policies that underpin this work. The research also pays attention to BIPOC LGBTIQ+ teacher education student experiences. The research team worked with focus groups across contexts and facilitated conversations, questions, and responses between participant groups located in all 5 contexts. In this way, a support network between participants was developed.

Using a queer theoretical framework, this paper reports on initial findings from the data, focusing upon Australian participants located in Victoria and NSW and illustrates the tensions, hopes, and ambitions that shape the experiences of final year LGBTIQ+ teacher education students. The paper reflects upon teacher education as part of the government's recent Jobs Ready Graduates scheme and questions who is made welcome within the profession. As well as this, the paper will provide a broad overview of the literature in the field and demonstrate that while research on LGBTIQ+ in-service teachers is a well-established and vibrant field, little research has been carried out with LGBTIQ+ teacher education students. Therefore, little is known about the experiences of LGBTIQ+ teacher education students or their experiences of entering the profession.

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