

A safe space?

Students' experiences and perceptions of the Dutch
university climate

By Anouk Kruizinga

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Supervisor Prof. Dirk Strijker

Preface

Although The Netherlands is generally perceived as a tolerant country, some incidents reported in the media imply that there is still a certain anti-gay bias existing in society. Research on this topic in literature is extremely limited, and appears to not extend into the academic context. As a student of the University of Groningen I noticed myself the absence of any conversation or display of the topic within the university setting. Henceforth, this current thesis presents the experiences and perceptions of 86 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) and 427 heterosexual domestic and international students of the faculty climate of the Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB) of the University of Groningen.

The research aim was to explore the current situation at the faculty, and develop strategies for the climate to become increasingly inclusive for LGBTQ students. After immersing myself in the literature on LGBTQ issues and spending many hours on the data collection and analysis, I am proud to say; “before you lies the thesis which marks the end of my Master of Science Cultural Geography”.

The completion of this thesis would not have been possible without the guidance, support and encouragement of many individuals. I would like to thank the Cultural Geography department of the University of Groningen, for allowing me to peruse not only this master, but also a second master in Economics. A special thank you goes to my supervisor Professor Dirk Strijker, who has been incredibly patient as well as helpful in the development of this thesis.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to all whom have been brave enough to share their stories in the survey or focus groups. Their expressions are at the core of this thesis, and will hopefully extend into a more positive university climate for all future students.

Furthermore, my sincere thanks extend to my friends and family, for listening, inspiring and keeping me going.

Anouk Kruizinga

Abstract

This thesis is a faculty wide study exploring the faculty climate, based on survey data collected from a sample of 86 LGBTQ and 427 heterosexual students from the Faculty of Economics and Business of the University of Groningen. The findings show that despite the general view of The Netherlands as being progressive towards the LGBTQ community, homophobia on campus remains a significant problem. Both international and domestic LGBTQ students do not perceive nor experience the faculty as a 'safe space' that is open about discussing sexual orientation/gender identity. Enhancing these feelings are the high levels of masculinity and heteronormativity displayed at the faculty, a distinct public-private distinction, and the lack of conversation on the topic. Due to the absence of the topic in conversation both international and domestic students refrain from being openly out on the faculty. Based on the data three categories of actions are identified in order to improve the inclusiveness of LGBTQ students at the faculty: show visible support, facilitate conversation, and include LGBTQ issues in the curriculum.

Key words: Diversity, Inclusivity, University climate, LGBTQ students

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Glossary

Please note that definitions/meanings of terms are often contested and change over time. The terms are often utilized differently in different texts such as those paraphrased in the background section. The following definitions relate to what the terms mean in this particular research study. These terms are based on their use in recent literature, with the understanding that individuals might experience these terms as limiting and therefore may choose to use other self-identifying terms. Please take this writing in the spirit with which it is written – to be helpful.

- **Bisexual:** Refers to people who are sexually attracted to both sexes, i.e. both males and females.
- **Coming Out:** There are many and varied definitions of coming out. In this thesis the term coming out is used to refer to the person declaring their homosexuality or same sex attraction to themselves or others, such as family, friends, peers, community, and lastly, to the public.
- **FEB:** The acronym for ‘Faculty of Business and Economics’.
- **Gay:** Refers to homosexuals and lesbians. Most lesbians prefer the term lesbian, and gay is more commonly used to denote the male relationship.
- **Gender:** Socially constructed behavioral characteristics attributed to being male or female, i.e. roles, expectations, norms and behavior.
- **Homophobia:** A fear or hatred towards homosexuals, gay and/or lesbians.
- **Homosexual:** The term used to denote all people who are sexually attracted to members of the same sex.
- **Intersex:** The term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't seem to fit the typical definitions of female or male.
- **Lesbian:** The term lesbian is used to denote women who self-identify as emotionally or sexually attracted to other women.
- **LGBT:** The acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered

- **LGBTQ:** The acronym utilized in some research where Q stands for Queer, Questioning, Intersex and all other sexual identities not otherwise specified.
- **Queer:** A term used as an umbrella term for something “strange” or out of the ordinary, which is also used as an adjective to refer to any people who transgress traditional distinctions of gender, regardless of their self-defined gender identity, or who "queer" gender.
- **Questioning:** Identifies those people who are still uncertain in regards to their sexual orientation.
- **Safe space:** A positive (university) climate which is supportive and affirming of all people regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.
- **Sexual Minority:** A term utilized for all groups who do not identify with the dominant heterosexual or gender norms.
- **Sexual Orientation:** The direction of a person’s sexuality relative to their own sex. Usually classified according to the sex of the person one finds sexually attractive.
- **Sexuality:** Sexual feelings or behaviors and the expression of physical or psychological sexual relationships.
- **Transgendered:** A term used to describe people who may act, feel, think, or look different from the gender that they were born with. Often the term the collective word for individuals for whom the term ‘man’ or ‘woman’ is not matter of course.

Chapter I. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

While diversity is one of the most talked about issues in many organizations and public institutions, planned actions as well as the outcomes in this area are heavily debated. Traditionally, most studies and practices have focused on a single dimension of diversity (e.g., gender, race, or age), often taking place in the domestic and United States context (Shore et al., 2009). However, in a world which is globalizing at an accelerating speed, the need to create a new set of paradigms is apparent. Over the past two decades research and public policy have slowly shifted towards a broader definition of diversity, in which aspects such as psychological variables (individual values, beliefs and attitudes), socio-economic background, physical abilities, and sexual orientation are being incorporated (e.g., Colgan, Creegan, McKearney & Wright, 2007; Hartas, 2011; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2010; Robinson & Dechant, 1997; Stone, 2010). Despite the expanding conceptualization, knowledge about feelings of inclusiveness, and effective ways to foster this new, broader, concept of diversity remain notably absent.

Research has shown that experiences at university have strong effects on students' lives, and therefore at society at large (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). In this phase of their life young adults develop a greater sense of intellectual and interpersonal competences and ideally grow as individuals (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). A growth which is found to influence the production and transgression of public spaces (Valentine, 1996). Simultaneously, it is theorized to be a period during which they are adapting to the complexities of interpersonal relationships and social norms (Blakemore & Mills, 2014; Knoll, Magis-Weinberg, Speekenbrink & Blakemore, 2015). Therefore, the need to discuss diversity and inclusivity seems especially important for this group in society.

When it comes to universities and their environment - which are progressively hosting more diverse student populations - one of the most discussed topics in relation to diversity

is the university environment or campus climate (Shenkle, Synder & Baer, 1998). The campus climate is seen as an important antecedent of feelings of inclusiveness (Higa et al., 2014), hence active implementation of diversity policy in this environment can foster inclusiveness, and thereby induce positive feelings about the climate amongst the entire student population (Ellis, 2009). These feelings of inclusiveness are highly important for peer socialization as well as for individual well-being (Higa et al., 2014; Rankin, 2005).

Research on inclusivity at universities in countries such as the United States of America, the United Kingdom and New Zealand have revealed that marginalized groups such as international students or sexual minorities often perceive the school climate as a hostile environment (Ellis, 2009; Rowell, 2016; Rankin, 2005; Renn, 2010). These two dimensions of diversity - internationalization and sexual diversity - are becoming increasingly important, where recent trends imply that this group is due to grow significantly. Induced by an ongoing globalization and internationalization students are increasingly willing to travel for higher education, which in the future will lead to more diverse student populations than ever before (Knight, 2007a; Varghese, 2008). For example, in the Netherlands universities are seeing a high growth in the number of different nationalities in their student populations, not solely due to the multicultural society, but also as a result of a growth of 58.000 international students in 2013 to 122.000 in 2018 (Venema, 2018).

Nowadays, we see that the internationalization goes beyond the mere language taught, and rather encompasses the whole *“process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution”* (Knight, 1994 in Knight 2007b). Notably, the acceptance of sexual nonconformity, or sexual minorities differ significantly across countries and between individuals (Kuntz, Davidov, Schwartz & Schmidt, 2015). These different views on matters of (homo) sexuality often meet in public places such as universities, which can cause severe friction between individuals belonging to different groups (Span & Vidal, 2003). Although student populations are due to grow and diversify considerably, knowledge on the inclusiveness of the combination of the two dimensions of diversity (i.e. being both an international student and belonging to sexual minorities) is lacking in research. Furthermore, diversity policy of

universities is generally narrowly defined, often concentrated around the traditional definition of diversity in gender, race and age, and neglecting other dimensions of diversity. Together with the absence of online material on the topic, one may question whether conversations on the topic are (actively) taking place. An issue which is also reflected in literature, where Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) rights and issues are both normative and empirically under-researched areas.

Henceforth, the purpose of the current research is to explore the state of the current university climate as experienced by domestic and international LGBTQ students, specifically in the context of The Netherlands. A country which is characterized by strong diversity, as reflected throughout the national media (Koeman, Peeters & D'Haenens, 2005). The output of this study will provide a basis for development of diversity policy to effectively enhance an inclusive environment for sexual minority students, and ultimately improve university climate and students' well-being as a whole. As a starting point, this thesis will explore the perceptions and experiences of domestic and international LGBTQ students through an examination of the situation at the University of Groningen, located in the north of The Netherlands. This will be done by means of a questionnaire and focus group sessions with groups of students. The responses of LGBTQ students will be compared to those responses of heterosexual students. Subsequently, this research will delve deeper into the internationalization dimension and compare the answers of domestic and international students, with the goal of identifying points of needed attention for diversity policy towards an inclusive university and faculty climate.

1.2 Context and Financing

The University of Groningen has a highly diverse student population, with a total share of 7.000 international students from a total of 31.000 students (1 October, 2018) (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 2018). Over the years various academic initiatives and institutional actions have been introduced, in order to gain more insight and progress towards a state of inclusiveness. The International Classroom Project, as a part of the Bachelor of Science International Business, recently started research on diversity and inclusiveness, and aims to drive conversations on a wide range of topics.

One topic in which the University of Groningen is lacking knowledge is their LGBTQ community and their inclusiveness, which is reason budget was found to investigate this topic. Hence, the International Classroom Project contributed resources to the focus group sessions, which will yield an advice report for the faculty at the end of the project. It should be noted that, although the data gathering was initiated by the International Classroom Project, this thesis is an independent product employing this database. For this thesis, separate and systematic analysis took place, in which the researcher treated objectively from any prior readings or findings.

Although there seems great drive to achieve an inclusive environment at the University of Groningen, only little is known about LGBTQ students' experiences and perceptions of the campus climate. Issues on the matter are often only signalled in private offices of general student confidentiality employees, at moments when students initiate conversations about the topic. In order to properly address issues of inclusiveness and safe space creation, however, there is a need to measure the current campus climate as perceived by the student population. This could be measured by means of a campus climate survey, as developed and employed by researchers such as Rankin (2005) and Ellis (2009).

1.3 Research Questions

The central research question of this research is defined as follows:

How is the campus climate in The Netherlands perceived by LGBTQ students, and how can this climate be improved?

In order to answer the central research question, several sub-research questions have been formulated:

1. *What is the scope of current diversity policy in Dutch universities?*
2. *How is the Dutch campus climate perceived by international and domestic LGBTQ students?*
3. *How do the perceptions and experiences of the campus climate differ between LGBTQ and heterosexual students?*
4. *How do the perceptions and experiences of the campus climate differ for domestic and international LGBTQ students?*

5. *Which policies and/or actions can be implemented to improve the campus climate?*

1.4 Limitations

Although a campus climate survey can be replicated anywhere on earth, what cannot be assessed is the variety of factors that lead to the perceptions of the campus climate of every individual student (Baker, 2008). Additional focus group sessions may grasp different additional important elements of the campus climate, however might not reveal all relevant factors. External factors such as the political climate, a multicultural student population and the current national actions involving the LGBTQ community might have an effect on the perceptions of the faculty climate. Not long before this research a public debate took place on same-sex visuals in media, after the company Suitsupply advertised their clothing with two men kissing. Some of these advertisements (in the form of posters) have been vandalized, which caused further debate on the topic that could have impacted students' perceptions regarding the acceptance of LGBTQ people both in society and at university. It should also be noted that this research is focused on, and solely reflecting the perceptions of the climate of a single faculty in The Netherlands. Further national survey should be run in order to evaluate university perceptions throughout The Netherlands.

Chapter II. Background

2.1 Diversity in organizations

To understand diversity issues in the academic context, it is essential to understand the matter in the wider context of organizational structures. Since the 1990s, business literature has had a strong focus on the value of diversity in organizations. Researchers and practitioners emphasize that – especially in working teams – differences in gender, age, and ethnicity can improve team dynamics and overall performance outcomes (Cox & Blake, 1991; Ely & Thomas, 2001; Jackson & Runderman, 1995; Shore et al., 2009). The general assumption which underlies this theory is that an increase in diversity means that working teams will experience possible positive effects such as: constructive conflict and debate, an increased understanding of different cultures/ethnicities, and increased creativity. From a business perspective diversity can simultaneously function to foster a better public image, and thereby increase fundability of projects (Stone, 2010). From an extended social perspective it can enhance cooperation and capacity for creative problem solving through individuals' different perspectives, foster an inclusive environment, and ultimately enhance individuals' well-being (Higa et al., 2014; Rankin, 2005; Reagans & Zuckerman, 2001). Conversely, negative aspects of team diversity addressed include communication difficulties, misunderstandings, decreased cohesion and increased conflict (Staples & Zhao, 2006). These process losses generally result in decreased performance and satisfaction (Lau & Murnighan, 1998; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998). Theories such as social identity theory, social categorization theory and the similarity/attraction paradigm suggests that negative effects associated with diversity arise due to the formation of in-groups and out-groups (Carte & Chidambaram, 2004).

Since the late-1990s both research and organizational actions moved beyond the traditional conceptualizations of diversity - which typically centres around visible identities such as gender, age and ethnicity - and started to include various other aspects such as psychological variables (individual values, beliefs and attitudes) (Jackson & Runderman, 1995; Stone, 2010), socio-economic background (Hartas, 2011), physical abilities

(Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2010), and sexual orientation (Colgan et al., 2007; Robinson & Dechant, 1997).

Parallel to the broadening view of diversity, a stream of LGBTQ rights emerged in discussions on human rights. Here, for example, Amnesty International (perhaps the most well-known international rights group) decided to include gay men and women in their organizational mandate. This happened only in 1991, after 15 years of perpetual demonstrations and lobbying by demonstration groups. Simultaneously, we see that organizations and their Human Resource Management departments more actively try to incorporate structures for coordination of equal employment opportunity (Janssens & Zanoni, 2014; Konrad & Linnehan, 1995). By means of actions such as formalized procedures, networking, training, and mentoring organizations try to foster equality (Janssens & Zanoni, 2014; Kulk & Robinson, 2008).

Some suggest, however, that modern corporate culture and professionalization in organization promotes diversity in narrow and predictable ways. Researchers (Janssens & Zanoni, 2014; Linnehan & Konrad, 1999; Noon, 2010; Renn, 2010) have found many actions to be ineffective, or even counterproductive to the extent that they reinforce existing stereotypes, prevail meritocracy, or exacerbate the majority's resistance or hostility towards minorities. The claim goes that money is often allocated to programs which are fundable and visible, rather than to those that are messy and unpredictable. Here, it is often said that lack of opportunity, ideological commitment, or a focus on "doing the right thing" raises concerns about these projects function as mere tokenism (David, 2009; Robinson & Dechant, 1997; Stone, 2010). Robinson and Dechant (1997) noted that diversity integration requires long-term organizational commitment, and the return on its investment (i.e. the outcome) is often not as tangible or predictable as other investment (e.g., product development) might be. As companies are often focused on business practices and survival, it is even more important that organizations are intrinsically motivated and genuinely committed to these projects.

An alternative reason why organizations often neglect to thoroughly address matters of diversity seems to be their lack of knowledge on how to correctly approach of these issues. In their publication *'Public duty and private prejudice: sexualities equalities and local*

government' Richardson and Moro (2013) discuss the so-called 'public-private distinction'. This distinction translates to the common views on what is publicly shared, and which topics typically belong in the private. Traditionally, matters such as sex and homosexuality were located in the private, which means that the topic was eminent absent in public discourse. Furthermore, we see a growing emphasis on 'sameness' rather than 'difference' in the current dominant political discourse on human rights. In a world where the focus on individualism grows, there is a growing belief that equality is based on equal treatment between groups (Hernández-Truyol, 2002; Mégret, 2008). Hence, no specific attention should be dedicated to one single group (e.g., LGBTQ people) while neglecting others (e.g., heterosexual people). Again others perceive acceptance as the norm today, hence do not see the need for actions focused on inclusiveness (Graaf & Sandfort, 2000; Van Wijk, van de Meerendonk, Bakker & Vanwesenbeeck, 2005). Altogether, these findings manifests in the common belief that no project should be directed towards one single group of individuals. This trend, together with the absence of a solid business case, which is to my knowledge currently still missing, contributes to why organizational investment and commitment is often lacking (Robinson & Dechant, 1997).

2.2 Diversity in the learning environment

As becomes apparent, matters of diversity are highly relevant for organizations generally. Similarly, research reveal the importance of diversity matters for educational institutions in specific. Schools are, after workplaces, the main site where discrimination or other forms of negative reactions take place (Keuzenkamp, 2012). At an accelerating pace, globalization is shaping the future world, one in which today's youth plays a major role. Recent publications on the state of undergraduate and graduate education identify the incorporation of diversity in the general education curriculum (Laird & Engberg, 2011) and have addressed the challenges in meeting the needs of this ever more diverse student population (Dwertmann, Nishii & Van Knippenberg, 2016; Knight, 2007b; Whittet al., 2001; Zhao, 2010). Because, more than ever before, we find that higher education institutions in Western countries contain an increasingly socially and culturally diverse student population (Knight, 2007a, 2007b; Varghese, 2008). The changes that come along

with these global trends pose challenges upon, and have implications for teachers and organizations of higher education (Carroll & Ryan, 2007; Zhao, 2010) as well as the students themselves (Andrade, 2006; Wu, Garza & Guzman, 2015). Not only are students affected by personal adjustment challenges, but they are also faced with challenges on their ability to cope with the social transition to a new and diverse environment (Kantanis, 2000). Factors such as an individuals' social network (Rienties et al., 2012), language proficiency, (Andrade, 2009), or distance from home (Xu, de Bakker, Strijker & Wu, 2015) affect the students' perceptions and experiences. In addition, Astin (1993) found that the faculty – as component of the university - has a strong impact on students where the most important element is the environment created by the faculty and its students.

Education is a future-oriented business, where it aims to prepare today's youth for the future. This environment can be actively enhanced by university or faculty initiated actions. Ottentitter (1998) notes that universities and faculties can be assessed, and hence be held accountable, for the three functional domains: education, services, and policies and procedures. Research has shown that universities can stimulate an inclusive environment through incorporating highly diverse actions, which should encompass all dimensions of the institution as well as students experiences (Whitt et al, 2001). Ways to address issues of diversity in universities and influence student's openness to diversity encompass amongst others: the organization of racial and cultural awareness workshops, curricular content which is relevant to openness to diversity, and offering a wide range of activities in which students can engage in meaningful interaction with their peers on topics which are challenging their previously held ideas and beliefs (Whitt et al. 2001).

2.3 The significance of the learning environment

In students' lives both direct and indirect experiences contribute to the overall perception of the campus and its climate. Rankin (2005) defined campus climate as "*the cumulative attitudes, behaviours and standards of employees and students concerning access for, inclusion of, and level of respect for individual and group needs, abilities and potential*"(p. 17). By means of a campus climate survey - a multi-item questionnaire - Rankin (2003) examined experiences of LGBTQ people, their perceptions of campus climate for LGBTQ

people, and their perceptions of institutional responses to LGBTQ issues and concerns. This assessment revealed that the campus climate has a significant impact on academic development and participation in campus life and, in turn, is affecting students overall well-being. These findings are consistent with subsequent studies on the perceptions of campus climate amongst LGBTQ students (e.g., Higa et al., 2014; Rankin, 2005; Xu et al., 2015). An inclusive campus climate and strong peer networks are positive factor associated with the well-being of sexual minority youth (i.e. LGBTQ youth) (Ellis, 2009; Higa et al., 2014; Riggle et al., 2014). Hence creating a positive campus climate - or a so-called safe space - which is supportive and affirming of all people regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity is of utmost importance (Ellis, 2009; Evans, 2002; Poynter & Tubbs, 2008). As Hatzenbuehler (2009) highlights, when (LGBTQ) students experience stress as a result of a negative climate or stigma, they are at greater risks for issues such as emotional regulation, interpersonal relationships, and even strong negative cognition.

Previous research from the United States of America, United Kingdom and Australia has indicated that students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning (LGBTQ) often have negative experiences on university campuses due to their sexual orientation or gender identity (Ellis, 2009; Higa et al., 2014; Waldo, 1998; Woodford & Kulick, 2015). These negative experiences entail, but are not limited to, censoring themselves in class because of fear of negative consequences, concealing their sexual orientation in fear of perceived threat of intimidation, discrimination, or harassment, lack of integration of sexual orientation into the curriculum, and lack of access to LGBTQ-specific support services (e.g., see Taulke-Johnson & Rivers, 1999, or Hatzenbuehler, 2009). In this nationwide UK study on campus climate in 2006, Ellis (2009) found that, despite the increased presence of an equality agenda homophobia is still a significant problem on campus and therefore it is not perceived nor experienced as 'safe spaces' by sexual minorities.

The term 'safe space' is increasingly used as a metaphor for a desired campus atmosphere, in which students can freely express their feelings and ideas, especially in relation to issues such as diversity, oppression, and cultural competence (Holley & Steiner, 2005; Poynter & Tubbs, 2008; Woodfort, Kolb, Durocher-Radeka & Javier, 2014). Here, safe space

programs are often focused on interventions to raise awareness about the topics of sexual and gender diversity as well as building a supportive and LGBTQ-affirming campus environment (Rankin, 2005; Woodford et al., 2014). Evans (2002) studied a safe zone project in which changes to the campus culture led to the creation of a more supportive environment for LGBTQ students, similarly there was more visibility for LGBTQ individuals and issues on campus. Other researchers (Astin, 2013; McAllum, 2018; Palkki, 2017; Palkki & Caldwell, 2016) found that shared curricula can stimulate conversational synergy, because common sources of conversation promote student-to-student interaction, serving to align their thoughts and connect to their peers. These findings are consistent with the theory of social constructivism, which takes that human thinking is shaped by social interactions and conversation. Subsequently, these external dialogues lead to internal manifestations in the form of self-reflection (Vygotsky, 1978). Further, Palkki & Caldwell (2016) found that LGBTQ students find (encouragement of) open acknowledgement of LGBTQ identities and issues of high importance.

2.4 The Dutch Campus Climate

Research on general acceptance of homosexuality shows that, in comparison with other EU member states, The Netherlands has the highest level of general acceptance, the most positive attitudes for equal rights, and reported the highest acceptance to having homosexual neighbours (Keuzenkamp & Bos, 2007). Boss and Felten (2017) found that anno 2017 15% of the Dutch citizens have a negative view of LGB, and 9% have a negative view of Transgendered individuals. Keuzenkamp (2010) notes that, even though homosexuality is getting more common and accepted, we are far from total acceptance. In her research on the experiences of homosexual youth with regard to acceptance and inclusiveness she found that many LGBT people struggle with their coming-out and other people's levels of acceptance. Not only do they fear reaction (i.e. not being accepted) from their close friends and family, but also from their colleagues and peers.

As is reflected by literature, homophobia in education is recognized as a problem which needs to be addresses. Until today, however, most of these researches on LGBTQ inclusiveness in academics are set and administrated in campus environments in the USA,

UK and New Zealand, and only little is known about the European or Dutch campus climate and LGBTQ issues. The few studies that examine homophobia in educational institutions in The Netherlands focus on the school rather than the university context. There have been national and regional studies of LGBTQ primary and secondary school youth (Blaauw & Ultee, 2016; Sandfort, Bos, Collier & Metselaar, 2010), as well as several small qualitative studies that explored the experiences of LGBTQ students (Elfering, Leest & Rossen, 2016). These studies all convey the urgency of research for these groups. Yet, the current understanding of experiences of LGBTQ students in University education within the Dutch context in today's society remains very limited.

Chapter III.

Methodology and Research Process

3.1 Research Design

To answer the earlier stated questions, this current research made use of two different research tools: the campus climate survey conducted in the spirit of earlier works on campus climate such as the ones undertaken by Sue Rankin (2003) and Sonja Ellis (2009), and additional focus group sessions. Initially, this study followed a methodology in line with previous studies on campus climate; which is a campus climate survey to quantitatively measure LGBTQ students experiences and perceptions of the campus environment. Brown and Gortmaker (2009) highlight that this specific tool is most often used by campus managers as the first step in enhancing the campus climate for LGBTQ students. In congruence, Poynter & Tubbs (2008) noted that campus climate surveys can be used to measure the students current attitudes and examine whether safe spaces are needed in the faculty and on campus. They found that when these survey questionnaires were anonymously utilized they yielded the highest number of responses.

Overall, these researchers note that, if correctly executed, research and assessment on campus climate can act as a catalyst for positive change in institutions. Babbie (2007) even goes as far as saying that survey questionnaires are perhaps the best method at hand for the social scientist. This method lends itself for collecting original data from individual participants, especially where the research population is too large to observe, or where the population might be hidden, difficult to reach or vulnerable. In literature, LGBTQ students are identified as such a vulnerable group (Valentine & Skelton, 2003; Valentine, Butler & Skelton, 2001).

After an initial analysis of the survey data, subjects of conversation were identified which needed to be discussed further. Hence, to provide an in-depth exploration of the topic this study made use of focus group sessions. This method is especially valuable where it reveals group dynamics, differences in options or common grounds. Similarly, the time (not) spend on each topic of the focus group discussion provides clues to how much the participants (do not) care about a particular issue.

To ensure total anonymity, and safeguard the participant's well-being these focus groups took place on the online focus group tool 'Focus Group It'. In these focus groups participants answered several questions posed by the moderator, while also being able to comment on the answers of other participants. This tool proved especially useful were it results in a transcript, accurately reflecting the way the participants write. Although the transcripts are entirely produced by the participants, it should be noted that this method does not reveal nonverbal communication, gestures and behavioural responses which are otherwise displayed in real-live conversations.

Not only is this mixed methods approach used because it produces more complete knowledge and understanding of the current situation, but at the same time it increases the ground and support for the final recommendations. This type of mixed methods design employing both quantitative and qualitative measures reflects a new "third way" epistemological paradigm explained Tashakkori and Creswell (2007); a paradigm occupying the space between positivism and interpretivism.

3.2 Sampling and Population

This study took place at the University of Groningen in Groningen, The Netherlands, and was open to all students that were registered at the Faculty of Economics and Business at the University in February and March 2018. The students were invited via a general request and course messages on Nestor (the online platform for students) by their program directors and/or study associations, and leaflets distributed through the faculty (see appendix 1) to participate in an anonymous questionnaire exploring the University environment for students with different sexual orientations and gender identities. By means of this broad definition, and the possibility for both heterosexual and LGBTQ individuals to answer the survey a broader location and canvasses for the selected target group (LGBTQ students) is covered. This method to better access and sample vulnerable target groups, is part of the strategy which Lee (1993) calls 'screening'.

Reporting sexual orientation is not a part of the Dutch census, hence there are currently no statistics known to identify what percentage of the Dutch population identifies at LGBTQ.

In an independent study Boss and Felten (2017) found that 4 to 6% of the population indicated to identify as LGB and 0.6 to 0.7% as transgender, no data was found on number of Questioning individuals. Likely these numbers are an underestimate of the real population size, where individuals might refuse to self-identify due to fear of sensitive questions or situations (Coffman, Coffman & Ericson, 2016; Kuyper, 2015; Lee, 1993; McAllum, 2018). This poses the risk of a self-selection bias. Baruch and Holtom (2008) found that the average response rate for studies utilizing tools to collect data from individuals (e.g., survey questionnaires) is about 52.7%. They do however note that content of the study (and corresponding personal relevance and motivation) is one of the most significant factor driving response rates. Hence, LGBTQ individuals might be more strongly motivated to participate in the research. In the academic year 2017-2018 the faculty of Economics and Business at the University of Groningen has almost 5.000 individuals enrolled in their bachelor and master programs. When utilizing Boss and Felten's (2017) data it can be hypothesized that, given the FEB's students body of approximately 5.000 students, it might be expected that around 5% (250) are likely to identify as LGBTQ. In this case, a 50% response rate from all LGBTQ students should therefore approximately yield 125 questionnaires.

The response rate to the course evaluation survey send out to the students of the Faculty of Economics and Business at the end of each block yields different expectations. These response rates are generally way below the 50% proposed earlier. For example, as reported by the FEB Quality Assurance Department on the 27th of November 2018, of the 93 evaluated courses, only 41 courses (44%) met the response threshold of and the overall student response is 18%. The number of respondents yielded will be discussed in the next section.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

The data collection took place in two phases; first the quantitative and qualitative data of the questionnaire was collected, followed by the online focus group sessions. The online questionnaire consisted of 40 questions and took about 10 to 20 minutes to complete. The questionnaire (attached as appendix 2) was made utilizing the online questionnaire program

Qualtrics, which offers the possibility to insert skip, or forward logic options in the survey. This option was used for instance when respondents indicated that they did not experience behavior framed in the question. If this was the case they were forwarded to the next question. However, did the respondent indicated to have experienced a certain behavior framed in the question, then there was an additional question asking the respondents to explain or elaborate on their experiences.

The first page of the questionnaire was used to explain the aim of the research, as well as ensuring participants on the confidentiality paired with this research. Next a section of demographic questions were asked. These questions are a combination of the demographic questions employed in the research of Ellis (2009) and the formulations used in the “EU LGBT survey” (2013) developed by the European Union Agency of Fundamental Rights. In addition a number of questions was added to further distinguish between domestic and international students. Next, the questionnaire follows the four topics as covered by Ellis: (1) harassment/discrimination (e.g., ‘Since being at the faculty, have you ever feared for your safety because of your sexual orientation or gender identity?’); (2) perceptions of campus (e.g., ‘To what extent do you think anti-LGBT attitudes exist on your campus?’); (3) campus climate and ‘outness’ (e.g., ‘Since you have been at university, have you ever avoided disclosing your sexual orientation or gender identity to a tutor, lecturer, supervisor or other staff member of the university due to a fear of negative consequences?’); and (4) LGBT inclusiveness (e.g., ‘The university thoroughly addresses campus issues related to sexual orientation/gender identity’). Additionally to Ellis’ (2009) items on perceptions of campus, Rankins’ (2005) items were considered, and next those relevant for the Dutch context were added. Most of the items in the survey questionnaire used to measure participants’ perceptions and experiences were Likert scale questions, some others, such as question 15 employed a bipolar rating scale measurement. At this question (originally from Rankin, 2005) participants were asked to rate their perception of the FEB from 1 to 5 on several items; one being the most positive (e.g., non-racist, non-homophobic) to five being the least positive (very racist or very homophobic).

The final question in the survey asked participants if they were willing to contribute more to this research in the future. They were informed that this would involve a one-hour in

depth interview. To compensate for their time they would receive a €30,- gift-voucher. Students could either click 'No' which meant the end of the survey, or they could select 'Yes' and leave their e-mail, so they would be contacted at a later stage.

The online questionnaire was open for about two months; during February and March 2018. In total 720 students commenced the questionnaire, amongst them were 122 individuals identifying as LGBTQ. The total number of completed and usable responses was 513: 427 heterosexual students, and 86 self-identified LGBTQ students, comprised of 9 Lesbian, 27 Gay, 40 Bisexual, 4 Transgender students (which also happen to all identified as Gay or Bisexual), 7 Questioning students, one Asexual student, and one person that indicated 'I don't actually care about the gender'. The initial number of 122 LGBTQ individuals matched earlier expectations, however was significantly reduced in the data cleaning process. Some respondents did not progress through to the end of the survey, others did not fit the target group (e.g., was a teacher), and some responses were obviously not seriously answered (e.g., filled in 'helicopter' at gender). From the total of 86 useful responses from LGBTQ, 41 students indicated to be Dutch, whereas 45 are international students. These international students are characterized from a wide range of different nationalities. For example, participant's origins were German (20%) and Chinese (13%), as well as individuals from nationalities such as Belgian, Brazilian, Bulgarian, Czech, Norwegian and Vietnamese.

As data was received on the Qualtrics website, this provided an overview of the incoming quantitative and qualitative data at any point in time. Reading, re-reading, visualizing and coding of these data gave a fair impression of commonalities in experiences and more general themes. Based on the four general themes and the answers of the survey questionnaire a list of topics for the online focus groups were developed (see appendix 3). In total, the 15 questions thus covered the four main subjects: (1) harassment/discrimination; (2) perceptions of campus; (3) campus climate and 'outness'; and (4) LGBT inclusiveness, but also asked participants how they think the University of Groningen could improve the campus climate for LGBT people and what their personal motivation was to participate in this research. These research topics were inserted into the web tool 'Focus Group It', in which participants can anonymously participate. Using this

online tool allowed for composition of these groups by gender and sexuality, and the participation of this (rather unexpected) high number of participants. Hence, this allows for the collection of data containing more varied perspectives and experience, and conversation between participants as well as between me as a researcher and the participants.

In total 22 respondents participated in the online focus groups. In total 13 international students and 9 Dutch self-identified LGBTQ students participated. The respondents were not informed about the sexuality of the other participants, merely that they self-identified as LGBTQ. The participants were divided in four different time slots. The participants anonymously interacted in the online chat platform, whereas their names were formulated as 'Participant 1/2/3/, and so on'.

3.4 Data Analysis Procedure

Questionnaire responses were online collected by Qualtrics, and at the end of the survey period imported into SPSS for analysis. The sample of this study consisted of respondents who self-identified as LGBTQ and were students of the FEB. In line with the studies of Rankin (2003) and Ellis (2009) a descriptive statistical analysis was performed using the quantitative data of the survey questionnaire. These descriptive statistics include the identification of frequencies and central tendencies such as mean, mode and median. In addition, analyses exploring group differences were carried out using the Mann-Whitney u test (a nonparametric test of the null hypothesis, used to compare mean responses of groups). These analyses were carried out for both the entire sample, and by group (i.e. domestic versus international).

The qualitative data for analysis was derived from the open-response items of the questionnaire (e.g., 'If you are aware of any specific homophobic incidents which have occurred at the faculty, please outline these here') and the online focus group sessions. All data was accessed from Qualtrics and Focus Group It, and analyzed using the qualitative scissor-and-sort technique (for a review see Stewart & Shamdasani, 2014). The first step entailed the initial reading and re-reading of the data (i.e. extensive pawing), and the

identification of valuable section relevant to the research questions. Special weight was assigned to those quotes from the focus groups, which were endorsed by other participants. Based on the four pre-assigned topics as used by Ellis (2009) categories were made: Actual harassment/discrimination, perception of campus climate, campus climate and outness, and LGBTQ inclusiveness. The topic of 'LGBTQ inclusiveness' was then divided into current feelings and perceptions of inclusiveness, and data addressing future inclusiveness. By means of different colors the responses were indicated to belong to a domestic student or international student. The material in the transcript relevant to each topic were then clustered, contrasted and summarized using Excel.

3.5 Ethical considerations

Research ethics have been highly important in the decisions on the research design and process. Due to the LGBTQ sample group being considered a vulnerable group, the research is classified as sensitive research. Therefore data collection tools were designed to anonymously collect data, for example neither the survey nor the focus group data sets contain names, email address, student numbers, or any other identifiers. In addition, the last section of the survey allowed for participants to anonymously share any experiences and/or incidents deemed left, and provided them with contact details of one of the members of the research group for any future inquiries. After finalizing the design of the survey questionnaire, permission to distribute the survey was granted by the Ethics Commission of the University of Groningen.

Chapter IV.

Results

4.1 Introduction

The findings reported in this section have been organized using headings representing the four main subjects of the survey questionnaire and focus group sessions: Actual harassment/discrimination, perception of campus climate, campus climate and outness, and LGBTQ inclusiveness. Each of these four sections will report the general findings from the survey and those of the focus group sessions, followed by a group comparison of international versus domestic respondents. Subsequently these findings will be contrasted to the responses of heterosexual students.

4.2 Actual Harassment/Discrimination

In total 4.7% of the LGBTQ students surveyed indicated that they had been victim of homophobic harassment/discrimination at least on one occasion since being at the faculty of Business and Economics. The forms of harassment/discrimination reported in the current study comprised of derogatory remarks (75%), pressure to be silent about your sexual orientation/gender identity (50%), denial of services (50%), and anti-LGBTQ graffiti (25%). Typically, these incidents were reported as commonly occurring in public spaces within the faculty (60%), in a class (20%), or while walking at the faculty (20%). Consistent with this, half of these incidents were reported to be perpetrated by students, and the other half equally divided as perpetuated by admin staff, security staff or catering staff.

When asking respondents how often they have heard their peers (friends, or other students) or university staff (lecturers or tutors, or other university staff) stereotyping, making negative remarks, or telling jokes which put down LGBTQ persons revealed that the students surveyed more often heard peers making these remarks than that they hear these

coming from university staff. Only 9.3% had heard lecturers or tutors and 5.8% had heard other university staff sometimes/quite often/frequently stereotyping, making negative remarks, or telling jokes which put down LGBTQ people. In contrast, 37.2% of the respondents have heard friends, and 45.3% had heard other students stereotyping, making negative remarks, or telling jokes which put down LGBTQ people (see table 1). One frequently reported issue is the use of the word 'gay' or 'homo' by heterosexual students in a for them seemingly unharmed way or intentional use in a negative context, creating a hostile environment for many LGBTQ students:

“For instance, when upon meeting some of them, they have described things or people they dislike as 'f*cking gay'. And then it shuts me almost down. So then I feel like 'let's do the assignment and part ways' and not share anything about myself.”(#1/40)

“I feel like, the word "gay" almost got a negative impact, since so many people use it as an insult. So when I say I am gay it is like something negative, which it is not obviously.” (#2/38)

Table 1. Percentages of experienced derogatory remarks (N=86).

	Frequently	Quite often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
How often have you heard lecturers or tutors stereotyping, making negative remarks, or telling jokes which put down LGBT persons?	1.2	0.0	8.1	29.1	61.6
How often have you heard other university staff (canteen, security, secretaries etc.) stereotyping, making negative remarks, or telling jokes which put down LGBT persons?	1.2	0.0	4.7	14.0	80.2
How often have you heard friends (at university) stereotyping, making negative remarks, or telling jokes which put down LGBT persons?	1.2	8.1	27.9	34.9	27.9
How often have you heard other students (non acquaintances) stereotyping, making negative remarks, or telling jokes which put down LGBT persons?	2.3	9.3	33.7	34.9	19.8

The Mann Whitney u test revealed that, at the 10% significance level, international students have heard slightly less often stereotyping, negative remarks or jokes which put down LGBTQ persons by other students (non acquaintances) ($U=734.5$, $N=86$, $p=.089$) and other university staff ($U=769$, $N=86$, $p=.056$) than their Dutch peers. When looking at the numerical values we see that both groups encounter these issues, though international students note that in some occasions their nationality is another target of discrimination.

“I was offered from another student at FEB to work at the Red light district because I am a perfect fit - Bulgarian and gay” (#16/232, International)

“I don’t like to spend a lot of time at the FEB faculty as I see it as a very unfriendly place” ... “Staff are often rude and being a non-dutch speaker people are often less friendly towards you.” (#16/239, International)

The majority of the LGBTQ respondents (88.4%) indicate they have never seen posters which are homo/transphobic at the FEB, 7% indicated they seldom see posters which are homo/transphobic at the FEB, and 4.7% indicated they sometimes/frequently see posters which are homo/transphobic at the FEB. Similarly, the majority of the respondents (96.5%) indicates that have not seen anti-LGBT graffiti in faculty buildings or university provided accommodation, and only 3 respondents indicated they have seen anti-LGBT graffiti in these environments.

When comparing these numbers to the responses of heterosexual students, we observe that whereas a large percentage of LGBTQ students indicate they experience sometimes or seldom an anti-gay bias, the responses of heterosexual students are predominantly skewed towards the 'Never' end of the scale. A Mann-Whitney test between the heterosexual students and LGBTQ students showed statistically significant differences between the statements assessing negative remarks heard to be made from lecturers or tutors, friends at university, and other students and university. On all three items heterosexual students indicated that they heard less often negative remarks, or jokes which put down LGBTQ students.

4.3 Perception of Faculty Climate

Even though actual harassment/discrimination against LGBTQ individuals was reported by LGBTQ respondents, more than half of these respondents (64%) indicated that they thought anti-LGBTQ attitudes existed to a little/very little extent, and only 8.2% indicated that they thought they existed to a great/very great extent. A sizeable minority (23.3%) indicated that they thought anti-LGBTQ attitudes existed to some extent. Likewise, the majority of respondents (76.8%) indicated they thought it unlikely/very unlikely that an LGBTQ person would be harassed on campus, just 8.2% of the respondents thought that an LGBTQ person is likely/very likely, and 15.1% indicates they do not know:

“I think in general people are mature on a level that they don't engage in such situations in person at FEB. Not saying that they don't gossip behind the back, but wouldn't hear much in my face.” (#9/8)

“I am very happy to say that this never happened to me yet at the FEB. In my previous university back in my home country, it was not uncommon to find texts such as "Marc is gay" written by students in the toilets. Luckily this doesn't seem to be the case at FEB!” (#9/24)

Although 19,8% of the LGBTQ participants indicated that they think posters advertising LGBTQ activities/events might be sometimes to quite frequently be defaced, destroyed or otherwise vandalized, actual experiences of vandalizing of property are not reported. In the focus groups students indicated that they had never experienced vandalism which was LGBTQ targeted, neither did they perceive it to be likely to happen. Both international as well as domestic students express they perceive it as childish behavior, and as something which is more associated with middle/high schools. The high perception of likelihood of happening of these events might not directly be related to the university atmosphere, but the environment on a larger scale. Many students refer to what has happen to advertisements of the company Suitsupply last year, which showed two man kissing:

“I think it is sad that people destroy other peoples property (Suitsupply example) and that they may think that they can restrict people to be who they are just by showing their opinion this way. I am actually not quite sure what their point is and what kind of people and how many think/act like those vandalism people.” (#9/32)

Explaining why he/she is shocked about what has happened: “because the netherlands were a safe space for so many people. Many international gay students chose the Netherlands also partly because they can open up here about it and then someones shatter this world. Shatter there sense of safty.”(#9/35)

“I never experienced anything I was unbelievable shocked about the recent backlash with regards to suitsupply. But I only read about it online never anything at the feb.” (#9/31)

Table 2. Perceptions of frequency of victimization (N=86).

	Frequently	Quite often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
How often do you think students at the faculty might experience having their personal property deliberately defaced or otherwise vandalized because they were thought/known to be LGBT?	1.2	1.2	12.8	23.3	61.6
How often do you think lecturers and tutors of the faculty might experience direct verbal harassment because they were thought/known to be LGBT?	1.2	1.2	14.0	39.5	44.2
How often do you think friends (at university) might experience direct verbal harassment because they were thought/known to be LGBT?	1.2	2.3	10.5	50.0	36.0
How often do you think other students (non acquaintances) at the faculty might experience direct verbal harassment because they were thought/known to be LGBT?	1.2	0.0	19.8	48.8	30.2
How often do you think other university staff (canteen, security, secretaries etc.) at the faculty might experience direct verbal harassment because they were thought/known to be LGBT?	1.2	2.3	10.5	47.7	38.4
How often do you think posters advertising LGBT activities/events might be defaced, destroyed or otherwise vandalized?	3.5	4.7	11.6	33.7	46.5
How often do you think students at your campus might receive threatening or otherwise derogatory notes, phone calls or emails because they were thought/known to be LGBT?	1.2	0.0	7.0	31.4	60.4

When checking for group differences between international and Dutch LGBTQ students, results revealed that Dutch students thought anti-LGBTQ attitudes to a larger extent than international LGBTQ students ($U=702$, $N=86$, $p=.042$). No significant differences showed for their thoughts on harassment within the faculty.

When comparing these numbers to the responses of heterosexual students, we observe that heterosexual students think the gay-bias is more present than LGBTQ students indicated. The Mann Whitney u test reveals marginally statistical differences on the perceived existence of anti-LGBTQ attitudes at the faculty, and the perceived risks of harassment because individuals were thought/known to be LGBTQ.

Additionally, 10 dimensions of the faculty climate were rated on a 5-point bipolar scale. These ratings show that the faculty is generally perceived towards friendly, respectful, cooperative, competitive, non-racist, non-sexist, non-homophobic and accessible to people with a disability. However, none of these dimensions are extremely strongly perceived by respondents. Similarly, the faculty climate is experienced as slightly more indifferent and uncooperative. Although there are numerical differences between domestic and international LGBTQ students, no significant differences showed in the Mann Whitney u test. This is likely due to the relatively high standard deviation in the sample (between 1-2 for each dimension), reflecting high differences within the groups. We will return to this in the discussion section.

Subsequent analysis of the group differences between LGBTQ respondents and heterosexual respondents revealed that 8 out of the 10 dimensions are statistically significantly different. The following 8 dimension were rated more towards the negative end of the spectrum of the scale by LGBTQ students in comparison to their heterosexual peers: friendly vs. hostile, communicative vs. reserved, concerned vs. indifferent, respectful vs. disrespectful, cooperative vs. uncooperative, non-racist vs. racist, non-sexist vs. sexist and non-homophobic vs. homophobic. There is not a significant difference demonstrated for the items: competitive vs. non-competitive and accessible to persons with a disability vs. inaccessible. However, the mean score of both the LGBTQ and heterosexual students with regard to a competitive atmosphere is 2.35, which is the second highest mean

after concerned vs. indifferent. This shows that the entire sample experiences the atmosphere as rather competitive.

The higher mean scores on the dimensions concerned vs. indifferent and cooperative vs. uncooperative are also reflected in the focus group data, which will be covered in the “LGBTQ Inclusiveness” section.

Table 3. Faculty Climate dimensions on a five-point bi-polar scale (where 1 is positive, 5 is negative) (N=86).

Dimension	Mean Heterosexual	Mean LGBTQ	Mean Dutch LGBTQ	Mean International LGBTQ
Friendly: Hostile	1.79	2.08	1.93	2.22
Communicative: Reserved	2.12	2.58	2.54	2.62
Concerned: Indifferent	2.76	3.21	3.22	3.20
Respectful: Disrespectful	1.84	2.09	2.02	2.16
Cooperative: Uncooperative	2.11	2.48	2.51	2.44
Non-competitive: Competitive	2.65	2.66	2.68	2.64
Non-Racist: Racist	1.69	2.00	1.85	2.13
Non-Sexist: Sexist	1.73	2.16	2.00	2.31
Non-Homophobic: Homophobic	1.65	2.00	1.93	2.07
Accessible to people with a Disability: Inaccessible	2.22	2.28	2.39	2.18

4.4 Faculty Climate and Outness

With regard to the faculty climate and outness three main subjects are identified: a climate of ‘fear’, heteronormativity, and the public-private distinction. Each of these will now be discussed in turn.

A ‘Climate of fear’

Respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they agreed with the statement ‘I feel comfortable about being out at the faculty’. Of the respondents 56.6% agreed or strongly

agreed with the statement, whilst a significant majority of 21.7% disagreed and 3.6% strongly disagreed. Here, no significant differences were found between the responses of international and domestic students. Whilst most respondents reported to feel safe being out on the faculty, the responses to questions on other indicators of perceptions of safety might suggest there is more to this dimension (see table 4).

Table 4. Indicators of ‘climate of fear’ amongst LGBTQ students (n = 83).

	Domestic		International	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Since being at university have you ever feared for your safety because of your sexual orientation or gender identity?	2.4	97.6	11.1	88.9
Since being at university have you ever deliberately concealed your sexual orientation or gender identity to avoid intimidation?	31.7	68.3	46.7	53.3
Since being at university have you ever avoided disclosing your sexual orientation or gender identity to a tutor, lecturer, supervisor or other staff member of the university due to fear of negative consequences?	21.9	78.1	37.8	62.2

A large share of domestic and international LGBTQ students reported that they have not feared their physical safety whilst being at the campus (97.6% and 88.9% respectively). However, almost a quarter (31.7%) of the domestic and almost half (46.7%) of the international students indicated that they have at least at one occasion concealed their sexual orientation or gender identity to avoid intimidation. Similarly, one fifth (21.9%) of the domestic, and two fifths (37.8%) of the students reported that they have avoided to disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity to a tutor, lecturer, supervisor or other staff member of the university due to fear of negative consequences.

To each of these three items more international LGBTQ students reported that they have encountered these situations than domestic LGBTQ students have. In the focus groups both domestic and international students noted the sensitivity of the topic of sexual orientation in an international setting with their peers, however, international students reported these feeling more strongly:

“It's not that I try to hide my sexual orientation I rather think it's not necessary for me to bring it up. However, thinking about it now, I am less open about it when the situation involves people who came from the culture similar to mine.” (#3/2, International)

"I would feel uncomfortable, openly discussing LGBT issues with people from cultures where non-normativity on the sexual or gender spectrum is shunned, like the exchange students from Indonesia with whom our tutorial group mixes sometimes. Just because I want to be able to cooperate with them in forced teamwork in the future and heated debate about LGBT issues, politics and religion might change the classroom climate" (#3/45, International)

Furthermore, some LGBTQ participants indicated they avoid enclosing their sexual orientation in university due to a fear of negative consequences in the form of lower grading by their tutor, lecturer supervisor or other staff member:

“Towards professors or others I do not feel comfortable to talk about it [*addition: it refers to sexual orientation*]. They have to judge your work, but you can never rule out the personal factor. Teachers are people too, with their own opinions. It is the same why I don't show my tattoos or piercings when I am at the FEB. It's better to be neutral than to provoke for the sake of being myself. Keep in mind that this is University, not your family's home. You don't have to be yourself for 100%” (#2/8)

Overall, both LGBTQ as well as heterosexual students report that the topic is little discussed, as one student even notes “the topic seems to be non existent” (#9/10). Perhaps

the lack of public discussion on the topic reinforces these exist images of sensitivity of the topic, rather than that these perceptions being created by actual events that have happened, given the reported numbers of actual harassment and discrimination.

Heteronormativity

Another set of topics which are strongly conveyed by focus group participants in relation to the 'climate of fear' and to their outness is the dominant heteronormativity and masculinity of the faculty climate. Participants indicate that they believe, and are under the impression that acting according to the norm. In their view this norm entails acting in a masculine manner:

“there is the expectancy to act more masculine when you're male, or feminine when you're female. I have not experienced this personally, but I have noticed other students that did not conform to this being judged by fellow students.”

(#1/14)

“at this 'alpha' people faculty, you better be masculine or other people will walk over you or not take you seriously.” (#4/33)

“I am hiding my more feminine side since I need to be able to take a leading role in group assignments and I am not sure how people surrounding me would react.”

(#1/59)

Both LGBTQ as well as heterosexual students indicate that this heteronormativity extends beyond mere sexuality. Several students notice the conformity based on gender, where males should be dominant and women should be feminine.

The public-private distinction

A third much discussed subject by focus group participants in relation to their outness is the public-private distinction, as explanation for why they refrain from sharing their sexual

orientation with students or professors. Several participants noted that they perceive the university environment as one which is mainly for education, and not as much for socialization:

“FEB is a place where you study and grow not a stage to show all your personality.” (#1/53)

“I never encountered any difficult situation. I keep things separated, university is about education, no place for personal things, just as work.” (#1/56)

4.4 LGBTQ inclusiveness

This next section is divided in two parts; the first part discusses the current perception of inclusiveness of LGBTQ students, the second part addresses the different perceptions on further creation of an inclusive environment.

Current perceptions

The last section of the survey comprised of questions assessing the perceptions of inclusivity at the faculty. The result showed that the majority (65,1%) of the LGBTQ respondents indicated that they strongly agree or agree that the climate of classes are accepting of LGBTQ persons. However, when asked if they feel comfortable raising LGBTQ issues in class, only 36.1% of the LGBTQ respondents indicated this was the case, this while 58.7% indicates this is not the case for them. In total 44.6% indicates the university does not thoroughly address campus issues related to sexual orientation or gender identity, and 56.6% of the LGBTQ respondents indicate that LGBTQ issues are not adequately represented within the curriculum.

Table 5. Perceived extent to which the university delivers LGBTQ inclusiveness, in percentages (N=83)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The university thoroughly addresses campus issues related to sexual orientation/gender identity.	2.4	9.6	43.4	25.3	19.3
LGBT issues are adequately represented within the curriculum.	4.8	8.4	30.2	27.7	28.9
The climate of classes I have taken are accepting of LGBT persons.	15.7	49.4	25.3	9.6	0.0
I feel comfortable raising LGBT issues in class.	9.6	26.5	25.3	20.5	18.1

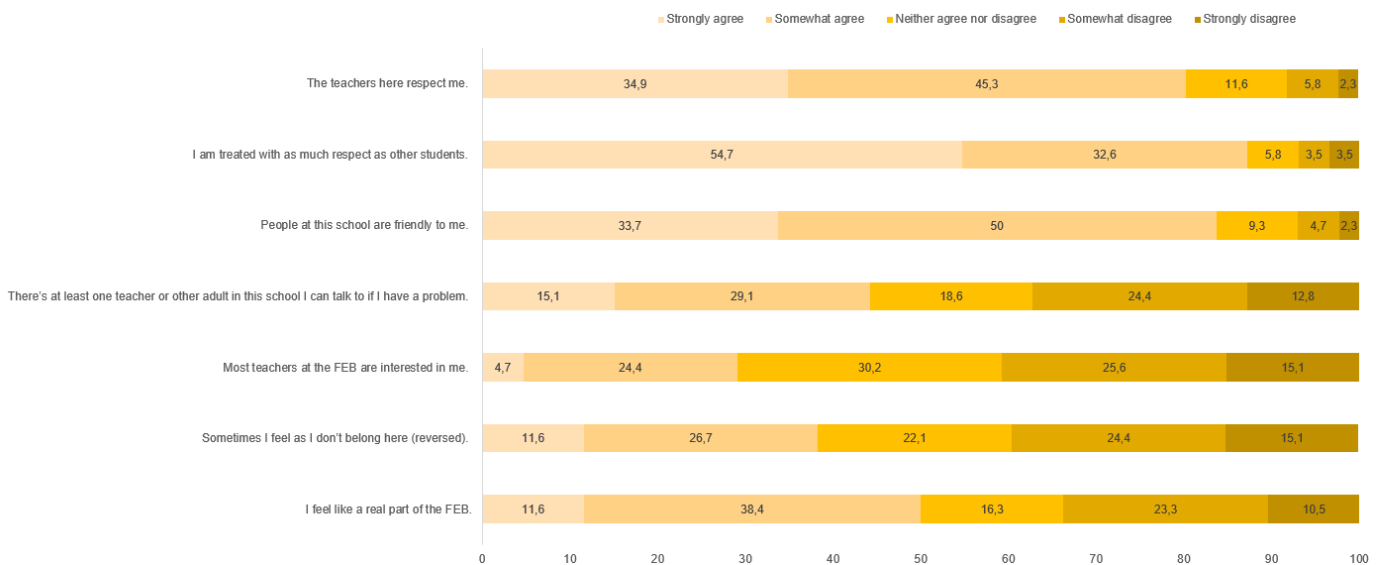
As can be seen in Figure 1, most respondents perceive to be treated with respect by their teachers (80.2%) and feel like they are treated with as much respects as other students (87.3%). Similarly the majority of students indicated that people at the University are friendly to them (83.7%). With respect to the other items on perceptions of inclusiveness the responses were much more diverged; a significant minority of the respondents indicated that there is no teacher or other adult in the university they could go to whenever they have a problem (37.2%), that they sometimes feel like they do not belong here (38.3%), or that they do not feel like a real part of the faculty (33.8%).

The Mann Whitney test revealed only significant differences between international and domestic LGBTQ students on the item. ‘I am treated with as much respect as other students ($p = .035$). International LGBTQ students agree significantly less with this statement than their domestic peers. It could be hypothesized that this is correlated to the dimensions of fear, which are more strongly expressed by international students. A Pearson correlation revealed that when an individual has been a victim of harassment/discrimination based on his or her sexuality, this person moves towards the ‘disagree’ spectrum on this item ($r = -$

.523, $p = .000$). Similarly, the other fear indicators show the same direction, however are not significant.

We also see that, although the majority agrees that the teachers of the FEB respects them, a significantly lower percentage of respondents indicates that they think teachers are actually interested in them. To the latter, only half (50%) agrees/strongly agrees and 33.8% indicated they disagree/strongly disagree (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Perceived rapport between students and faculty, in percentages (N=86).



To the question “Do teachers/staff treat LGBT issues and experiences seriously?” the majority of the students indicated they do not know/not applicable, whilst only one individual indicated this is the case. A significant minority 5.8% (N=5) indicated they do not think teachers/staff treat LGBT issues and experiences seriously. One respondents explains his/her response:

“I don't think it is high on their priority list and they prefer to focus on the study material itself. I believe when there are remarks that are non-violent they will more likely ignore it than really think it is a major issue.”

When students were asked whether the university provides visible resources on LGBT issues/concerns, the majority (56.6%) of LGBTQ students disagreed or strongly disagreed, while only 10.8% indicates they agreed or strongly agreed that this is the case.

When comparing the LGBTQ responses to those of their heterosexual peers, we find that LGBTQ students feel that LGBTQ issues are less adequately represented within the curriculum, and feel less comfortable about raising LGBTQ issues in class. Similarly we find marginally statistical differences on the statement ‘the faculty thoroughly addresses to issues related to sexual orientation/gender identity’, which LGBTQ students agree with less. In addition, LGBTQ students indicate more strongly that they sometimes feel as if they don’t belong at the university, that they perceive the university as less friendly, and feel less respected by teachers than their heterosexual peers. On the other dimensions no statistically significant difference are found, and only marginally different scores are observed. Overall, in all cases LGBTQ students perceive the campus and faculty as slightly less inclusive.

Further LGBTQ inclusion

To examine whether these are concrete recommendations on how to improve the issue we examined answers to the question at the end of the survey respondents “What do you think could be done differently to improve the faculty’s atmosphere for LGBT persons?” In addition to the information provided here, additional questions were asked with regard to this topic in the focus group sessions. Their answers can be broadly categorized into four categories; 1) do nothing, 2) showing visible support, 3) including LGBTQ in teaching and learning, and 4) facilitate conversation.

With concern to this topic some of the students indicate that the faculty should not take (additional) efforts, as they currently consider the faculty as a friendly environment. These exclamation mainly comes from heterosexual students, however are also mentioned by several LGBTQ students. Some argued that actively taking action to improve the environment, and including LGBTQ considerations in their curriculum would perhaps be counterproductive. These respondents note that as a result this will separate LGBTQ

students from other students, or that heterosexuals might even feel treated as “less favorable”.

Alternatively, the majority of the LGBTQ respondents indicate they would appreciate future action on the topic. These constitute of three main categories: show visible support, facilitate conversation, and include LGBT issues in the curriculum. In the former, participants note the absence of the topic in the current situation. Although some mention that they consider the faculty to be a fairly inclusive environment, they also note that LGBTQ expressions should be more visible. The respondents suggest several actions the faculty or university could undertake in order to create a more inclusive environment for LGBTQ students. These include: LGBT posters, including LGBTQ on social media messages, and raising a rainbow flag on Pride day.

“I think it is important to show support! In all my years at university in Groningen I never heard anything about sexuality, probably because that is not something that is usually discussed at universities. But showing support (like with a rainbow flag or posters, stuff like that) shows LGBT people that they are accepted and can be themselves at the FEB”

“Subtle hints like the rainbow flags on the posters by the counselors/study advisors signify to me that those would be safe spaces to discuss any issues pertaining to LGBT identity. The faculty should definitely support LGBT people, but not put us on the spot or give us special treatment...” (#12/35)

Thirdly, we see many suggestions on including LGBTQ in teaching and learning. This mainly consisted of ideas to educate university staff on how to create a more inclusive environment and ideas about on how to make the curriculum itself more inclusive.

“I think e.g. during marketing lectures, ads of gay couples, may be shown on the slides together with a male-female couple. It is normal and this way you will show that to your audience.” (#12/42)

In the fourth and last category are respondents’ suggestions of ways to facilitate conversation about the topic. One of the most suggested action is to pay attention to the topic during the introduction time at the beginning of the academic year. Respondents note

that the topic could be (briefly) discussed in the welcoming speech, or could be included in the information package provided by the university. They believe it will set the tone, and will convey that the faculty is an environment that embraces and supports diversity. Here, many of the domestic respondents stress the importance of introducing the new international student to the norms in The Netherlands on this topic, or at the least to facilitating conversation on the topic with international students. This regards to the entire student population, both LGBTQ and heterosexual students.

“I think as a Faculty, you set the norm for the environment you want the students and staff to interact in. Also, when so many internationals are coming to the FEB and experiencing another country for the first time, I think it is important to let them know that LGBT is accepted here and normal.” (#12/18)

With regard to integrating LGBTQ in conversation, many respondents note the absence of (visible) LGBT networks both inside as well as outside the faculty. They are not aware of any organization, this while they express they would have the interest in joining such network and getting to know other LGBTQ students.

Additionally, students express the value of this current research as a start of proactive inclusion of LGBTQ at the faculty.

“The main responsibility of the FEB is to create a positive learning environment where everyone feels included, safe, and confident to learn. Discussion points such as this research or LGBT-related events are a good example. However, other useful tools can be e.g. a support service for LGBT students/staff that may need a person to talk to.” (#13/18)

“I think it might be nice to have this kind of research more often to open up channels of discussion to those who need one.” (#13/22)

In congruence, students’ motivation to participate in the focus group sessions were mainly tied to wanting to help improve the campus or faculty climate, share their stories and talk about it (i.e. start conversation), and/or the remuneration. Their willingness to contribute to the study for future improvements of the faculty atmosphere is congruent with previous

research stating that LGBTQ individuals are more willing to participate for positive future outcomes.

Chapter V. Discussion

5.1. Relevance

Literature has shown that currently diversity policy in universities in The Netherlands is lacking. Especially institutional efforts in the domain of LGBTQ inclusion is strikingly absent. Given the lack of knowledge about the experiences and perceptions of LGBTQ students this might not come as a surprise. This main purpose of this research was to explore the LGBTQ students' experiences and perceptions, starting at the Faculty of Economics and Business at the University of Groningen. Once more, the findings discussed below emphasize the importance of research on the topic.

5.2. Faculty Climate Perceptions

Actual harassment or discrimination

In total 4.7% of the students surveyed indicated that they had been victim of homophobic harassment/discrimination at least on one occasion since being at the faculty. This percentage is significantly lower than the 23.4% reported by Ellis (2009) in her UK based study a decade ago. Whilst there appears to be a decrease over time, this may also be geographically or organizationally bounded. Where Ellis (2009) notes that the incidence of homophobic harassment appears to be substantially lower in the UK in comparison to those in the US, these incidence of homophobic harassment appears to be even lower for the context of The Netherlands. Another reason for the lower number of incidents reported could be the high public-private distinction; universities in The Netherlands are generally focused on the provision of education and have little additional facilities (e.g., student organizations or university accommodations). In the study of Ellis (2009) participants indicated that many of the reported incidents occurred in student accommodation (university based) or student organizations, particularly those which are related to religious groups. As these types of organizations are not present at the university, these are not covered in this research.

When asked about the frequency of anti-LGBT sentiments, LGBTQ students indicated they more often heard their peers (friends and non acquaintances) stereotyping, making negative remarks, or telling jokes which put down LGBT people than they have heard university staff make negative remarks. These findings are similar to those reported in the UK study from Ellis (2009) and US study from Malaney, Williams and Geller (1997), in that students were much more likely than staff to have been heard making negative remarks. Here students indicated they often hear the word “gay” being used in a seemingly negative context. Chonody, Rutledge and Smith (2012) found that in American slang this word is used to refer to something that is ‘boring’, and heterosexual male students commonly call one another a “fag”. Their findings suggests this contributes to the anti-gay bias, which is also portrayed by our respondents. Hence, this slang term also occurs in the context of The Netherlands, and the Dutch faculty climate.

Perceptions of faculty climate

Although the majority of the heterosexual and LGBTQ respondents indicates they think anti-LGBTQ attitudes exist to (a very little) extent and perceives it (very) unlikely that an LGBTQ person would be harassed while being at the faculty, a sizeable minority of students conceive it (very) likely to happen. Similarly, almost one fifth (19.8%) of the LGBTQ respondents indicates they think it is likely that posters advertising LGBTQ activities or events might be sometimes/quite frequently be defaced, destroyed or otherwise. This high percentages might not be directly related to the university atmosphere, but the environment on a larger scale, given that the vandalizing of the Suitsupply add is mentioned several times.

Faculty climate and outness

Over a quarter (25.3%) of the LGBTQ respondents indicate that they are not comfortable about being out at the faculty. Similarly, about the same share of respondents indicate that they have avoided disclosing their sexual orientation or gender identity to university staff due to fear of negative consequences. An even higher percentage of LGBTQ students

indicate that they have deliberately concealed their sexual orientation or gender identity to avoid intimidation.

A subject that was much discussed in relation to respondents' outness was the strong heteronormativity and masculinity at the faculty. They express that due to these perceptions of conformity to the 'alpha' norm they are less out in the faculty environment. In congruence, existing literature (e.g., Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Herek, 2007; Kimmel, 2012) found that a masculine climate generally does not contribute to an inclusive environment for sexual minorities. According to anthropologist Maurice Bloch, masculinity appears as a "fact in the nature of things" (Kimmel, 2005) and is dominantly socially constructed and imposed (Frank, 1987). Therefore, it is not easy to demonstrate the relationship between a masculine atmosphere and feelings of discomfort. Similarly Ellis' (2009) findings suggest that LGBTQ students do not specifically perceive a 'climate of fear', however actively behave in a manner which is a response to such a climate. In the current study we observe a similar situation.

The public-private distinction in the faculty also seems to contribute to this 'climate of fear' perceived by LGBTQ students. Similar to the findings in Ellis' (2009) UK study, this current study found that the lack of open debate on the topic enhances the climate of fear. Several students strongly indicated that they perceive the university merely as a provider of education, not a place to socialize and share personal things. Others note that due to the lack of open conversation of the topic they rather keep their sexuality closeted due to fear of possible negative reactions. Given the existing literature on the public-private distinction in The Netherlands it is perhaps no surprise that these views are expressed by students in the survey and focus groups. As this distinction does not appear in US and UK literature on campus climate this phenomenon may well be culturally bounded.

Overall, the findings in relation to outness suggest that despite the relatively low number or incidences of homophobia on the faculty reported, it occurs frequently enough to have affected the climate of the faculty, whereby LGBTQ students deliberately refrain from sharing their sexual orientation/gender identity in order to avoid forms of discrimination/harassment. Hence, rather than homophobia being solely about actual forms of discrimination or harassment, the potential threat of its' occurrence results in LGBTQ

students more often choose not to be out on the faculty (also see Ktizinger, 1996 for further discussion).

5.3. LGBTQ inclusiveness

Although the majority of the respondents indicates that they perceive their classes as accepting of LGBTQ persons, a considerable share of people indicate they are not comfortable raising LGBT issues in class. This highly coincides with the aforementioned perceptions of being out at the faculty. Namely, participants note that due to the lack of attention to the topic in the faculty environment, they do not experience the atmosphere as inclusive. For many respondents, the lack of recognition for the topic within the curriculum or the classroom setting results in the feeling that the university or faculty itself is not supportive or inclusive to sexual minorities. These findings are comparable to those in other studies (e.g., Ellis, 2009; Rankin, 2005), which propose that universities could be more proactive in addressing the inclusion of LGBTQ students. Literature suggests, that the invisibility of LGBTQ students is also tied to an insidious manifestation of heteronormativity (Hylton, 2005). Similar to most previous studies (e.g., Ellis, 2009; Rankin, 2005), respondents in this study indicated they would be appreciative of effort to make to university climate more inclusive. The respondents made several suggestions to reach a state of inclusion; these will be further discussed in section 5.4 ‘Faculty recommendations’.

5.4. International versus Domestic views

Overall, the experiences and perceptions of international and domestic students seem fairly similar throughout these four dimensions. Although the experiences with harassment/discrimination is low for both groups, international respondents reported that in some cases their nationality as an additional target of discrimination or harassment. On the contrary, we found that in general international students indicated less often that they heard other students (non acquaintances) and other university staff making negative remarks or jokes which put down LGBTQ people. Similarly, international students thought

anti-LGBTQ attitudes existed to a lower extent. It could be hypothesized that this might be due to the presence of language barriers or cultural differences, though no direct evidence was found supporting this. Alternatively, this could be a result of international students generally being less out at university, and less open at the faculty than their domestic peers. Here especially international students note that the cultural difference, or fear of what the other might think, makes them conceal their sexual orientation or gender identity.

5.5. Faculty Recommendations

Based on the survey and focus group data several preliminary recommendation can be made. Although few respondents indicated they do not deem it necessary to undertake any action, the findings as a whole reflect that a large percentage of students would benefit from actions to enhance inclusiveness of LGBTQ people at the faculty.

Here, it is important to note that it is important to recognize that addressing LGBTQ issues and facilitating an inclusive faculty climate does not only benefit LGBTQ students. If the inclusiveness of LGBTQ students is poor, this will also effect the overall faculty climate for the entire student population. Similarly, when it is safe for LGBTQ students to express themselves, this will allow other (heterosexual) students to deviate from the narrow stereotype 'alpha'-enforced norm. Furthermore, changing the current situation facilitates for students to fully develop upon their potential, and to socialize within the faculty.

Based on the data three categories of action can be distinguished: show visible support, facilitate conversation, and include LGBTQ issues in the curriculum (see Figure 2). This first category – *showing visible support* – is covering actions which demand little effort and investment, yet mean a great deal to LGBTQ students. For example, it is recommended to include LGBTQ people in the marketing domain (e.g., in social media posts, on flyers) and general display (e.g., poster at the student councilor, or a flag on pride day). Making it more visible will increase an overall awareness of the topic and will encourage conversation about the topic. Ideally these actions would include the celebration of 'diversity day' in which differences are embraced, or a celebration or other forms of extra attention to LGBTQ inclusion during the week of National Gay Pride. Many organizations in

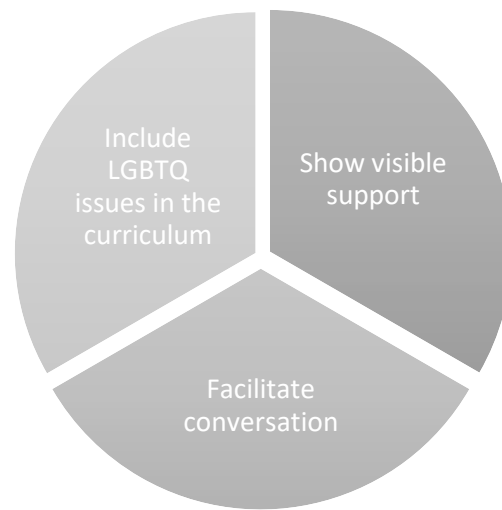
Groningen currently display the LGBTQ flag on days like these, and it is recommended that the University of Groningen joins in these actions.

In addition, it is recommended to create a safe space in which you *facilitate conversation*. As indicated by LGBTQ students in this current study, there is a desire for a sense of belonging and the opportunity to meet other LGBTQ students. The organization of social events - such as shared lunches or afternoon drinks - in a safe environment could be a simple way to allow for this to happen.

Integrating LGBTQ issues into all aspects of the university environment also involves the *inclusion of the topic in the curriculum*. This would involve the inclusion of LGBTQ in both teaching and education. For example, educating all university staff and students about LGBTQ issues and the current heteronormativity would increase awareness of the topic. As research has found, heteronormativity is a learned behavior which most heterosexual people are not aware of (Carpenter & Lee, 2010). As identified by the respondents in this research, the curriculum of courses does not represent LGBTQ issues well at this moment in time. The faculty currently offers courses on cultural differences. The faculty could potentially consider covering LGBTQ issues in these type of courses.

Previous research found that these forms of LGBTQ-supportive initiatives in university are acknowledged to encourage conversation across differences, and can contribute to a more affirmative and inclusive environment (e.g., see Rankin 2010; Woodford & Kulick, 2015). Focusing solely on one element of this implementation – curriculum content for example - would only have a limited effect where it neglects to address the wider context of the faculty climate. Therefore, the main focus should be on the coherent implementation of aspects from these three categories. Only then the university environment will clearly communicate and create a campus climate of zero tolerance towards any form of discrimination or harassment. Communicating this will induce the creation of a safe space for the entire student population.

Figure 2. Three categories of action for LGBTQ inclusiveness.



5.6. Limitations of the Study

It should be noted that inherent to the research methods employed, several limitations are present. One important limitation is the self-selection bias, in which individuals select themselves into a group, causing a biased sample based on their decision to join or not. Perhaps students refrain, or opt out from participating in the questionnaire based on the topic of the questionnaire or a specific question asked. Therefore, the result reflect solely the experiences and perceptions of those students that participated in the questionnaire, and might not cover all views on the topic. Fortunately this research has a fair response rate, as well as absolute sample size, to ensure that many opinions are accounted for. Yet, a larger, and more diverse sample will provide better insight in the situation of LGBTQ inclusion of universities in The Netherlands. This brings us to future research, which could extend the scope to other faculties within the same university as well as to different universities in The Netherlands.

5.7. Recommendations for Further Research

This current research examines the experiences and perceptions of an important group within the LGBTQ inclusion agenda; the LGBTQ student, as contrasted to the heterosexual student. However, not only students are affected by the faculty climate, likewise the atmosphere also affects university staff and visitors. Unfortunately exploring the experiences and perceptions of these groups was beyond the scope of this research. Creating a more inclusive environment will likely benefit all of these groups, though more research on these different groups will broaden our perspective of inclusion and action and will lead to further – and perhaps better - inclusion of all of these groups.

Furthermore, this study acts as a base measurement of the faculty climate. After implementation of actions to enhance LGBTQ inclusiveness the climate can be monitored over time making use of the faculty climate survey. Continued research into experiences of LGBTQ and the perceived university climate is recommended, including future faculty climate assessment and further examination of the experiences of international students.

Chapter VI.

Conclusion

The purpose of the thesis was to explore heterosexual and LGBTQ students' experiences and perceptions of harassment and discrimination on campus, and the perceived inclusiveness. Overall, the data suggests that whilst homophobia on campus is not an overwhelming problem, it is still a significant one. This study emphasizes that there is still a way to go before the inclusivity agenda is incorporated within the faculty context. Hopefully sharing the results of this study will lead to the topic entering the debate of inclusion in the university, and lead subsequent actions in this domain.

From my view, it is essential to establish a zero tolerance climate (Neumann, 2005) towards all forms of discrimination or harassment. This would involve the implementation of the three suggested actions by respondents in this research: show visible support, facilitate conversation, and include LGBTQ issues in the curriculum. Initiatives that increase the visibility of LGBT issues are essential to challenge the current heteronormativity. Visible LGBTQ-supportive initiatives at the faculty will encourage conversation across difference and can contribute to an accepting and inclusive environment (Rankin, 2010; Woodford & Kulick, 2015). Providing a safe space for both LGBTQ and heterosexual students, with the possibility to meet peers, openly discuss experiences and perceptions of the issue, and easier access to networks. As conveyed by Rankin (2005): "Differences disturb the norm; a culture of silence reinforces the norm for those who are different" (p. 21). Actively enhancing the faculty climate will therefore benefit the entire university community; ignoring any issues will degraded the quality of life for those who study, work or visit the place.

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Appendix 1.

Leaflet distributed through the faculty

Are you a FEB student?
Let us know what you
think:



Appendix 2.

The questionnaire as administrated in Qualtrics

PAGE TYPE	TITLE / SUB-TITLE	POSSIBLE REPLIES
1. start	Faculty Climate Survey	This research aims to understand how students, of different sexual orientation and gender identities, perceive the atmosphere at the faculty of Economics and Business (FEB). The survey has been designed to explore issues around the faculty atmosphere for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) students, both Dutch and international, but welcomes the inputs from heterosexual and cisgender students too. The aim of the research is to identify if, and if so, in what way, the FEB can improve the inclusivity of all students at the FEB. All responses will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality. The data will be analyzed anonymously, it will not be shared beyond the research team, named below, and only a summary of the data will be shared with the Faculty Board. Given the important goals of the project, we would highly appreciate it if you could complete this survey as fully as possible. The survey will take approx 10 minutes.
2. number	How old are you?	Slider scale 16-60
3. radio	What sex were you assigned at birth?	1. Male 2. Female
4. radio	Do you self-identify as transgender or have you identified as this in the past?	1. Yes 2. No
5. radio	Presently, you identify as:	1. Male 2. Female 3. Intersex 4. Other, namely (with explanatory text) 5. Prefer not to say
6. radio	Would you say you are ...	1. Gay 2. Bisexual 3. Heterosexual/Straight 4. Other, namely (with explanatory text) 5. Don't know
7. radio	Have you come out to (please select all that apply)	1. Everyone 2. Family 3. Some family 4. Friends 5. Close friends only 6. Colleagues 7. Others, namely (with explanatory text) 8. Nobody
8. radio	Do you agree with the following statements: 1) I feel feminine 2) I feel masculine 3) I look feminine 4) I look masculine 5) I wish I was more feminine 6) I wish I was more masculine	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree 5. Don't know
9. radio	Have you ever received negative reactions because you behave or have	1. Never 2. Seldom

	behaved in a too feminine or too masculine way? 1) Too feminine 2) Too masculine	3. Sometimes 4. Often 5. Almost always 6. Don't know
10. radio	I am a...	1. Undergraduate student 2. Graduate student 3 Other, (textbox)
11. radio	I study... (Display This Question: If 10 = Undergraduate student)	1. BSc International Business 2. BSc Bedrijfskunde 3. BSc Econometrics and Operations Research 4. BSc Economics and Business Economics 5. Pre-MSc
12. radio	What is your nationality?	1. Dutch 2. Other (with explanatory text)
13. radio	Have you come out in your home country to (please select all that apply) (Display This Question: If 12 != not Dutch)	1. Everyone 2. Family 3. Some family 4. Friends 5. Close friends only 6. Colleagues 7. Others, namely (with explanatory text) 8. Nobody
14. radio	How long have you been at the FEB?	1. Less than one year 2. 1-2 years 3. More than 2 years
15. yesno	Do you have a mental or physical disability which impacts your study experience?	Yes/No
16. bipolar	Please rate the faculty (FEB) climate in general for the following items. 1) Friendly – Hostile 2) Communicative – Reserved 3) Concerned – Indifferent 4) Respectful – Disrespectful 5) Cooperative – Uncooperative 6) Competitive – Non-competitive 7) Non-racist – Racist 8) Non-sexist - Sexist 9) Non-homophobic – Homophobic 10) Accessible to persons with a disability - Inaccessible	5-point bipolar scale
17. radio	Please indicate to what extend you agree with the following statements. 1) I feel like a real part of the FEB. 2) Most teachers at the FEB are interested in me. 3) Sometimes I feel as if I don't belong here. 4) There's at least one teacher or other adult in this school I can talk to if I have a problem. 5) People at this school are friendly to me. 6) I am treated with as much respect as other students. 7) The teachers here respect me.	1. Strongly agree 2. Somewhat agree 3. Neither agree nor disagree 4. Somewhat disagree 5. Strongly disagree
18. radio	To what extent do you think anti-LGBT attitudes exist at the faculty?	1. to a very great extent 2. to a great extent 3. to some extent 4. to a little extent 5. to a very little extent

19. radio	How likely do you think it is that an LGBT person would be harrassed within the faculty?	1. very likely 2. likely 3. unlikely 4. very unlikely 5. don/'t know
20. yesno	Have you ever seen anti-LGBT graffiti in faculty buildings, or in university provided accommodation?	Yes/No <i>If yes, Please explain (multiple lines of text)</i>
21. radio	Please indicate: 1) How often have you heard lecturers or tutors stereotyping, making negative remarks, or telling jokes which put down LGBT persons? 2) How often have you heard friends (at university) stereotyping, making negative remarks, or telling jokes that put down LGBT persons? 3) How often have you heard other students (non acquaintances) stereotyping, making negative remarks, or telling jokes that put down LGBT persons? 4) How often have you heard other university staff (canteen, security, secretaries etc.) stereotyping, making negative remarks, or telling jokes which put down LGBT persons?	1. frequently 2. quite often 3. sometimes 4. seldom 5. never
22. radio	How often do you think students at the faculty might experience having their personal property deliberately defaced or otherwise vandalized because they were thought/known to be LGBT?	1. frequently 2. quite often 3. sometimes 4. seldom 5. never
23. radio	Please indicate: 1) How often do you think lecturers and tutors the faculty might experience direct verbal harassment because they were thought/known to be LGBT? 2) How often do you think friends (at university) might experience direct verbal harassment because they were thought/known to be LGBT? 3) How often do you think other students (non acquaintances) at the faculty might experience direct verbal harassment because they were thought/known to be LGBT? 4) How often do you think other university staff (canteen, security, secretaries etc) at the faculty might experience direct verbal harassment because they were thought/known to be LGBT?	1. frequently 2. quite often 3. sometimes 4. seldom 5. never
24. radio	How often do you think posters advertising LGBT activities/events might be defaced, destroyed or otherwise vandalised?	1. frequently 2. quite often 3. sometimes 4. seldom 5. never
25. radio	How often do you see posters which are homo/transphobic at the FEB?	1. frequently 2. quite often 3. sometimes 4. seldom 5. never

26. radio	How often do you think students at the faculty might receive threatening or otherwise derogatory notes, phone calls or emails because they were thought/known to be LGBT?	1. frequently 2. quite often 3. sometimes 4. seldom 5. never
27. textbox	If you are aware of any specific homophobic incidents which have occurred at the faculty, please outline these here:	Multiple lines of text
28. yesno	Do teachers/staff treat LGBT issues and experiences seriously?	1. Yes 2. No 3. Don't know 4. Not applicable <i>If yes, Please explain (multiple lines of text)</i>
29. yesno	Since being at the faculty, have you ever feared for your safety because of your sexual orientation or gender identity?	Yes/No <i>If yes, can you briefly describe the context (multiple lines of text)</i>
30. yesno	Since you have been at the faculty, have you ever deliberately concealed your sexual orientation or gender identity to avoid intimidation?	Yes/No <i>If yes, can you briefly describe the context (multiple lines of text)</i>
31. yesno	Since you have been at the faculty, have you ever avoided disclosing your sexual orientation or gender identity to a tutor, lecturer, supervisor or other staff member of the university due to a fear of negative consequences?	Yes/No <i>If yes, can you briefly describe the context (multiple lines of text)</i>
32. yesno	Since you have been at the faculty, have you ever been a victim of harassment/discrimination based on your sexuality? <i>(If no, forwarded to 36)</i>	Yes/No
33. radio	In what form was that harassment? (Please select all that apply)	1. Derogatory remarks 2. Threats to expose your sexual orientation/gender identity 3. Pressure to be silent about your sexual orientation/gender identity 4. Direct or indirect verbal harassments or threats 5. Denial of services 6. Written comments containing anti-LGBT sentiments 7. anti-LGBT graffiti 8. Threats of physical violence 9. Actual physical assault or injury 10. Other (with explanatory text) 11. Not applicable
34. radio	Where did this harassment occur (at Zernike Campus)? (Please select all that apply)	1. In a class 2. In a staff office 3. In a public space on campus (e.g. student union; cafeteria) 4. While walking at the faculty 5. Other (with explanatory text) 6. Not applicable
35. radio	Who was the source of harassment? (Please select all that apply)	1. Student 2. Admin staff 3. Tutor/Lecturer 4. Resident Assistant 5. Security staff 6. Catering staff 7. Other (with explanatory text)

		8. Don't know 9. Not applicable
36. yesno	Since you have been at the faculty, have you ever been a victim of harassment/discrimination based on your gender? (If no, forwarded to)	Yes/No
37. radio	In what form was that harassment? (Please select all that apply)	1. Derogatory remarks 2. Threats to expose your sexual orientation/gender identity 3. Pressure to be silent about your sexual orientation/gender identity 4. Direct or indirect verbal harassments or threats 5. Denial of services 6. Written comments containing anti-LGBT sentiments 7. anti-LGBT graffiti 8. Threats of physical violence 9. Actual physical assault or injury 10. Other (with explanatory text) 11. Not applicable
38. radio	Where did this harassment occur (at Zernike Campus)? (Please select all that apply)	1. In a class 2. In a staff office 3. In a public space on campus (e.g. student union; cafeteria) 4. While walking at the faculty 5. Other (with explanatory text) 6. Not applicable
39. radio	Who was the source of harassment? (Please select all that apply)	1. Student 2. Admin staff 3. Tutor/Lecturer 4. Resident Assistant 5. Security staff 6. Catering staff 7. Other (with explanatory text) 8. Don't know 9. Not applicable
40. number	Do you believe that your sexual orientation has a positive, neutral, or negative impact on your experiences as a student at the FEB.	Slider scale from 0 (negative) to 100 (positive)
41. radio	Please indicate" 1) The faculty thoroughly addresses to issues related to sexual orientation/gender identity, while enrolled in the programme. 2) LGBT issues are adequately represented within the curriculum. 3) The atmosphere of classes I have taken are accepting of LGBT persons. 4) I feel comfortable raising LGBT issues in class. 5) I feel comfortable about being out at the faculty. 6) The faculty provides visible resources on LGBT issues/concerns.	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree 5. Don't know
42. textbox	What do you think could be done differently to improve the faculty's atmosphere for LGBT persons?	Multiple lines of text
43. textbox	If there are any specific experiences and/or incidents you would like to share	Multiple lines of text

with the research team feel free to write them down here:

44. yesno Are you also willing to contribute more to this research? This will consist a 1 hour in-depth interview. The interviews will be held in highly confidential setting. As well the results will be used strictly confidential and unanimously. With your participation you will contribute to the position of the LGBT community at your faculty. Participants will receive a bol.com voucher of 30 euros. We will be very grateful with your participation! Yes/No

45 finished Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Appendix 3.

Focus group topic list

1. Do you have the feeling you can be completely yourself within the faculty's environment? Please explain.
2. To what extent do you feel comfortable, safe and open about your sexual orientation when being at FEB? Please explain.
3. Are there situations or settings when you conceal your sexual orientation or being less open about it? Please explain. (for example: class, work groups, in between lectures, study related activities such as events organized by the study associations)
4. Do you think the extent to which you are showing feminine and/or masculine behaviour affects how you got treated within the faculty's atmosphere? Please explain.
5. What do you think is different of being LGBT as an international and a domestic student at the faculty? And how does this affect you?
6. In case you have a mental and/or physical disability, do you think this is also affecting you differently in the experiences of being LGBT comparing with non-disabled LGBT students? Please explain.
7. Some of you replied on the survey that you sometimes don't have the feeling that you belong at FEB. Can you elaborate on that?
8. Please describe experiences you had with noticing stereotyping, negative remarks or jokes about LGBT persons, can you describe in what kind of situations this happens and give examples about what is being said and by who? How did you react and how did other students/lecturers/etc. respond? And what did you think about that? (with 'who' we mean students, tutors, lectures, staff etc.)
9. What are your experiences with written and/or oral anti-LGBT messages within the faculty. Please explain.
10. What are your experiences with direct or indirect verbal/physical harassment or threats within the faculty? And how did you deal with this?
11. Can you give examples of cases when you or other students had yours/their personal property deliberately defaced or otherwise vandalized because you/they were thought/known to be LGBT? And how did you deal with this?
12. To what extent do you think it is important that the faculty shows support to LGBT?

13. How do you think about the role and responsibility of the faculty with regard to include LGBT issues/concerns and representing LGBT within the curriculum, providing visible resources and/or other facilities for LGBT students?
14. What do you think could be done differently to improve a more inclusive faculty's atmosphere for LGBT students?
15. Why did you participate in this research?