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Transgender College Student Equity and Inclusion Program

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Transgender College Student Equity and Inclusion Program

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Abstract

Understanding the inequities experienced by Transgender college students on university campuses is fundamental to promoting the occupational engagement of Transgender individuals. The Transgender community in the United States (U.S.) today is more widely varied and accepted than ever before in the recorded history of post-European colonialization of this country (Beemyn, 2014). Dowers, White, Kingsley and Swenson (2019) explain the risk for increased occupational injustice for Transgender college students due to their complex experience of occupations and the influencing factors. Current research has significant gaps in our understanding of how to counteract the effects of occupational injustice for Transgender college and university students. This project analyzes the needs and experiences of Transgender students and utilizes them to synthesize a program to promote occupational and educational equity. This program focuses on creating equitable and inclusive university campuses by providing suggestions on how to eradicate systemic transphobia and increase education and awareness of Transgender student needs.

A mixed-method project design was utilized as a needs assessment, which included quantitative and qualitative data collection via anonymous surveys with both Likert scale ratings and short answer questions. Three themes emerged from the findings: existing Transgender resources, systemic transphobia, and physical and psychosocial environment. Needs assessment findings were developed into a ten section Transgender Student Equity and Inclusion Program which is being implemented at Dominican University of California.

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Introduction

College students are at a new stage in their life with a new environment allowing for variable occupational engagements and experiences. Minorities in college contexts can be understood as those less ingrained in the institution of higher education as a whole and are primarily identified by their ethnic, sexual, or socioeconomic differences. These known minorities tend to have unique struggles when facing the new academic and social world of higher education. Recent institutional change has commenced throughout the context of higher education across the U.S; these changes mainly focus on students of ethnic and socioeconomic minorities. Those with minority sexualities have had few programs offered within higher education institutions. Even these supposed inclusionary programs often excluded Transgender college students.

Transgender people often face gender discrimination within their communities, including the LGBQ+ community, which greatly affects their engagement in social and educational occupations like friend groups and academia. Combined with the known stressor of higher education in a new environment, these students are at a high risk for nonoptimal occupational engagement in many aspects of their lives as college students. Transgender people are often seen as an excluded group, even within the LGBTQ+ community (Niccolazo, 2016). Historically fighting for the rights of the community associated, Transgender people are seen as the 'other' by many, causing existential isolation (Helm, Lifshin, Chau, & Greenberg, 2019). These thoughts often lead to suicidal ideation and execution. Excluded from mainstream conversations, people of marginalized gender identities have their own terms and language they have created for themselves. There are a variety of terms and identifications that are included as a part of this community, with different groups and people using various versions of the LGBT acronym. For the purpose of maximum inclusivity in this paper, the program developers have

chosen to use the acronym LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning

plus).

Background and Literature Review

Language

In order to understand the occupations of Transgender college students at the university level, the reader must first become acquainted with the LGBTQ+ community. The best way of delving into such a well-defined community begins with an introduction of terms and language used within and regarding said community; terms used to identify individual experiences of gender and sexuality (See Appendix A).

Understanding the nuances of these terms requires an understanding of gender theory, the difference between gender and sex. Sex refers to a person's biological status and is categorized as male, female, or intersex (i.e., atypical combinations of primary and/or secondary sex characteristics that typically distinguish male from female). There are a number of indicators of biological sex, including X and Y chromosomes, gonads, internal reproductive organs, and external genitalia. Most people's assigned sex, or the sex they are labeled as at birth, is based solely on their external genitalia at birth. Gender differs from sex in that it refers to the attitudes, feelings, and behaviors that a person identifies with and may or may not be what a given culture associates with a person's biological sex. Behavior that is compatible with cultural expectations is referred to as gender-normative; behaviors that are viewed as incompatible with these expectations constitute gender nonconformity. The definition of gender is not correlated to the terms *sex* or *sexuality*, which refers to the biological identification of a person at birth and a person's experience of sexual attraction, respectively. Gender is defined as a self-identification that does not necessarily conform to the societal gender expectations of binary identities (i.e., man or woman). The term *Transgender*, for the purpose of this project, refers to people who do not identify with the gender assigned to them at birth. People who do identify as their assigned gender are called *cisgender*. Cisgender people identify as either Male or Female, in accordance with the term assigned to

their birth sex. Transgender people then may identify as: a transwoman (meaning a person who identifies as a woman but was not assigned female at birth), a transman (a person who identifies as a man but was not assigned male at birth), or nonbinary (meaning they do not identify their gender as exclusively a man or exclusively a woman regardless of what they were assigned at birth) (Clarke, 2019; Dowers, White, Kingsley, & Swenson, 2019). Nonbinary refers to a wide range of gender identities that do not fall into the binary (male/female) categorization. Nonbinary individuals may use a wide array of terms to describe and/or categorize their gender identity. This project includes all people who identify as Transgender, including trans men, trans women, and nonbinary individuals.

Being Trans in the United States

Over time, the ways in which we talk about Trans[gender] identity and experience have changed. Each narrative has had personal and political significance, offering possibilities and limitations; for instance, the 'sex-gender misalignment' narrative aided in gaining medical assistance for transitioning but also reinforced heteronormative ways of thinking about sex and gender. There is no single narrative that fits every Trans body and no narrative that remains free from political and personal limitations. It is critical to be aware of how we share and listen to experiences of sex and gender, because the narratives we use can have powerful consequences (Kaufman, 2014).

The Transgender community in the U.S. today is more widely varied and accepted than ever before in the recorded history of post-European colonialization of this country (Beemyn, 2014). Transgender individuals are necessarily impacted by the predominant, heteronormative cisgender culture that has been influenced by decades of changing perceptions of their community. Transgender Americans have experienced legal and social discrimination for the ways they challenged the established gender systems of their society for the entirety of their documented existence (Beemyn, 2014).

Ever since sexologist Richard von Krafft-Ebing published the *Psychopathia Sexualis* in 1886, Western medicine has been entrenched in debate surrounding whether or not desires to dress, behave, and/or be perceived as a gender different than the one assigned at birth is a mental disorder (Beemyn, 2014). Krafft-Ebing's framework of cross-gender identification as a form of psychosis influenced over a hundred years of the medical and psychological fields' interactions with the Transgender community. As mental health professionals failed to produce even a single example of a patient who had been 'cured' of their desire to change sexes, the U.S. medical paradigm regarding Transgender individuals began to shift towards gender-affirmation (Beemyn, 2014). Where previous Transgender 'treatments' focused on returning the individual to a cisgender identity had failed, gender affirming treatments, designed to help the person present themself in alignment with their gender identity, were incredibly successful (Benjamin, 1966; Beemyn, 2014). The pathologized view of Transgender people was validated, despite its lack of evidence, in 1980 when the third edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM 3) was published. The term *transsexualism* was used and listed as a "disorder", characterized by a constant state of uncomfortability about one's anatomic sex and persistent wish to live as a member of the other sex and rid of one's genitals (APA, 1980 pp. 261-262). This was changed in the 1994 DSM 4 to *Gender Identity Disorder* and then finally, in 2013, the DSM 5 changed this yet again to *Gender Dysphoria* (Beemyn, 2014).

In 2020, Transgender people are considered, by most, to be a valid part of the LGBTQ+ community. Definitions of Transgender have expanded from simply FTM (female-to-male) and MTF (male-to-female) to encompass the whole range of identities known as Transgender, including nonbinary identities. Nonbinary individuals have rewritten the social idea of a gender binary to acknowledge the wide variety of human experiences beyond the experience of male and female. Support for people who identify as anything other than cisgender is increasing in the U.S. (Beemyn, 2014). Though current

trends show slight progress, the future is uncertain for this community. This does not mean that Transgender Americans today are free from the discrimination of the past. Almost half of all Transgender people in the U.S. report being denied equal treatment and experiencing discrimination and/or violence based on their gender identity (James, Herman, Rankin, Keisling, Motter, & Anafi, 2016). Not only that, but Transgender women of color are still one of the most harshly persecuted minorities in our country (James et. al., 2016). Many states still do not have laws protecting Transgender people from discrimination (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 2013). In 2012, Seamus Johnson, a Transgender man, lost his gender identity-based discrimination court case against the University of Pittsburg after he was expelled for utilizing the men's bathrooms and facilities on campus (Johnson v University of Pittsburg of the Commonwealth System of Higher Education, 2012). Twenty four percent of people who were out as or perceived to be Transgender in higher education report experiencing transphobia in their college environment and the unemployment rate of transgender Americans in 2015 was three times the unemployment rate of the United States population (James et.al., 2016).

The long history of disagreement on how Transgender people should be treated and viewed has created a clash of cultural contexts across America with the recent rapid political, psychological, and social cultural shifts. And as cisgender culture shifts, Transgender people's occupations and patterns of engagement shift (Beagan, Souza, Godbout, Hamilton, MacLeod, Paynter, & Tobin, 2012). Transgender people must navigate a variety of conflicting cultural and social contexts as they engage in their everyday occupations.

Occupation

Occupation has an array of interrelated definitions that describe various kinds of meaningful, purposeful activities in which individuals, groups, or communities engage in everyday life. Some common examples of occupations are dressing and hygiene, sleep, work and education, and social

participation. Engagement in occupations is intrinsically influenced by the social and cultural environment within which the actions take place. (AOTA, 2014). Humans engage in occupations to develop their intrinsic sense of self, an understanding of the world around them, and their place in it. As these needs evolve throughout a person's lifespan, occupations and the performance skills used to engage in occupations must evolve to match (Hitch, Pépin, & Stagnitti, 2014). Social, cultural, and personal environments and contexts that occupations are performed in have the potential to hinder occupational engagement, resulting in issues of occupational justice.

Being Transgender does not necessarily affect the type of occupations engaged in. Cisgender and Transgender college students can both engage in the same occupations in the same physical environment and yet have vastly different experiences of their occupational engagement due to a variety of influencing factors (Dowers et. al., 2019). For Transgender people, occupational engagement exists in the cultural and social environment that is shaped by the temporal context of Transgender history. In addition to this, the personal factors, and temporal contexts of a Transgender persons' unique experiences of their environment throughout their lifespan may impact their personal factors and occupational engagements (Dowers, et. al. 2019).

College students face a unique moment in their occupational life. As these emerging adults develop through new stages of their life, their occupations and patterns of occupational engagement change (McCarthy, McRae, & Hattjar, 2019). Many factors influence this occupational engagement including physical environment, social environment, policy, time availability, and mental or health wellbeing. During emerging adulthood, not only are the occupations and performance patterns evolving, but the factors, environments and contexts are changing as well (Arnette, 2000). For Transgender college students, the risk for occupational injustice increases due to their complex experience of occupations and the influencing factors (Dowers, White, Kingsley, Swenson, 2019).

Occupational Justice

Occupational justice is described by Wilcock and Townsend (2000) as the concept of "recognizing and providing for the occupational needs of individuals and communities as part of a fair and empowering society" (p 1). It is closely linked with social justice which shares the belief that just societies have an imperative to promote "fairness, empowerment, equitable access to resources, and the sharing of rights and responsibilities" (p.1). This is done through policies and actions that create means and opportunities, and acknowledgement of and dismantling systematic hindrances of oppression. Occupational justice focuses on occupational capacities and meanings within a society and draws from the concepts of occupational equity and fairness, which is to say respect for the various occupational differences within and between societal groups and individuals (Wilcock & Townsend, 2000). Whiteford and Townsend (2000) describe the experience of occupational injustice as occupational deprivation, when outside forces hinder an individual or groups ability to "do what is necessary and meaningful in their lives" (p1). Without an understanding of occupational justice and experiences of occupational deprivation, followed by actionable changes to support occupational equity and fairness, societies will remain unjust (Wilcock & Townsend, 2000).

Clare Hocking (2017) explained that within a community, occupational justice has the ability to restore a disconnect between people's quality of life and the societal conditions that hinder their occupational engagements. Occupations are contextually embedded, meaning that there are determinants, such as structural factors and personal characteristics, that may or may not affect an individual's occupational engagement (Hocking, 2017). In other words, if the person does not meet certain criteria, they may not be able to engage equally with their peers or even at all, thus creating occupational deprivation and alienation. Occupational alienation is the experience of "incompatibility with the occupations associated with a place, situation, or others" to the extent which creates hindrances

to individuals or community's ability to "attain or maintain basic needs" (Wilcock & Hocking, 2015, p 258). In the lives of Transgender people, this can be seen in where a person may experience such intense dysphoria, unsafety, and unwelcomeness in binary-gender public bathrooms and a lack of access to gender-neutral facilities that they are hindered from engaging in their basic activities of daily living (BADLs).

Advocating and enabling equitable occupational engagement can manifest occupational justice, however, the methods of doing so vary depending on the culture, time, and place due to the multiple ideas, traditions, and ways of life that shapes a person's occupational patterns, standards, and performances (Hocking, 2017). Occupational injustices may be obvious, and some may be hard to see for those outside of the affected communities, but all occupational injustices reinforce "inequities which touch the very essence of living" (Wilcock & Townsend, 2000, p 2). If we, as occupational therapists, do not bring attention to these issues, we cannot advocate for nor enact occupational justice.

Occupations of College Students

The reality of college is unique and nuanced for each individual student. College is a complex combination of school and social life. It is a time of building for the future while simultaneously discovering the self in the moment. Emerging adults engage in a variety of social, personal, educational, and sometimes spiritual activities, filling themselves with knowledge and experiences (Arnett, 2000). This critical period of identity and occupational exploration during emerging adulthood fulfills each person's intrinsic needs to be engaging in occupations, belonging in their social culture, and becoming who they will be in the future while seeking to understand the self and the world (Arnett, 2000; Eakman, 2010). To do this, students must manage their occupational engagement throughout the dynamic cultures of their unique college campus.

While the primary occupation for college students is education, for students who live in campus housing, and use campus facilities, these cultural influences may become involved in students' activities of daily life (ADLs). Students may utilize campus bathrooms, eat at campus dining halls, engage in self-care and personal hygiene activities, socialize with peers, and navigate their preferred method of functional mobility around campus. Students who live in campus housing will also experience their occupations of sleep, dressing, leisure, and those associated with home environment and maintenance in the cultural context of the dormitories. While formal education is its own occupation, it involves aspects of many other occupational engagements such as employment and volunteer exploration. Education can be broken down into the many components students need to accomplish to effectively complete their college education. Depending on their major, study habits, and personal factors, college students may engage in some or all of the following education activities; note taking, class attendance, out of class studying, homework assignments and essays, communication with professors and peers, and exams or presentation engagements (American Occupational Therapy Association [AOTA], 2014). For many emerging adults, college is also a time for sexual exploration and formulating their own sexual and/or gender identity (McCarthy, MacRae, & Hattjar, 2019).

LGBTQ+ College Students

College students who are part of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer plus (LGBTQ+) community engage in many of the same basic occupations and activities as their heterosexual, cisgender peers. However, the experiences of the same occupations may be quite different for people who are LGBTQ+. All occupational engagement for these students is influenced by the cultures on campus that their occupations take place in. Many LGBTQ+ people experience homophobic and/or transphobic discrimination from their cisgender/heterosexual peers (Dowers, White, Kingsley, & Swenson, 2019; Pryor, 2015; James, Herman, Rankin, Keisling, Mottet, & Anafi, 2016; Hong,

Woodford, Long, and Renn, 2016). These experiences of the culture around them necessarily shape

student's engagement with their occupations. Engagement in specific occupations such as social

activities and dressing may be influenced by their sexual and/or gender identity as well as the campus

cultures around them. While we have yet to identify occupations that are entirely unique to the LGBTQ+

community, there are elements of occupations that are experienced uniquely (Beagan et. al., 2012).

Gender/sexual minority students may feel during social engagement, the need to come 'out' or disclose

their personal identification (Pryor, 2015). While all people, regardless of gender and sexuality, engage

in occupations that convey their identity, this engagement may be more pronounced and conscious for

Transgender people (Beagan et.al., 2012). LGBTQ+ college students may also specifically seek out

social groups and spaces that are organized by and for people in their community (Beagan et. al. 2012).

      The LGBTQ+ community does exist on college campuses, however, there are moments where

the Transgender community is not included altogether. Hong et al. (2016) surveyed the experiences of

discrimination of LGBQ college students and found a statistically significant impact of heterosexist

aggression. The original study was intended for LGBTQ+ people, but a lack of Transgender participants

limited the study to sexual minorities.

      The lack of representation of Transgender experiences in studies is an issue when researching

literature specifically about the Transgender community. When looking up such literature, there is either

little to no information involving solely this community and where literature does exist, it is literature

that is outdated and transphobic. The outdated literature classifies Transgender individuals as

"transsexuals" or "crossdressers", which are now understood to be offensive terms. Research that

involves Transgender people is typically associated with research involving the broader LGBTQ+

community, and rarely specifically addresses Transgender identity and experience. The research that we

do have clearly indicates that Transgender people experience discrimination in a variety of ways that are

not being directly addressed. Further research is needed to understand the unique occupational experiences of the Transgender community.

Transgender College Students

Even with the Transgender community dealing with the many discriminatory issues throughout the years, there are still promising opportunities that have come about in the past decade. National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (2013) notes that 45% of the US population is covered by Transgender-inclusive nondiscrimination law. This fact is not specific to a school community, but there is also inclusivity on university and college campuses for gender identities and expressions. More than 720 campuses added the Transgender community to their policies involving nondiscrimination within the last seventeen years. Other gender-affirming policies that have begun to be implemented include gender-inclusive housing and bathrooms, hormone therapy, and gender-affirming surgeries under student health insurance (Beemyn, n.d.). Out in the Classroom, written by Jonathan T. Pryor (2015), discusses the issues on college campuses, such as rights and equality among cisgender and Transgender students. Transgender students who are going through their transitioning process in college face the complicated decision of whether or not they should reveal their gender identity. The unquestioned binary systems that are set within a college campus force Transgender students to conform to the binary gender roles assigned to them based on cisgender people's assumptions of an individual's gender or sex. College campuses do not always have inclusive, nonbinary areas, causing pressure among the community to perform gender "correctly" to avoid discrimination and harassment (Pryor, 2015).

Gender as an Occupation

The construction of gender begins at birth with an assigned sex based solely on external genitalia. With their sex and name to match on their birth certificate, the performance of gender commences; before the individual is able to be an agent in their own life, they are assigned a role. The

hospital begins the performance placing the boys in blue clothes and girls in pink. Societal gender norms are imposed for the entirety of each person's life based on binary expectations of their physical presentation. These imposed roles present themselves in a variety of occupational engagements throughout the lifespan (Kim, Shakory, Azad, Popovic, & Park, 2019). Formed by the accumulation of expected occupations associated with a gender, the expression of gender becomes its own occupation (Kim et. al., 2019; Beagan et. al., 2012; Dowers et. al., 2019).

Transgender people experience the occupation of gender, as well as other occupations, differently than cisgender people. Dowers, White, Kingsley and Swenson (2019) review how Transgender identities are expressed through dressing. Dressing enables individuals to present themselves as masculine or feminine. Transgender people partake in this occupation to physically express their gender identity such as choosing clothing or body structure modifications that affirm their gender identity (White, Kingsley & Swenson, 2019). Physical presentation, while deeply rooted in the need to express an intrinsic sense of self, is continually influenced by societal and cultural expectations of one's assumed gender (Dowers et. al., 2019).

Dressing is one aspect of the many occupational engagements involved in performing gender. Beagan et al. (2013) bring up how "both women and men engage in 'doing' occupations in particular ways to convey social identities" (p. 2). Examples of this would be in food preparation, childcare, financial provision, and household work, which are areas that are typically identified as either a man or a woman's role (Beagan et al., 2013). These are binary roles in society, hence why certain expectations about behavior and dressing are associated with binary genders of woman or man. Dressing is shaped not only by gender identity but how gender is portrayed, leading men and women to see themselves in a particular social identity (Beagan et al., 2013; Goodman et al., 2007). Transgender people do not always fulfill the gendered image that many societies portray to the world, which leads to issues where

cisgender people do not understand or respect Transgender people's identities. Daily occupations are affected because of this notion that there are certain roles men and women play in order to fulfill the societal definition of gender. Certain occupations can "provide safe spaces, community connections and identity pride" (Beagen et al., 2013; Williamson, 2000, p. 3). Other occupations do not provide that sense of safety to those who are non-binary.

Some Transgender people may pay more attention to occupations focusing on management of authentic relationships. These relationships are mainly with family, friends, and colleagues and focus on minimizing rejection and maximizing safety (Bergan-Gander & von Kurthey, 2006; Beagan et. al., 2013). If not careful, their safety may be in danger because of those who do not understand their identity. Managing the harassment and possible violence is, unfortunately, a reality for those in the LGBTQ+ community, especially for Transgender people. Anti-transgender violence, harassment, rejection, and prejudice, whether subtle or blatant, is called "transphobia" (Dowers, White, Kingsley & Swenson, 2019). A Philadelphia study reported that those who appeared gender-ambiguous faced harassment and sexual assault in public areas such as classrooms, elevators, or subways (Connell, 2010; Doan, 2010; Beagan et al., 2013). This leads to people who do not present as a binary gender "feeling unsafe in public places" (Kenagy, 2005; Beagan et al., 2013, p. 3). For this reason, many Transgender and Nonbinary people may perform gender in ways that do not align with their gender identity in an effort to appear cisgender and protect themselves from potential transphobia.

Gender can directly shape occupation. Transgender individuals experience occupation differently due to personal factors such as body structures and societal expectations of their gender identity and/or expression. The use of occupations, such as grooming or occupations which revolve around changing a physical appearance to convey gender, also add to the experience of gender as occupation.

Environment and Transgender Occupations

Transgender people in America must navigate their occupational engagement through a cis-normative social culture. Gender and sexual minorities may feel pressure regarding whether or not to come out (Pryor, 2015). Coming out is a process of revealing one's sexuality, gender, pronouns, and/or name. Coming out due to necessity occurs often for Transgender students. Student information systems (SIS) that list and display a student's pre-transition name and or assigned sex may out these students to anyone within campus staff with whom they interact, including professors. Kristen Schilt and Laurel Westbrook (2009) discussed a study about the presentation of heteronormativity and the tie between gender and sexuality, where transgender men who were transitioning from woman-identified to man-identified in the workplace were immediately given "male" tasks, such as carrying heavy items, thus reinforcing gender binary normativity. Transgender men experienced a reinforcement of binary gender roles in their workplace when they were assigned "male" tasks such as carrying heavy items immediately after beginning their social transition (Schilt & Westbrook, 2009). When faced with occupations involving preparation/sharing of public spaces--(e.g., restroom or locker room) --some gender minority students felt excluded. The program was not inclusive of the student needs and "should have already been thought out" when the student started school (Patton, 2009). This further demonstrates how society automatically categorizes individuals into behaviors and occupations that fit within a gender binary construct (McCarthy, Ballog, Carranza & Lee, 2020, p. 5).

McCarthy, Ballog, Carranza, and Lee (2020) discussed the occupation of doing nonbinary gender in their study, where participants expressed frustration about binary gender roles in all aspects of life, as well as feeling marginalized in the dominant cisgender binary culture. They sought out spaces that differed from social binary environments and allowed a sense of safety and validation from peers (McCarthy et al., 2020). It is this information about inequities affecting members of the Transgender

community which inspires the creators of this project to create college and university programming that supports inclusion and equity for Transgender students.

Theoretical Framework

Person, Environment, Occupation and Performance

Person, Environment, Occupation, and Performance (PEOP) is a client-centered model created by Carolyn M. Baum and Charles Christiansen (2005). It is organized to enhance their "everyday performance of necessary and valued occupations of individuals, organizations, and populations and their meaningful participation in the world around them" (Baum & Christiansen, 2005, p. 244). The model is visually represented with four spheres: person, environment, occupation, and performance. The space where all the four spheres overlap represent how they all influence occupational performance. According to Baum, Christiansen, and Bass-Haugen (2015), occupation describes the needs and wants of the individual's daily life and performance is the act of doing the occupation which is influenced by a combination of personal factors and the environment where the occupations are performed (Baum & Christiansen, 2015).

Occupational engagement is motivated and performed by the individual and necessarily takes place in an environmental context which will impact both the individual and their occupational performance. Analyzing the four components, it is important to consider not only how it affects the performance of an individual as a whole, but how the individual's occupational performance reflects the act of doing (Baum & Christiansen, 2015). Consideration of the interrelationship of occupation and performance are important to understand the person's engagement in the occupational performance.

Doing, Being, Becoming, and Belonging

In 1998, Wilcock developed the Doing, Being, Becoming framework to view an individual's engagement with occupation and how this forms their sense of connection to the world. This framework

highlights a synthesis of people's engagement in occupation, their sense of self-identity, and their transformative life journey towards their optimal quality of life. People engage with the world around them through the doing of occupations. The term 'doing' has become synonymous with meaningful occupational engagement (Molineux & Baptiste, 2011; Hitch, Pépin, & Stagnitti, 2014). The 'doing' of occupations incorporates personal significance from the individual's active physical, cognitive, and psychosocial engagement (Hitch, Pépin, & Stagnitti, 2014). In other words, a meaningful ADL for a Transgender person is engaging in the 'doing' of dress as a form of gender expression. Doing is how we shape not only our own lives, but also the society around us.

The concept of 'being' in conjunction with 'doing' is often misconstrued as the development of being through doing occupations that fulfill social or personal roles (Wilcock, 1998). However, Wilcock posits a more holistic interpretation of being lies within the times between occupations, when a person is at rest, where their inner self is expressed and acknowledged. In fact, it is this misconception of 'being' as dependent on 'doing' that leads to breakdowns in the realms of health and psychosocial and personal wellness (Wilcock, 1998). Experiences that are tied to social roles can both induce and hinder self-discovery and development if an individual focuses too heavily on the occupations that fulfill their expected roles and not on their personal needs and experiences. (Hitch, Pépin, & Stagnitti, 2014).

'Becoming', the third concept, relates to change and development and has a provided definition from Wilcock, which is "to become (somehow different), to grow, for something to come into being" (Wilcock, 2006, p. 148; Hitch, Pépin, & Stagnitti, 2014, p. 238). 'Becoming', as noted by Hitch, Pépin, Stagnitti, "is rarely the result of an individual's pure vision" (2014, p. 238). 'Doing' will eventually transition into 'becoming', where a new self emerges and involves constant reaction and adjustment in different areas of an individual's life, including their family, friends, and broader social network (Pickens et al., 2010; Hitch, Pépin, & Stagnitti, 2014).

The synthesis of these three is the understanding as occupational therapists that "becoming through doing and being is part of daily life for all people" (Wilcock, 1998, p 6). When individuals experience hindrances in one of these areas, it negatively impacts all the others. This in turn can have significant impacts on health and quality of life which "is created and lived by people within the settings of their everyday life; where they learn, work, play, and love" (WHO, 1986).

This consideration of the contextual elements present in all occupational engagement is what prompted Hitch, Pépin, and Stagnitti to highlight the final and often overlooked element of this framework: belonging. Belonging can be understood as a sense of being in a relationship with the world around us. When a person's environment changes, they may need to seek out new ways of belonging or adjust their sense of being and their journey of becoming to be able to achieve a new sense of belonging (Hitch, et al., 2014). As a minority group, Transgender people may struggle to experience belonging in predominantly cisgender spaces. This may be in part why in recent years many Transgender people have turned to virtual contexts to form communities with similar experiences and find a place of belonging even in isolating physical and social environments.

Doing, being, becoming, and belonging are all interconnected facets of human existence in their world. Optimal engagement in these is a significant determinant of health and quality of life. The World Health Organization's 1986 Ottawa charter for health promotion highlighted that "to reach a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, an individual or group must be able to identify and to realize aspirations, to satisfy needs, and to change or cope with the environment" (para. 3). For Transgender people, these concepts can be complex and there are many invisible hinderances to engagement that are not experienced by cisgender people. These unaddressed hinderances and their impact on the lives and occupational engagement of Transgender college students is the driving force of this project.

Methods

Reflexive Statement

The project team is comprised of two emerging adult occupational therapy master's students currently enrolled in Dominican University of California: a white Queer-identifying nonbinary student and a Filipino-American cisgender heterosexual female with a minor in gender studies. The project supervisor is a white cisgender female occupational therapist. All project developers have a social, political, and occupational interest in gender issues, are involved with the Transgender and LGBTQ+ communities, and are members of the Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity (COTAD).

Statement of Purpose

As college becomes a social praxis--ingrained as an expected practice--in Western culture, a growing need emerges in higher education support for minority students (Gordon, 1991). Transgender students, a minority group often excluded even from the larger LGBTQ+ community, are not being seen and served equitably in institutions of higher education. Transgender college students are a community often ignored in higher education, with support programs focused primarily on serving low socioeconomic or ethnic minority students. While some colleges have begun to institute programs and policies to meet the needs of LGBTQ+ students, this community is vast and rarely do these programs have specific resources to meet the unique needs of gender minorities. Transgender students are not provided the equal opportunity to authentically engage in occupations in these institutions of higher education. The social and physical environments created and perpetuated within institutions of higher education impede and deter occupational engagement of Transgender students. As a population at risk for occupational injustice, occupational scientists and occupational therapy practitioners are in a

uniquely well-suited position to advocate for and implement interventions to promote equitable occupational engagement.

Project Development

Project Design

The culmination of this project is an occupation-focused program of implementable changes colleges and universities can enact to support equitable engagement for Transgender college students. The program will emphasize the physical, cultural, and social environmental impacts on occupational engagement, psychosocial experiences, and quality of life. The project developers are citing Linda Fazio's book *Developing Occupation-Centered Programs for the Community* (2008) as guidance for the program development process.

The target population is Transgender college students in the U.S. who were attending in-person classes in 2018 or 2019.

Community Profile

This project began with a community profile of the Transgender student population at University of California, Berkeley (UCB). This included undergraduate and graduate students, and off-campus students and students living in university housing. UCB was selected for its large and diverse student population and variety of LGBTQ+ services, such as their Transgender Care Team, Gender Equity Resource, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Resources. A large aim of this project was to understand how the services provided on college and university campuses are and are not effectively meeting Transgender students' needs. The original plan for project development included interviews and focus groups with survey participants. Due to COVID-19 school shutdowns and shelter-in-place orders, the program developers had to expand their population outreach through social media instead of conducting in-person follow up. Reddit and Twitter accounts were made with links to surveys and the

project developers posted solicitation for participants on prominent LGBTQ+ and Transgender virtual

spaces. Through using these virtual contexts, the program developers have expanded the population of

the community profile to include Transgender students at colleges and universities throughout the

United States.

Needs Assessment

The needs assessment was conducted via a survey which contained qualitative and quantitative

data collection. The survey was advertised using paper flyers posted around UCB campus and online

forums for Transgender people. A separate survey containing the same questions was also distributed to

staff and faculty at UCB campus. The survey was split by those who identify and did not identify as

Transgender in order to gain insight into how cisgender people were perceiving the needs and

experiences of Transgender students. Inclusion criteria was that the respondent be either a student or

faculty or staff who was working at or attending college in 2018 and/or 2019. The survey asked

participants to state if they identified as Transgender in order to compare the responses of Cisgender and

Transgender participants. No identifying data was collected. Total participants were 19 Berkeley

students (18 Transgender, 1 Cisgender); 4 Berkeley Staff (3 Transgender, 1 Cisgender) and 17 students

from colleges and universities across the U.S. (9 Transgender, 8 Cisgender). The responses of all

Transgender students and Cisgender students were averaged separately. The first 12 questions of the

survey utilized a Likert Scale of 1 to 5, 1 meaning "strongly disagree" and 5 meaning "strongly agree".

These 12 questions are laid out in Table 1.1.

At the end of these questions, survey respondents were asked to explain if they had answered

"disagree" or "strongly disagree" to any of the previous 12 questions. This gave an understanding of

exactly what respondents felt was the reason that their school did not adequately serve Transgender

students. Respondents were also asked to identify what resources and programs existed on their campus,

whether they were helpful or not, and why they did or did not adequately meet the needs of Transgender students. Program developers asked respondents to provide any additional comments or concerns they had regarding their college or universities relationship with Transgender students. This qualitative information provided further insight into exactly what types of programs were successful, what changes could be made to existing programs, and what new programs needed to be introduced to colleges and universities. The survey ended by asking participants for any comments or concerns they had regarding the survey as a reflexive method of ensuring it was not furthering systemic transphobia. This allowed participants to provide information that was not directly asked for in any of the previous questions.

Table 1 Survey Questions 1-12

| Q	Survey Questions
1	The college/university I currently go to provides support for Transgender students on campus
2	There are resources and programs on campus that meet the needs of Transgender students
3	The resources and programs provided on campus assures the safety of Transgender students/helps them feel safe on campus
4	This college campus meets the needs of Cisgender students and Transgender students equally
5	The faculty/staff at this college treat Cisgender students and Transgender students equally
6	The staff/faculty have an appropriate understanding of the Transgender community
7	Cisgender students treat Transgender students equally to their Cisgender peers
8	Transgender students are safe to come out/express their gender identities on campus
9	Campus facilities (i.e., bathrooms, dorms, locker rooms) provide safe and equitable options for Transgender and Nonbinary students (including non-gendered options)
10	Transgender students have equal opportunity and ability to succeed at the university as their Cisgender peers
11	Transgender students *do not* face discrimination for their gender identity on campus
12	Transgender students *do* face discrimination for their gender identity on campus

Findings

Qualitative Findings

The responses to the 12 quantitative survey questions (averaged by group in table 1.2) highlighted baseline discrepancies between Cisgender people's and Transgender people's perceptions of their universities' Transgender inclusion. The responses from a Cisgender staff person were taken from only one respondent so their responses may not accurately portray the majority of Cisgender staff. However, it is worth noting that Cisgender students and staff rated their colleges and universities higher in almost every question than did Transgender staff and students. The exceptions to this trend are questions 1, 2, and 12 which asked if programs and resources for Transgender students exist on campus, if these programs and resources met the needs of Transgender students, and if Transgender students faced discrimination on campus. Transgender staff and students scored these questions higher than cisgender staff and students, indicating that there were existing programs for Transgender students that met some of the students' needs, and that Transgender students did face discrimination on campus.

Transgender respondents answered more positively that there were programs and resources for Transgender students. However, cisgender respondents rated these services higher than Transgender respondents in terms of assuring the safety of Transgender students on campus and equally meeting the needs of Transgender and Cisgender students. Transgender participants contradicted the responses of cisgender participants, reporting that faculty, staff, and students did not treat Transgender and cisgender students equally, faculty and staff lacked an adequate understanding of the Transgender community, and Transgender students do not have equal opportunities to succeed as their cisgender peers. Transgender participants additionally responded that campus facilities such as bathrooms were not provided in an equitable manner that met the needs of Transgender students and ensured their safety. Almost all participants agreed that Transgender people face discrimination on their campus.
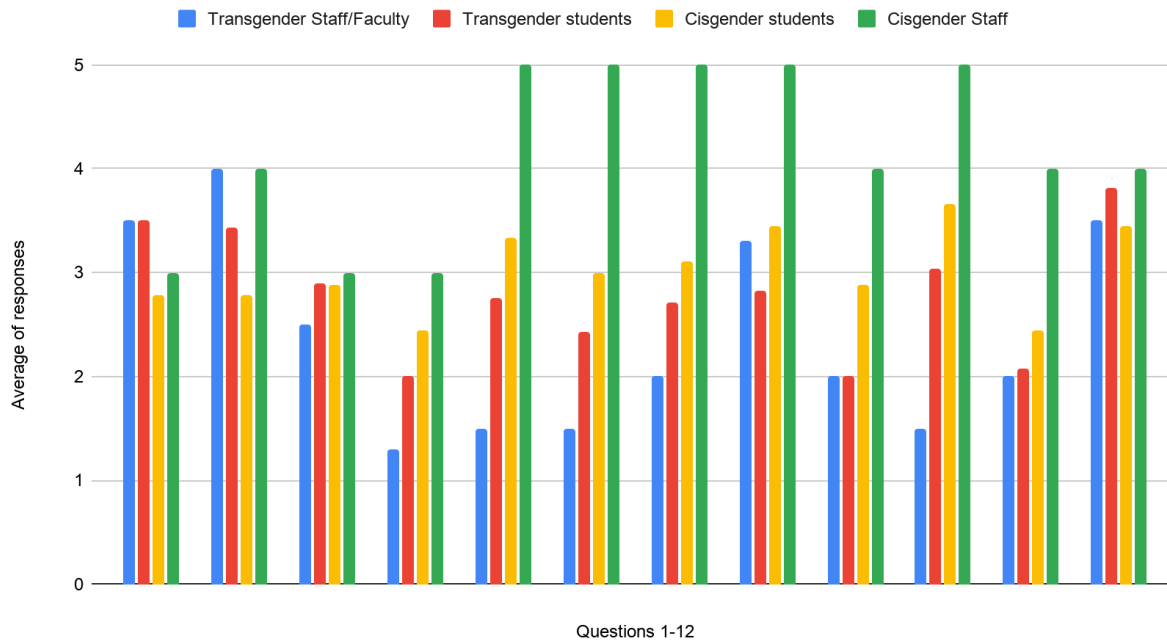
Note: *Cisgender staff was limited to one survey respondent due to project changes following COVID-19 shelter-in-place order.

Quantitative Findings

Along with these quantitative responses, the program developers also coded the qualitative responses to short-answer questions. The program developers utilized inductive coding methods, allowing themes to emerge from the responses. Three themes related to the experiences and needs of Transgender college and university students were identified: Transgender resources, the physical and psychosocial environment, and systemic transphobia.

Transgender Resources

Participants identified a variety of programs, and departments that provided resources for Transgender students as well as in which ways these programs were meeting their needs, and in which areas there was need for improvement from their personal experiences. All identifying information from respondents such as names of programs or universities have been removed for confidentiality.

Benefits.

Campus health centers that provided transition related services were identified as a positive resource by many transgender participants. Some students attended universities that have "a dedicated trans health care team" which included "primary care providers and mental health providers", both of which were identified by participants as being "incredibly useful" in both their "social and physical transition". Some universities were able to provide on-campus transition care such as "a trans care team that can prescribe hormones", as well as had resources for off-campus care providers where students could obtain transition care covered by the school health insurance. Some schools additionally provided routes for students to apply for financial assistance for transition related needs.

Support-groups and other community-building opportunities such as "a group therapy organization that meets weekly", "a trans support group", and LGBTQ+ trans-inclusive living spaces in the dorms were all identified by transgender participants as being "very helpful in finding resources and connecting with other trans people". Information, resources, and community-building opportunities were some of the most important aspects of what campus programs provided, according to transgender participants.

Limitations.

Regardless of the number of programs identified on their campus and the resources these programs provided, all transgender participants stated that there were needs of transgender students that were not being met. One participant summarized this limitation saying, "[The existing trans support centers] are great but cannot do everything it takes to ensure safety and equal access". The most commonly expressed drawbacks of existing programs and resources were that these were often underfunded and small, which prevented them from being able to provide a wider variety of support.

Often programs operated on volunteer commitments and internal fundraising which was noted by two participants who said "[The existing resource] is the bare minimum and seemingly sparsely funded and often closed" and that "there is no dedicated LGBTQ or Trans center on campus that has staff paid specifically to serve trans students".

Many participants indicated they had no knowledge of if any resources existed on their campus and felt that this was a major failing on part of the university. "No specific resources or protection. No plans in place for inevitable harassment." Whether caused by a lack of resources or a lack of visibility of those resources, students who had no knowledge of programs for Transgender students more frequently reported feeling unsupported and experiencing daily barriers and transphobia.

Campus health centers were a space where multiple participants reported experiencing transphobia. Systems that delayed transgender students access to health care were a major source of inequity.

"As far as unhelpful services, I know the [Transgender healthcare team] means well, but it's weird that you have to see a 'trans-certified' doctor when you just have a cold. Oftentimes trans folk at [my university] just pretend they're cis at [the health center] because of that and they've reported better experiences. I don't think having that divide is helpful or necessary"

Person-to-person transphobia within campus health centers were also identified with one participant noting "I have heard students report being deadnamed, misgendered, or even told casual transphobic remarks by medical providers at the university health center." Where transition and gender-affirmation services were provided, some students experienced barriers accessing these services. One transgender student described their experience of accessing their school's transgender healthcare services, "trans specific care ... can be helpful but require many hoops, lack clarity, and some

gatekeeping depending on the medical profession". Another transgender student expressed even greater difficulty, stating "receiving transition care is difficult or impossible."

Very few participants identified name changes in SIS as an obstacle. This may in part be due to how the questions were phrased as well as the recent increase in colleges and universities creating easily accessible avenues for students to change their names (Campus Pride, 2020). However, some participants still expressed that the "name change process was difficult" and they were unable to change their "name or gender in certain systems".

Graduate students reported feeling unsupported even when transgender resources were available on campus. As one transgender graduate student explained, the difficulty that Transgender students experience trying to "navigate for basic needs" was made even more complex by the added difficulty of "navigating a grad program". One graduate student stated that they did not think that groups targeted at the needs of undergraduate students would address the different needs of graduate students, "I only know of undergrad focused trans student groups on campus, so I haven't attended any of them, since the needs and social circles of undergrad tend to be different". Other graduate students reported feeling "unwelcome in the space as a grad student," and went on to say, "I feel pretty unsupported in my graduate program". However, programs that did incorporate graduate students and address their needs such as a "trans and nonbinary peer support group [which] has many participants in both grad and undergrad" were seen as being "comfortable for both".

Physical and Psychosocial Environment

Participants described a variety of environmental factors that affected their occupational engagement and experiences on college campuses. These environmental factors included both physical environment, such as gender-neutral bathrooms, as well as the psychosocial environment as it was shaped by acceptance and transphobia they experienced on campus and in the classroom.

Gender-Neutral Facilities.

The lack of gender-neutral facilities, namely bathrooms and locker rooms, on college and university campuses was the most frequently mentioned form of inequality noted by both transgender and cisgender participants. No participants identified any non-gendered locker rooms on their campus, including students on campuses where gender-neutral bathrooms were available. "There's not a place in the locker room for trans/non-binary [people] besides the binary gendered locker rooms". Participants on campuses that did have gender-neutral or non-gendered bathrooms reported these to be too few with varying barriers to access.

"While we are making steps to provide more gender-neutral restrooms, there are so few on campus and often they're on only one odd floor in a given building. It's not the easiest to navigate especially since many trans students don't know where gender neutral restrooms are. I've seen fellow trans students get told off by teachers for taking long finding the bathroom that they'd feel comfortable using. It shouldn't be that hard to find a place for us to pee."

Many participants noted that gender-neutral and trans-friendly restrooms were "hard to dependably find" as they were not available in every building. Along with gender-neutral bathrooms being only in "a few floors of a few buildings" on campus, they were also reportedly "generally on higher floors or in the sides and back of buildings". Several participants reported that "some of the only gender-neutral bathrooms" they had access to were locked, requiring students to request a key, "leaving your card and having to unlock the door yourself".

The need for gender-neutral bathrooms was shown by students who discussed feeling unsafe in binary gender bathrooms due to potential or previously experienced transphobic harassment. The social environment of binary gendered bathrooms was seen to "facilitate harassment of trans students even in Queer spaces". Multiple participants named recent incidents on their college campuses affecting

transgender women who had been "harassed in a women's restroom". Another transgender student stated, "my friends and I have trouble entering bathrooms based on the way we present ourselves". While this participant did not explicitly state that the difficulty they faced was caused by harassment from other students, many participants agreed that "gendered bathrooms can be a scary place, even for trans folk who pass". Transgender students on many college and university campuses experience inequality directly stemming from lack of access to bathrooms where they are safe to engage in the basic activity of daily living of toileting.

Transphobia and Invalidation on Campus.

Transgender participants identified several ways in which they experienced transphobia on their college or university campus. This included not only direct transphobia such as hearing transphobic comments, but also invalidation of students' transgender identity in such instances as being misgendered and referred to by their dead name or their name from before they transitioned. Student diplomas and class rosters often referred to students "only in their full legal names" regardless of whether or not that was the lived name the student went by. Even on campuses where effort was made to support transgender students, there were still opportunities for transphobic interactions. This was noted by one participant who said, "regardless of the professional stance of the university, students and faculty can be individually transphobic".

Transgender student participants described an environment of heteronormativity in their classes. "Binarism is rampant in classrooms" was a commonly reported experience by participants who discussed being dead named and misgendered in class. One of many transgender students reported, "I am misgendered daily, sometimes in front of other students", which often resulted in those students being outed as transgender to their classmates. This participant continued, saying, "I experience regular looks and comments that make it known I am neither understood nor welcome". Many participants felt

this was largely due to a lack of cultural competency on the part of the staff. Some participants said that "most professors are not understanding of trans people" and others reported that "the amount of cultural and sensitivity training is low".

"Things that seem helpful such as having everyone introduce their pronouns at the start of the semester is nice until you realize that not a lot of people actually remember your pronouns and often misgender you. I believed that to be more of an issue of a lack of teaching people about transness and identities that aren't cisnormative."

Lack of Transgender knowledge and understanding was also identified amongst peer-to-peer interactions. Participants described a culture of "cisnormativity" and hearing "horrible transphobic comments" from cisgender students on their campus. Some participants felt that cisgender students were unwilling to step up for them in instances of transphobia. One transgender student said, "there is little effort on part of my peers to understand me or my experiences".

Student participants who reported transphobic interactions to campus administration stated that there were "no repercussions for violence against trans students," and "absolutely no support from administration". Some students chose not to report because they felt they "have no reason to believe [the Title IX office] will handle things competently". The reactive approach taken by university to counteracting transphobia was noted by participants as insufficient protection from harassment. Many participants described a "broader culture of not speaking up in the face of anti-trans violence," which resulted in the university relying on Transgender students to "feel safe and empowered and knowledgeable enough" to report these issues. One participant stated, "I shouldn't even have to report a professor for repeated misgendering, the [graduate student instructors], other students, other colleagues should be doing that work". Transgender students who experienced lack of accountability on the part of the university felt it "made it clear how disregarded" they are on their college and university campuses.

Resources as Environments.

In discussion of campus support resources for Transgender students, many participants identified the spaces created by those resources as additional environments that contributed to their occupational engagements and well-being. Peer support groups and LGBTQ+ living spaces in campus dorms were reportedly spaces where transgender students were able to develop a supportive community environment. Offices of programs the provided events and resources, as well as the events themselves were also noted as "nice safe spaces" where students could go and be sure they would not experience harassment. Conversely, transgender student participants described a negative experience of the environment in programs and spaces where students did experience transphobia. Misgendering, deadnaming, and "repeated discrimination" all contributed to creating an environment where students did not feel safe or respected.

Systemic Transphobia

Systemic transphobia was noted by multiple participants as a barrier to accessing higher education, especially as it disproportionately impacts transgender women. Gender discrimination in jobs, domestic violence, health disparities, and poverty were all identified by transgender participants as outcomes of systemic transphobia that impacted transgender peoples' occupational and educational attainment. Furthermore, many transgender students felt there was little to no awareness nor efforts to counteract these systemic barriers on the part of their college or university. "The economic barriers to university attendance faced by trans people, especially trans women, aren't especially alleviated by the university… The resources and opportunities aren't the same." Participants indicated that the existing resources on their campus, often described as being disproportionate to the size and diversity of their campus, were insufficient to "counteract the broader systems of violence trans people suffer under".

From analysis of the quantitative and qualitative findings, the program developers identified ten points of actions to be taken on the part of the university to support occupational and educational equity for transgender students. The ten points identified were: access to gender-inclusive bathrooms, transgender-inclusive housing, name changes in the student information system (SIS), transgender-informed healthcare, programs to address students' needs, university response to transphobia, faculty and staff education, cisgender student education, scholarships to address systemic transphobia, and responsibility to transgender students' needs. These ten points were developed into ten sections of a transgender inclusion program and included both what transgender student identified as being supportive and areas where participants noted a need for improvement.

Transgender College Student Equity and Inclusion Program

The Transgender Inclusivity Program was divided into ten sections, each addressing a different area of change needed to support Transgender students. These ten sections are Gender-Neutral facilities, Transgender housing, Name change in registrar, Healthcare accessibility, Programs for Transgender students, Addressing Transphobia, Faculty and Staff education, Transgender curriculum education, Scholarships for Transgender students, and Listen to Transgender students.

Each section was structured and written based on the responses of the participants, addressing the issues they have encountered on their campus with students, faculty, and staff. Furthermore, comparisons are listed in the program to understand how Transgender inclusivity would be implemented on bigger campuses versus smaller campuses. Although the data was initially gathered from UCB, a university that is widely known to have a big campus, the program sections are tailored to be adaptable for other colleges and universities to implement ideas of Transgender inclusivity on their campus, regardless of school size. The aim of this program is to not only educate the university or college about their Transgender students, but to create a safe and welcoming environment for them to participate in their everyday activities along with their cisgender peers, without having to feel discrimination due to their gender identity. This transgender student inclusion and equity program reflects the needs assessment findings that meaningful change requires collaborative effort across all campus departments

Table 2 Transgender College Student Equity and Inclusion Program Outline

	Sections identified from findings analysis	Transgender Inclusion and Equity Program	Points of implementation
1.	Access to gender-neutral bathrooms	Gender-Neutral facilities	- Sanitary trash cans in men's bathroom - Equal amount of non-gendered bathrooms
2.	Transgender-inclusive campus housing	Transgender housing	- All schools: transgender students choose gender to dorm with - Large schools: LGBTQ+ dorm building - Small schools: LGBTQ+ hall of existing dorms
3.	Name changes in Student Information System	Name change in registrar	- Email and class registration reflect student's lived name - Pronouns on roster
4.	Transgender Healthcare needs	Healthcare Accessibility	- All staff educated on transgender needs - Transition services covered by student health insurance - Large school: Transgender healthcare team - Small school: resources for receiving transition services
5.	Programs to address students' needs	Programs for Transgender students	- Graduate and undergraduate - Paid staff - Advertisement
6.	University response to transphobia	Addressing Transphobia	- Proactive approach - Institutional silence impacts students
7.	Faculty and staff education	Faculty and Staff education	- Mandatory - Normalize pronouns
8.	Cisgender student education	Transgender curriculum education	- Incorporate transgender experiences - Transgender speakers
9.	Scholarships to address systemic transphobia	Scholarships for Transgender students	- Provide resources and opportunities for transgender students
10.	Responsivity to transgender students' needs	Listen to Transgender students	- Take their concerns seriously - Meaningful effort into correct issues

Gender-Neutral Facilities

Gender-neutral and all-gender bathrooms must be made as available and accessible as binary gender bathrooms. The already provided binary bathrooms on college campuses need to be made transgender accessible. Two examples of Transgender accessibility are when men's bathrooms have trashcans in the stalls for transgender men to dispose of pads and tampons, and when all bathrooms have changing tables for parents of all genders. Furthermore, it is vital to provide a clear signage of where these bathrooms are so Transgender students know where to go if they need to use them. A campus bathroom map indicating where the different bathrooms are located can also support ease of access.

Transgender Housing

All universities, regardless of size, need to have Transgender-inclusive housing policies. Transgender people should have the ability to decide what gender they feel most comfortable rooming with. At a large university, there should be an LGBTQ+ dorm building for Queer and Transgender students to create a safe and social living environment. Dedicating a building solely for Queer and Transgender students may not be easily achievable at a smaller school, so this can be accomplished this through a dedicated LGBTQ+ hall of an existing dorm building that is already on campus.

Name Change in Registrar

Student emails and registration should be set up with students' lived names and allow for students to change their name if needed without legal name change. Student's lived name and pronouns should be shown on class rosters without students' deadnames. This will prevent students being outed without their consent. Degrees should be given out with the student's lived name.

Healthcare Accessibility

All healthcare staff, including mental health counselors, should be educated on transgender terminology and experiences. A larger school may have trained transgender-health specialists who are able to provide gender-affirmation transition procedures. A smaller school should ensure that transition services are covered by student health insurance and have resources to refer students to transgender health specialists in the area. Schools with a dedicated Transgender healthcare team should refrain from referring students to the specialist team for non-gender related healthcare needs such as common illnesses. This will prevent health disparities caused by delayed access to healthcare.

Programs for Transgender Students

Programs should be available to address the needs of transgender students, be accessible to both graduate and undergraduate, be funded with a paid staff, and be advertised to ensure incoming students are aware of the resources available to them. Programs and program offices can provide a safe space for gender minority students on campus. Programs for students should be aware of and include the experiences of Transgender students such as facing transphobia and the increased risk for domestic violence.

Addressing Transphobia

Universities need to take a proactive approach to transphobia with cisgender faculty and staff and make them aware of the issue, as well as addressing it when it occurs. The responsibility cannot be entirely on Transgender students to feel knowledgeable and empowered to address this alone. Cisgender faculty, staff, and students should be aware of when transphobia occurs and address it before a transgender student has to make a report.

Faculty and Staff Training

Faculty and staff trainings need to be mandatory so that all of campus is aware of the needs and experiences of transgender students. Feedback from Transgender students indicate that when these trainings are optional, the faculty who need it most will not attend. These training should include education on the language and experiences of Transgender students as well as how to address transphobia, the effect of deadnaming and misgendering, and how to normalize introducing pronouns in class. Staff for various departments should include trainings on the type of requests they may receive from transgender students and how to appropriately address their needs. Faculty and staff from graduate and undergraduate programs should be equally trained to ensure all students receive equitable support. These trainings can be done in collaboration with LGBTQ+ community organizations. In addition to thorough training, there should be consequences for faculty and staff who repeatedly deadname, misgender, or otherwise perpetuate transphobia against Transgender students.

Transgender Curriculum

Transgender experiences should also be integrated into curriculum. Gender and minority studies, healthcare majors, art, and history are just a few examples of courses where the history, experiences, and needs of transgender people could be incorporated. Transgender curriculum integration will not only add to the breadth of course material but will also support students in becoming knowledgeable about diverse communities. Transgender guest speakers and faculty or staff should be included in these classes to ensure the material presented is relevant and appropriate. Additionally, Transgender terminology and experiences should be incorporated into mandatory new student trainings. Many schools already implement some form of sexual assault awareness training, but often these lack valuable knowledge about the experiences of transgender students. Education on diverse experiences is how we create an inclusive and educated student body.

Scholarships for Transgender Students

Scholarships, jobs, and grants should be made available to transgender students who are facing financial barriers in order to counteract systemic transphobia. Schools should have a list of scholarships available to LGBTQ+ students which students can easily access. Many schools have a section of their financial aid website that lists resources to LGBTQ+ scholarships and databases where these scholarships can be found. Scholarships to counteract systemic transphobia and the barriers to higher education it creates are a valuable resource to transgender students who are struggling financially. Additionally, schools may include resources for transgender individuals to receive financial assistance for the purpose of gender affirmation transition procedures.

Listening to Transgender Students

Universities and their faculty and staff need to actively listen to transgender students and the needs and concerns they express. The needs of transgender students need to be taken seriously and meaningful work should be put into correcting the issues that create barriers to transgender students educational and occupational engagement.

Project Implementation

The program developers met with a variety of groups and departments at their own university, Dominican University of California (DUC), to present this Transgender student inclusion and equity program and engage in collaborative discussion on how to implement these changes. The groups and individuals involved so far in the implementation process have been People Respecting Intersectionality Diversity and Equity (PRIDE) club, Diversity Action Group (DAG), director of facilities, Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity (COTAD), campus health center, director of housing, director of IT, registrar staff, and alumni relations staff. The program developers have plans to continue presentations and implementation with these and other departments in 2021. Implementation involved trainings, panels, presentations, and discussions which often resulted in referrals to other groups, individuals, and departments to present and collaborate.

The first program presentation was with COTAD, a group of OT students, and involved educating cisgender students on how to advocate for Transgender students as well as receiving feedback from peers in the OT field on the occupational perspective of this program. Student presentations continued with PRIDE club where the program developers again educated cisgender students on Transgender students experiences and advocacy. Meeting with the PRIDE club students also provided an opportunity to receive input from LGBTQ+ and Transgender students at DUC. In this meeting, PRIDE club members highlighted certain phrasing on housing registration forms that asked students to say how they felt about living with a Transgender student. LGBTQ+ students felt that this question unfairly marginalized them and set a standard of transphobia amongst the student body. The program developers brought this concern to housing where it was recognized that this question is largely in place to protect Transgender students from being placed in a dorm room with someone who is transphobic. Program developers and the housing director collaborated on the inclusion of a second question which

asked students how they felt about living with a cisgender student as well as changing the format on forms for asking students gender in order to be inclusive of Transgender and non-binary students. The program developers then took the program presentation to DAG which is a campus group of over fifty faculty, staff, and students committed to supporting diversity at equity at DUC. Program developers provided in-depth explanations of each program element, educated attendees on language and experiences of Transgender students, and answered questions regarding implementation and procedures. Collaborative conversation with DAG members elicited insights into the complexity of changes such as the SIS for student registration, and ways in which faculty could begin to immediately implement changes in their classes to promote Transgender student equity. Faculty identified asking for students' names and pronouns in a pre-class survey, using they/them pronouns for people whose gender they did not know, and using ungendered language when referring to groups of people as three changes they could make immediately. DAG attendees also requested the program developers meet with them and their departments to present and collaborate.

Departmental meetings began with alumni relations to begin work on creating and LGBTQ+ alumni group. It was decided that this group would be primarily targeted towards supporting new grads in networking, finding LGBTQ+ inclusive jobs, and support for addressing anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination in the workplace. The development of this alumni group is still in process. The program developers met with the staff of the campus health center to discuss healthcare needs of Transgender students. The healthcare staff researched and confirmed that gender affirmation procedures are covered by the student health insurance plan and expanded their student resources to include LGBTQ+ mental health and transition care resources. The health center staff noted that they had not ever had students come in asking about transition services or other Transgender healthcare needs and asked what the program developers thought might be the cause. The program developers explained that while this could

be caused by the current low amount of out Transgender students on campus, it could also be due to students not knowing that they could even ask about these needs. The health center staff agreed to have signage on the front door to inform Transgender students that they could inquire about any health care related needs they might have. Intake forms were also discussed, and the health care staff has changed the language on these forms to be inclusive of all genders. Gender options on both healthcare and housing forms were changed from 'male, female, or other' with a write-in line next to 'other', to just asking 'gender' with a write-in line.

Program developers met with the head of the IT department to gain greater understanding into why name changes are a complication issue. High cost and multi-year implementation process were the two biggest barriers to the implementation of a new SIS with more inclusive name and gender options. The program developers shared with the IT department the importance of Transgender inclusion and the dangers that not allowing for name and gender changes presents for Transgender students. When transgender students email and class registration are set up with their deadname, the student is outed to every faculty, staff, and peer, or any other person who interacts with them via email or accesses their student accounts. The IT head explained what changes he can make immediately, such as setting up alias emails for students who request it and indicated that he was willing to begin working with the university on the process of updating the SIS. Discussions with registrar staff also indicated that their department had begun researching potential SIS that would allow for greater inclusivity and equity for Transgender students.

The program developers met with the director of facilities to discuss the importance of gender-neutral, non-gendered, and Transgender inclusive facilities. The director of facilities agreed that installing trashcans in the stalls of men's restrooms would be a low-cost change that could be made very quickly. Opportunities to convert existing binary-gender bathrooms to all-gender by changing the

signage were discussed, as well as ways to ensure current remodel plans to certain parts of campus included non-gendered bathrooms that were equitable and accessible. The program directors explored with facilities how the existence of a few single-stall gender-neutral bathrooms was not sufficient as these were in very few buildings and on higher floors. Facilities will continue to collaborate with the university on how to implement changes to increase bathroom equally for gender minority students and are collaborating with program developers to provide a training for all facilities staff on the importance of Transgender inclusion.

A general faculty and staff training was held by Marin County LGBTQ+ organization, Spahr center, and program developers met with the Spahr center to tailor the presentation to the needs and experiences of Transgender students at DUC. The program developers have plans in place to continue trainings, program presentations, and collaboration with various groups and departments at DUC to continue implementing these and other changes.

Project Evaluation

While the program developers were unable to evaluate the impact, these changes have on Transgender students at DUC, they are able to evaluate the response of faculty, staff, and students to the program presented. The collaborative discussions following program presentations contributed to the evaluation of program potential for effectiveness. Obstacles, timelines, and project costs were identified and incorporated into deliverables distributed to the involved departments. The program was further evaluated by a follow-up survey of DAG attendees which asked what they committed to achieving at DUC and their anticipated timeline and requirements, as well as what program elements they expected to be difficult to accomplish and why. The results of the follow-up surveys were averaged to identify which program elements were perceived by faculty and staff as able to be implemented, and which elements were perceived to be difficult to implement. The averages are summarized in figures 2 and 3

below. Figure 2 shows the program points that respondents committed to achieving at Dominican University of California (DUC). Listening to Transgender students, faculty and staff trainings, and addressing transphobia on campus were rated the highest, indicating that the majority of respondents feel that these can be accomplished immediately and are committed to achieving these at DUC. Transgender housing and Transgender healthcare accessibility were the least frequently chosen program points by respondents indicating these two elements received the lowest amount of people who committed to accomplishing them. Follow up meetings with both the housing director and the healthcare center staff resulted in immediate changes to language on forms, assurance of student health insurance coverage for transition care, and initiation of long-term changes. Figure 3 averages the responses of survey participants to the question, "Which areas do you expect to have difficulty implementing at Dominican campus?". Name changes in registrar, scholarships for Transgender students, and healthcare accessibility were rated to have the highest amount of perceived difficulty. Transgender housing, addressing transphobia on campus, and Transgender curriculum integration were all rated as being equally difficult. Notably, no participants responded that they predicted difficulty in listening to the needs of Transgender students. These follow-up survey responses provided greater insight into which program elements will be implemented immediately, and which will require ongoing collaboration to accomplish. Responses also prompted the program developers to contact other groups and departments to establish an understanding of prospective obstacles and what would be needed in order to overcome these hinderances. These ongoing presentations have resulted in numerous immediate outcomes and encouraged initiation of long-term projects. Initial actions taken by DUC groups and departments include inclusive housing options and language on residency forms, inclusive language on health center forms and ensuring coverage of hormone replacement therapy and other transition services by campus healthcare, and alumni emails being created with alums' lives names. Many long-term projects have also

begun including research towards inclusive SIS, increasing gender-neutral and transgender-inclusive

bathrooms, development of a gender support plan, integration of LGBTQ+ curriculum, and ongoing

trainings. Every program presentation directly resulted in an increase of transgender awareness and

knowledge, and an increase in faculty, staff, and students who felt empowered to advocate for equity for

Transgender students. For further information on the implementation of this program at DUC, please see

the Transgender College Student Inclusion and Equity Deliverable and DAG Deliverable.

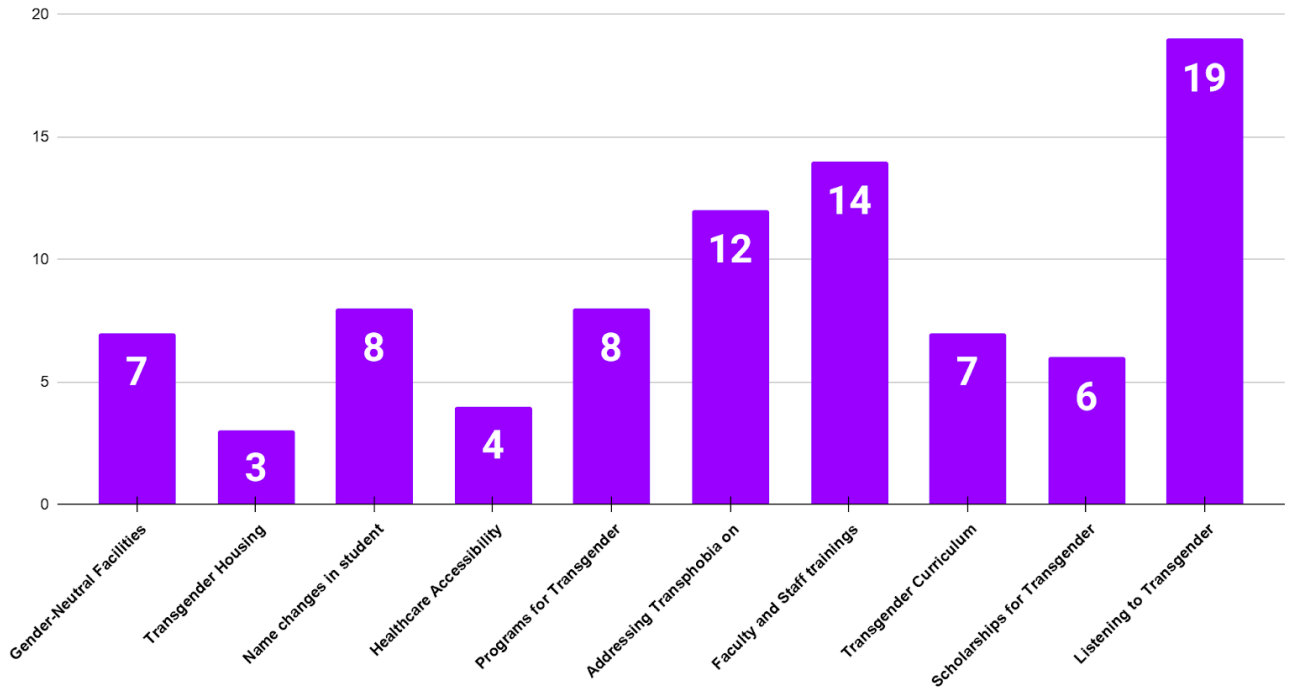*Figure 2 What survey respondents commit to doing to increase Transgender Inclusivity & Equity at DUC*
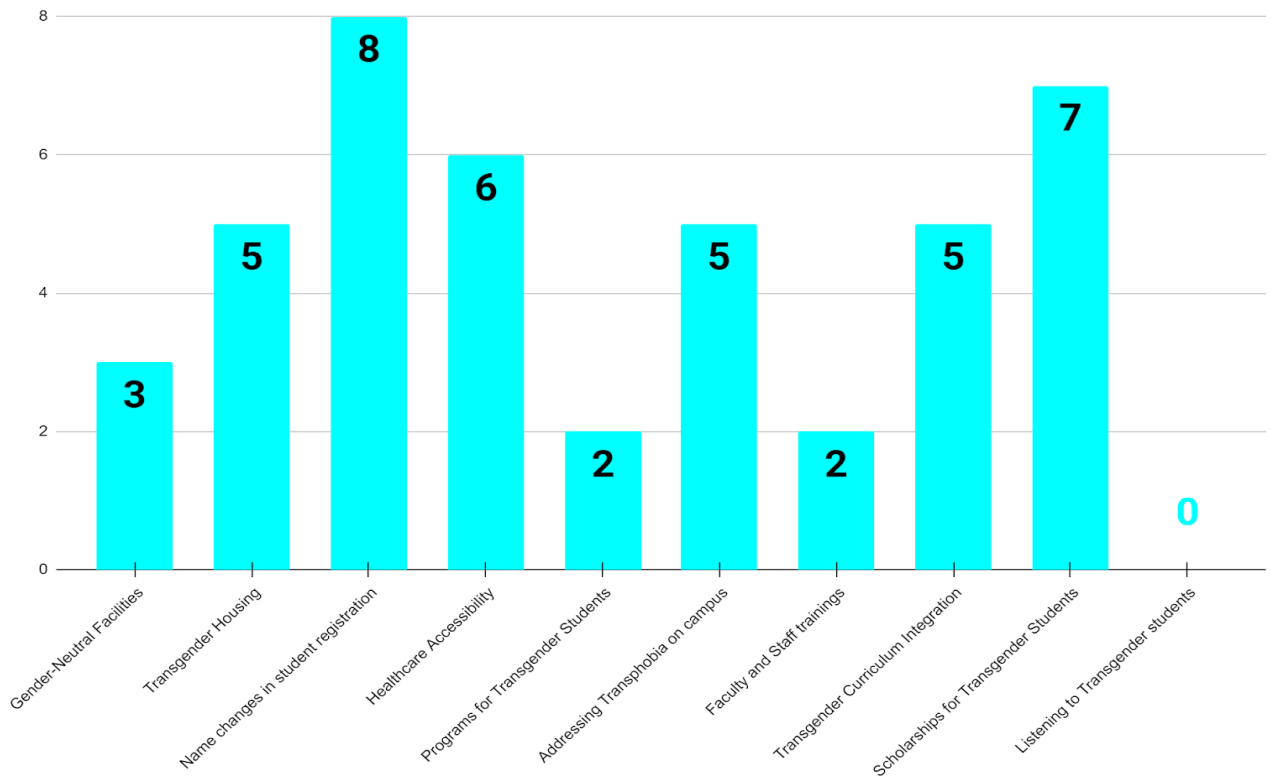

Figure 3 Areas that survey respondent predicted the greatest amount of difficulty

Discussion

Implications for Occupational Therapy

With the numerous unaddressed inequities Transgender students experience, they face barriers to occupational engagement. Transgender students are inhibited from engaging in the same occupations that cisgender students engage in with little to no difficulty, and transgender students are not receiving enough acknowledgement of or support for the barriers they face. This leads to the feeling of not doing, being, becoming or belonging anywhere and becoming emotionally and physically isolated from the individuals around them. Occupational therapy brings clients back to engaging in their meaningful occupations, therefore, more education and knowledge of how to support transgender college students will increase a greater, more meaningful engagement in their life.

When Transgender students face barriers to occupational engagement not faced by cisgender students, they experience occupational injustice. Occupational therapists have a unique lens to understand how social and physical contexts affect engagement in occupations. Lack of bathrooms and living facilities where Transgender students feel safe, inhibits their engagement in the basic activities of daily life. Transphobia, isolation, othering, deadnaming, and misgendering can create an educational environment where Transgender students do not feel safe or respected and therefore may experience more difficulty engaging with class material as well as social and leisure engagements with peers on campus. This profession has the insight to understand how social and physical barriers create negative psychosocial impacts and hinder student's engagement in ADLs, IADLs, education, work, leisure, and more. Occupational therapists have a role in advocating for populations who experience occupational injustice. All occupational therapists need to be educating themselves and others on the experiences of gender minorities, advocating for what transgender people need in order to tear down the barriers to occupational engagement, and actually do the work of changing environments, systems, and norms to

promote occupational and educational equity for Transgender college students. This Transgender student inclusion program will add to the breadth of occupational therapy knowledge, understanding, and awareness of occupational needs of gender minorities. The program developers hope to empower occupational therapists and students to advocate for the changes needed to achieve occupational and educational equity for Transgender students. Further research to enhance engagement in academics among Transgender and cisgender peers will benefit future Transgender college students to receive higher quality educational and occupational inclusivity and equity.

Limitations

The program implementation process has a variety of limitations, including a small participant sample size, and a small implementation sample size. Research began at UC Berkeley and gathered 23 participants, only one of which was a cisgender staff person, thus limiting the program developer's insight into the general perceptions of the UC Berkeley population. The COVID-19 shutdown stopped the program developers from being able to comprehensively survey Berkeley and required the needs assessment process to continue virtually. Program developers received 17 more participants via virtual recruiting, resulting in a total of 40 participants. A needs assessment with a larger population size may elicit additional results which could further shape this program and its effectiveness. Dominican University, where the program was implemented, is also a small campus with limited student body and funds which could limit the extent of possible evaluation. Additional implementation by larger universities would demonstrate more effectively the impact this program has on transgender student experiences. Due to the long-term nature of many of these changes, the program developers were unable to immediately assess if the experiences of Transgender students at DUC improved.

Conclusion

Transgender college and university students are facing numerous systemic, interpersonal, and environmental barriers to occupational engagement. The existing Transgender resources on college campuses have, so far, been insufficient in ensuring the safety and equity of Transgender students. Transgender students continue to be inhibited from engaging in education, daily activities of toileting, dressing, social and leisure occupations due to negative environmental experiences and a lack of comprehensive campus programming. A ten-section program was developed from survey responses and seeks to address a variety of campus factors that address Transgender students' needs and experiences. The program developers acknowledge that not every change may be immediately feasible on every college and university campus. Schools should begin by examining the challenging the established systems and begin dismantling systemic transphobia wherever it exists on campus. The educational and occupational equity of Transgender students requires a multi-faceted ongoing collaboration with all areas of campus. As one participant noted, if specific work is not put into counteracting the broader cultural realities of transphobia, the issues and disparities remain.

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Appendix A

Table 3 Operational Definitions

Term	Definition
AFAB/DFAB	Assigned/Designated Female at Birth
AMAB/DMAB	Assigned/Designated Male at Birth
Assigned Gender (Also Assigned Sex; AGAB)	The sex and/or gender a person is labeled with at birth based on their external genitalia (Male or Female)
Assumed Gender	The gender other people perceive an individual to be based on their appearance and visible occupational and role engagement
Binary	Used to reference the western sociocultural cis-normative framework of the human existence as exclusively male or exclusively female
Cisgender	Someone who exclusively identifies as their sex assigned at birth; not indicative of gender expression, sexual orientation, hormonal makeup, physical anatomy, or how one is perceived in daily life
Cisnormativity	The assumption that all, or almost all, individuals are cisgender.
Cissexism	Prejudice or discrimination of transgender people.
FTM	Female-to-male transition
Gender Dysphoria	Discomfort or distress that is associated with a discrepancy between a person's gender identity and that person's sex assigned at birth (and the associated gender role and/or primary and secondary sex characteristics) Only some gender-nonconforming people experience gender dysphoria at some point in their lives.
Gender Nonconformity	To engage in occupations, roles, and other behaviors that explicitly do not align with the societal gender roles associated with an assigned and/or assumed gender.
Gender Theory	Interdisciplinary study devoted to analyzing gender identity and gendered representation
Heteronormativity	Denoting or relating to a world view that promotes heterosexuality as the normal or preferred sexual orientation.
Heterosexism	Heterosexism is a system of attitudes, bias, and discrimination in favor of opposite-sex sexuality and relationships. It can include the presumption that other people are heterosexual, or that opposite-sex

Term	Definition
	attractions and relationships are the only norm and therefore superior.
LGBQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Queer Acronym indicating inclusion of sexual minorities - Does not include gender-based identities

LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer plus
	   - Commonly accepted acronym
	   - "Plus" indicates inclusion of the wide variety of identities not listed in the first 5 letters
	   - Inclusive of all marginalized gender and sexual identities

MTF	Male-to-female transition
Nonbinary	Not identifying as solely male or solely female. Could be both, neither, or another gender/combination of genders.
Transgender	People who identify as something other than the gender assigned to them at birth
Queer	Historically, Queer has been used as a slur or offensive term against people in the LGBTQ+ community. In recent years, many people in this community have reclaimed the term Queer. People in the LGBTQ+ community may refer to themselves or others as Queer as an umbrella term for all non-heterosexual, non-cisgender identities. It can also be used as a term to indicate that one does not fall into otherwise defined gender and/or sexuality categories.

Note: Operational definitions were gathered from the scholarly sources cited in the paper, prominent LGBTQ+ organization websites, and are commonly accepted terms and definitions within the LGBTQ+ and Transgender communities.