

Parental Reactions to Their Children's Coming Out as
Lesbian, Gay, or Bisexual: A Scoping Review

Student: Flavia Gkioka (s4828003)

Youth 0-21, Society and Policy

Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences

Primary Supervisor: Mónica Lopez Lopez

Second Assessor: Anoek Sluiter-Oerlemans

22/08/2022

Word count: 10.195

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

Abstract

Lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals (LGB) face discrimination and prejudice because of their sexuality since society stigmatizes people who are not heteronormative. This situation puts this group of people at a high risk of harmful consequences such as depression, substance abuse and suicidality. Young people's wellbeing can be compromised even more since emerging from childhood to adulthood is a challenging situation on its own, therefore, the risk of being rejected because they identify as LGB can put further emotional strain on them. One of the milestones for LGB youth is revealing their sexual identity to their parents. This study uses a scoping review to explore parental reactions after the disclosure that their child is part of a sexual minority. After the screening process was complete 29 articles remained which were analyzed to map and synthesize the data on how parents react and what characteristics influence a positive or a negative reaction from them. Data shows that parents frequently respond in a negative way to the coming out of their children, and characteristics like ethnicity, age, religion, and cultural values can influence their reaction.

Keywords: parental reactions, LGB youth, sexual orientation, coming out

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

Introduction

The support of parents is a crucial component for the overall well-being of the youth. Parents who are loving, affectionate and encourage their child to become their own individual self, have a stronger and more positive relationship with their child (Arnett, 2000; Helsen, Vollebergh, & Meeus, 2000). Although childhood is a period when a positive parental attribution is much needed, adolescence is equally considered a crucial and fragile part of a young person's development (Pastrana, 2015; Potoczniak, Crosbie-Burnett, & Salzburg, 2009). Research suggests that parents who are supportive and positively influence their child's life relates to young people being more independent and having a healthier mental stability (D'Augelli, Grossman, & Starks, 2008; Grafsky, 2014; Willoughby, Malik, & Lindahl, 2006). On the contrary, the youth who experiences a lack of support from their parents often face negative consequences during their lives. For example, a negative relationship with their parents can lead to the youth engaging in dangerous activities like drug abuse, aggressive behaviour, suicidality, victimization, and a difficulty emerging from childhood to adulthood (Auerbach, Bigda-Peyton, Eberhart, Webb, & Ho, 2011).

Emerging adulthood is a period which is characterized by a lot of anxiety, uncertainty, and vulnerability and in those times parental support is needed the most (D'Augelli et al., 2008; Grafsky, 2014; Willoughby et al., 2006). Research on sexual minority youth and parental reactions after the coming out process is underdeveloped, but the evidence that we have so far supports that young people who are part of a sexual minority are in much more need of emotional support in comparison to their heterosexual counterparts (Clark, Dougherty, & Pachankis, 2021; D'Amico, Julien, Tremblay, & Chartrand, 2015; Huebner, Roche, & Ruth, 2017). Coming to terms with the fact that their sexuality is different from most people is a tough process itself and especially during adolescence when every emotion feels more heightened (Armesto & Weisman, 2001). However, this is not the only challenge that has to be overcome as people who are a part of a sexual minority will navigate their lives in a society that stigmatizes non-heterosexual identities (Gattamorta, Salerno, & Quidley-Rodriguez, 2019). It was not until 1973 that the American Psychiatric Association (APA) removed the diagnosis of "homosexuality" from the second edition of its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM). Before 1973, homosexuality was regarded as a disease and many theories of pathology perceived it as a

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

warning of defect. Furthermore, several of these theories went to extreme and described homosexuality as a social evil (Drescher, 2015). This shows how extreme and harmful some individuals' opinions can be and even though years have passed, and the situation is gradually getting better, we still have a long way to go for an equal, amiable, and just society towards Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual (LGB) people. Even today, views, attitudes and laws remain rooted in past beliefs of “normality” leading to discrimination, stigmatization, and family conflict (unfortunately, among other many damaging issues) of non-heterosexual individuals (Clark et al., 2021).

Sexual development is a continuing process which occurs during adolescence (Rosario, Schrimshaw, & Hunter, 2008); many teenagers and young adults might spend this time trying to figure out their sexuality while others might have a certain image of it since their upbringing years. The development of the sexual identity of LGB people is a different process than the one that non-heterosexual individuals go through. According to Mayeza (2021), the sexual developing process for LGB youth starts with the acknowledgement that being lesbian, gay or bisexual comes with a lot of stigma; the realization that they are part of the sexual minority is a difficult situation to handle and affects the well-being of the LGB youth. Secondly, this process unfolds over a period of time, and, as the time passes, the level of acceptance within themselves increases among the LGB youth. The final step involves the coming out process.

Theoretical Background

“Coming out” can be described as the disclosure of one’s non-heterosexual identity to another individual. One of the most challenging and crucial milestones of coming out is the revelation of someone’s sexual identity to their parents and the way the parents choose to respond to this information is essential to the subsequent adjustment of both the family and the child (Wakeley & Tuason, 2011). However, most adolescents fear being treated with hostility and being rejected by their family while contemplating whether they should come out or not (D’Amico et al., 2015). Heterosexual parents generally do not have the personal understanding and experience of the coming out development and therefore their adjustment after learning that their child is part of a sexual minority can be a complicated process (Saltzburg, 2004). Consequently, the approach that parents will take after the realization that their child is non-

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

heterosexual will directly affect the young person's mental and overall wellbeing (Campbell, Zaporozhets, & Yarhouse, 2017). However, only a few studies have examined how parents react to the coming out of their children.

For LGB individuals, disclosing their sexual identity to the world might feel terrifying, and this feeling becomes more intense when thinking of coming out to their own parents (D'Amico et al., 2015). On the other hand, regarding to parents, the revelation that their child identifies as lesbian, gay, or bisexual can be a challenging process; they have to accept that their child is different and will have an unlike lifestyle than the one that they might have wanted or expected for them (Gattamorta et al., 2019). The existing literature indicates that a variety of factors might influence the way parents are going to react after the disclosure that their child is non-heterosexual (Chrisler, 2017). For example, young at age parents are more likely to respond positively to the coming out of their children compared to older parents (D'Augelli et al., 2008; Grafsky, 2014; Willoughby et al., 2006). Moreover, some parents who are a part of an ethnic minority have the tendency to be less supportive than parents who belong in an ethnic majority (Richter, Lindahl, & Malik, 2017). Also, mothers tend to be more accepting compared to fathers (Pearlman, 2005).

Consequently, even though the research is limited in this area, data reveal that parental rejection or acceptance depends on demographic factors such as age, race, ethnicity, and gender. According to research, parents who are attached to religious values and ethnic minority families respond with more negativity and discrimination in comparison to Anglo European families (Campbell et al., 2017). Furthermore, older parents are more prejudiced and intolerant towards their LGB offspring as they are less likely to be influenced by modern conceptions (Chrisler, 2017). However, research suggests that parental reactions, behavior, and conceptions about a child's sexuality transform in a positive direction as the time passes by, and most parents gradually develop a behavior of tolerance or acceptance (Freedman, 2008). Nevertheless, a common finding in the literature over the years has been that parents' initial reactions generally are characterized by substantial negative affect, such as shock, sadness, and/or confusion—feelings that can last for months and possibly years (D'Amico et al., 2015; Huebner et al., 2017). Although some parents report immediate acceptance of their LGB child, this is not the norm (Saltzburg, 2004). Moreover, it is possible that younger children might face a more accepting

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

reaction from their parents compared to older ones. When the child discloses its non-heterosexual sexuality later in life it is more difficult for parents to accept it because they have already invested more time in imagining a traditional, heterosexual future for their child (Huebner et al., 2017). It should be noted that to this day there is limited research describing the process of the parent's adjustment after finding out their children's true sexuality.

Coming out to the family and particularly to the parents is quite frequently one of the most difficult tasks. Still, the majority of non-heterosexual youth make the decision to come out to their parents, despite their fear of being rejected or starting a conflict with them (LaSala, 2000). A contradiction exists in the literature in correlation to the gender of the parent and their reaction; research discloses that mothers are likely to react with more acceptance compared to the fathers (Armesto & Weisman 2001). On the other hand, some studies reveal that mothers react more negatively as they feel more worried and tend to feel more guilt than fathers (Baiocco et al., 2015; Pearlman, 2005; Wisniewski, Robinson, & Deluty, 2009). It should be mentioned that daughters and sons are more likely to come out to their mothers first (Baiocco et al., 2015).

While research shows us that parent's reactions are essential to the mental wellbeing and development of LGB youth, there is not much known about the way parents respond to the coming out of their child. As before mentioned, the disclosure of someone's sexual orientation to their parents is considered as one of the most significant milestones faced by LGB individuals, filled with stressful emotions (Wakeley & Tuason, 2011). However, from the research so far, parents are additionally subjected to severe stress after the coming out of their children as LGB and the management of those feelings it's not an easy process (D'Amico et al., 2015; Huebner et al., 2017).

Family Stress Theory and Minority Stress Model

Many researchers have used the Family Stress Theory in their studies to explain the process of adaptation that parents go through after the revelation that they have a child who is part of a sexual minority. The Family Stress Theory as described by Willoughby, Malik, and Lindahl (2006) is:

A conceptual framework that aims to delineate and organize factors influencing a family's reaction to a crisis event or stressor. Developed primarily from Hill's (1949)

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

classic research on war induced separation and reunion, family stress theory draws on a social systems approach to conceptualize families under stress. This approach views families as living organisms consisting of real and symbolic structures. As with any social structure, families theoretically attempt to establish a state of equilibrium. Thus, the family is seen as more than a sum of its collection of members; it is viewed as a system of its own that is an aggregate of relationships, shared memories, failures, goals, and successes.

The main purpose of this theory is to clarify why some family relationships weaken when stressful events occur. When a child discloses their same sex attraction to their parents this might be viewed as a stressful event that can disturb a family's cohesion. This theory also indicates that parents who are simultaneously confronted with other stressors (e.g., financial difficulties) might react more adversely compared to families with a reduced number of concurrent stressors (Chatterjee, 2014). The Family Stress Theory is useful because it offers a valuable framework helping researchers study the way families shift and adjust after the revelation that their child is LGB.

The Minority Stress Model is the most relevant framework to clarify the experiences of LGB individuals. This theory explains that people who belong in a marginalized group are at a higher risk of facing added stress and misunderstanding from others. Consequently, LGB people might be confronted with hostile stressors associated to being part of a sexual minority (e.g., stigmatization and threats of violence because of their non-heteronormative sexuality). Essentially, the Minority Stress Model describes that discrimination against LGB individuals and their negative experiences because of that contribute to negative mental and physical outcomes (Toomey, Ryan, Diaz, & Russell, 2018).

Conducting more research on parental reactions after the disclosure that their child is LGB is important for the practice field. Every universal and family-based prevention program should include the topic of LGB. Educating parents on developing proper skills on how they should react when their child reveals that their sexuality is non-heterosexual will contribute to an effective communication between the parent and the child. Therefore, including trained professionals who specialize in LGB matters in family-based prevention programs and social

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

support groups will minimize the risk of parents reacting in the wrong way (being discriminative and unsupportive towards their LGB child) (Ryan & Chen-Hayes, 2013).

Research Questions

Social attitudes against LGB forced people to come out later in their lives, however, the legal and social progression that has been made has improved this situation (Mehra & Braquet, 2011). Nevertheless, parental reaction is still an area that requires more research so we can have more data on the way parents respond to the coming out of their children. Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to gather information on how parents react when their children disclose to them that they are non-heterosexual. Expanding the data on this topic is important because it would offer a clearer understanding on why parents react in a particular way. Having the necessary information about parental reactions on the coming out of their children would help researchers and policymakers develop recommendations for practice.

Moreover, it needs to be clarified why this study focuses on lesbian, gay and bisexual youth without including transgender people. Sexual orientation and gender identity are two different concepts with their own specific definitions. Sexual orientation refers to an individual's identity regarding the gender or genders they are sexually and/or romantically attracted to (e.g., heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual). Gender identity refers to an individual's own sense of their gender, it can correspond to their sex assigned at birth (SAAB) or it can be different from it. Individuals who feel that their gender identity does not match their SAAB are referred to as transgender. Both people who are LGB and transgender suffer a very specific process of stigmatization and vulnerability from their families, peers, and society in general. Concerning parents, adapting to a child coming out as LGB might be a different process than adapting to a child coming out as transgender (Moleiro & Pinto, 2015). For example, parents might face specific difficulties adjusting to their child being transgender as they mourn the loss of their child's sex assigned at birth and they might be concerned about possible medical procedures (Abreu, Riggle, & Rostosky, 2019). Therefore, it is crucial to devote specific attention to understand parental reactions regarding their transgender children. However, the size of this current research is limited, thus not allowing to dedicate the necessary attention to parental reactions on transgender children. Moreover, since sexual orientation and gender identity are two

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

separate constructs, they have the capability to be studied on their own. Consequently, the following research question is formulated in order to answer the aforementioned situation: *How do parents respond when their child comes out of the closet as non-heterosexual?*

As it has already been mentioned, the literature is extremely limited on the way parents react after the disclosure that their child is LGB. This conclusion was reached after using many databases (APA PsycArticles, APA PsycBooks, APA PsycInfo, ERIC, MEDLINE and SocINDEX) to explore and then gather data on the subject. Therefore, this research aims to explore the attitudes of the parents and to assemble the existing literature on parental reactions. More precisely, this study aims to address two sub questions:

- 1) What are the most common reactions that parents have after the disclosure?
- 2) What characteristics (age, ethnicity, race, gender, etc) influence a positive or a negative reaction from the parents?

Societal and Academic Relevance

Young people who are a part of the LGB community are at a higher risk of combating mental disparities due to discrimination and oppression that they might face living in a stigmatized society (Arnett, 2000; Helsen et al., 2000). According to the literature these challenges that can deeply affect the mental health of the youth are linked with factors such as family rejection and facing prejudice on many levels of their lives (i.e., in the job market, at school, their own friends turning their backs on them, etc). The Minority Stress Model helps to explain this link. Additionally, there is a definite raise in the number of people revealing that they are lesbian, gay or bisexual (D'Amico et al., 2015). Statistics reveal that in the USA the number of individuals who identify as LGB increased from 3.5 in 2012 to 5.6 in 2020. Contemporary society seems to have become more acceptive towards LGB people and the implementation of many legislations that protect their rights creates a safer environment for them to come out (Witeck, 2014). The youth of today has viewed changes that the older generations of LGB individuals had never thought possible. For example, people in high positions like politicians and individuals who work in the education system have disclosed that they are a part of the LGB community. Moreover, the fact that more countries are allowing same sex marriage

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

and the existence of a more positive representation of sexual minority people in the media are components that lead to them revealing their true sexual identity.

Because more and more young people openly identify as LGB and the negative consequences that this declaration might have on their mental well-being make this research relevant both in a societal and academic level (D'Amico et al., 2015). Moreover, the more the youth reveal their true sexuality the more data researchers can extract about the way parents react and the overall well-being of the LGB youth. Finally, research that is related to parents is even more limited as the majority of the existing literature focuses exclusively on the LGB youth (D'Augelli et al., 2008; Grafsky, 2014; Willoughby et al., 2006).

Method

Study Design

The current study employed a scoping review methodology. A scoping review is defined as:

A form of knowledge synthesis that addresses an exploratory research question aimed at mapping key concepts, types of evidence, and gaps in research related to a defined area or field by systematically searching, selecting, and synthesizing existing knowledge (Colquhoun et al., 2014).

As their name already reveals, scoping reviews are a perfect tool in order to decide the scope of the existing literature that is going to be used for a certain study topic while allowing complete transparency of the selected data (Munn et al., 2018). According to Levac, Colquhoun, and O'Brien (2010) scoping reviews serve the following purposes:

- 1) identifying the types of available evidence in a given field,
- 2) clarifying key concepts/ definitions in the literature,
- 3) examining how research is conducted on a certain topic or field,
- 4) identifying key characteristics or factors related to a concept
- 5) identifying and analyzing knowledge gaps.

Authors who do not aim to give answers to a precise question but rather are more interested in investigating the concepts and characteristics of a certain topic will perform a scoping review (Levac, Colquhoun, & O'Brien, 2010).

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

Scoping reviews aim to map and report the data to answer a specific question. The main difference between a scoping and a systematic review is that the former one has a broader scope. Still, scoping reviews should not be confused with literature reviews because they are meant to summarize publications and studies on a specific topic (Munn et al., 2018).

There has been evidence that in many scoping or systematic reviews significant information has been conducted in a poor way leading to some data becoming less useful (Moher, Tetzlaff, Tricco, Sampson, & Altman, 2007). After this, the QUORUM statement was formulated in 1996 and it worked as a guideline for researchers who performed meta-analysis. Since then, the knowledge about systematic reviews has expanded and the PRISMA protocol was eventually developed which includes a 27- item checklist and a flow chart. Every author who performs a scoping or a systematic review uses the PRISMA protocol because complete transparency of the data needs to be achieved; following PRISMA's checklists and conducting a flow chart map adds clarity to the data of every scoping or systematic review (Munn et al., 2018).

In accordance with the methodological framework for scoping reviews, the following six stages will be undertaken: (1) identifying the research question, (2) identifying relevant studies, (3) study selection, (4) charting the data, (5) collating, summarizing, and reporting results and (6) consultation. The PRISMA Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR): Checklist and Explanation will be used throughout the review process (Tricco et al., 2018).

Eligibility criteria

The research conducted on the reactions of the parents after the disclosure of their child's non-heterosexual orientation is limited. Furthermore, the concept of reactions itself is complex because it can be defined in several aspects, also many studies are merely focusing on how negative parental reactions affect a child's mental and physical well-being and not on the parents themselves (D'Amico et al., 2015; Huebner et al., 2017). For these reasons the first step is to retrieve all the articles that focused on parents (even if big parts of the study centered the children) and how they react to the revelation of having a child that is a part of a sexual minority. After consideration, it was decided to screen only the studies that included young individuals who identify as lesbians, gays, and bisexuals. Adapting to their kids' same sex attraction is a different experience for the parents in comparison to adjusting to the fact that their kid's sex

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

assigned at birth does not correspond to their gender identity (Moleiro & Pinto, 2015). Since sexual orientation and gender identity are two separate constructs, they have the capability to be studied on their own. Consequently, because the capacity of this current research is limited, it was decided that the focus would be on sexual orientation. Another factor that led to this decision was that the majority of the articles were about LGB youth and very few of them included gender identity as well; consequently, there was not enough data to compare and draw a conclusion about how parents react to the revelation of having a non-heterosexual child and how they would react when the subject is the gender of their child. Moreover, the fact that sexual orientation and gender identity are both complex concepts requiring different approaches led to the decision of only including the former.

Type of studies

The type of studies that are included for this research are empirical ones and peer reviewed. Both qualitative and quantitative studies are included.

Population

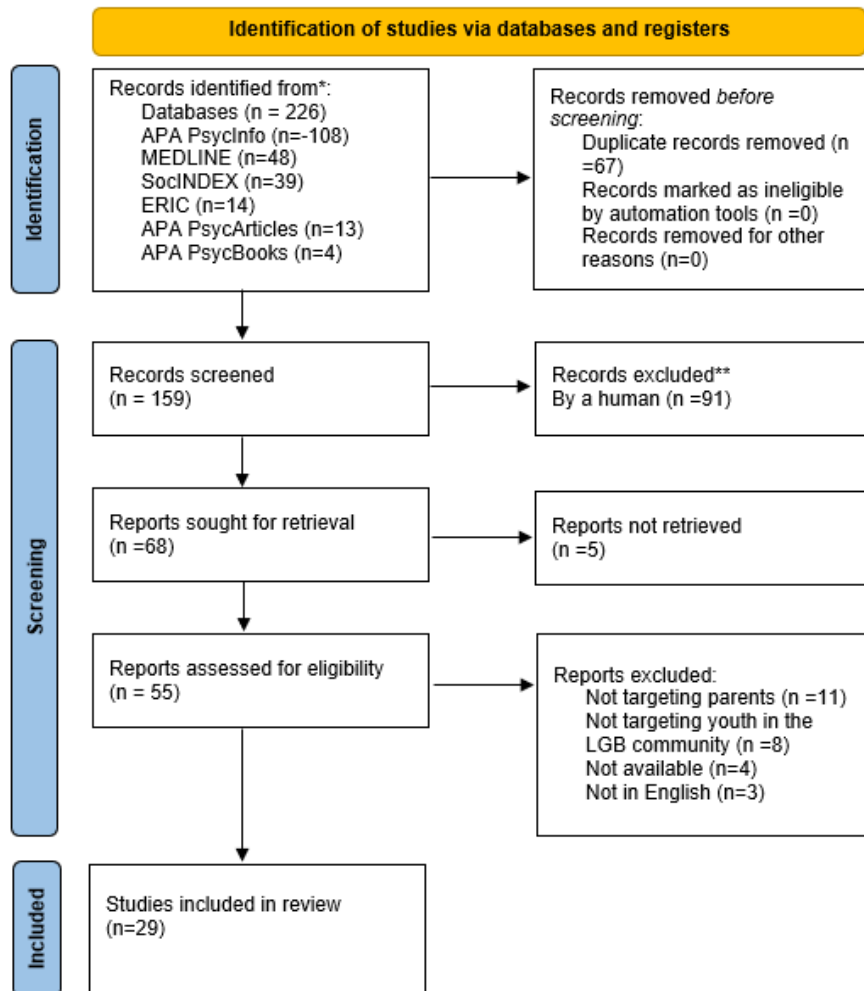
As it was beforementioned, this research only focuses on the way that parents react to their children being non-heterosexual therefore the acronym LGB is used referring to gay, lesbian, and bisexual. Regarding the age of the parents there is no limit as it is useful to cover both younger and older parents.

Context

The context of the studies is the parent's reaction after the revelation that their child identifies as a lesbian, gay or bisexual. This field of research is important because it can reveal how ready the parents are to accept that their child is part of a sexual minority, moreover, the way parents are going to react will have possible detrimental effects on the relationship with their child. Although this research focuses on the parents it is only plausible that the way that they are going to react is directly linked to the impact it will have on their children. It is a bidirectional situation and the dynamics involved are crucial because they will define the future relationship of the child and the parents.

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

PRISMA 2020 flow diagram for new systematic reviews which included searches of databases and registers only



Languages

All the articles that are included in the research are in the English language.

Search strategy and study selection process

For this research a manual search was conducted using electronic databases. The databases that were used are: APA PsycArticles, APA PsycBooks, APA PsycInfo, ERIC, MEDLINE and SocINDEX. The searching period started in March and ended in April 2022. These particular databases were chosen since they include a number of evidence-based literature

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

in the field of sociology and psychology. The search terms were demonstrated in a way that would cover the research question as much as possible and were paired like this: 'LGB or lesbian or gay or homosexual or bisexual or queer or sexual minority' AND 'Parents or caregivers or mother or father' AND 'Youth or adolescents or young people or teens or young adults'. Establishing inclusion and exclusion criteria while doing research is a standard and necessary practice. Inclusive criteria are characterized as the factors that will help the researcher answer the main question of his investigation. To the contrary, exclusion criteria are defined as the features that will be excluded from the study in order for the investigator to eliminate aspects that may restrict the interpretability of the research outcome. Both inclusive and exclusive criteria impact the validity of the study. In this research, the inclusion criteria are related to these characteristics: the youth included in this research must identify or self-identify as a member of the LGB community and the study is restricted to the youth (12-25 years old). Moreover, the research will not have any geographic limitations nor gender ones, all the articles included in this scoping review are in English and must consider risks associated with parental responses on LGB youth. When it comes to exclusion criteria, studies who are considered grey literature such as dissertations and commentaries are excluded. Furthermore, articles that do not emphasize on the way parental rejection or acceptance affect the well-being of the LGB youth are also excluded. As for limitations concerning publication dates, it was decided to include as many results as possible since the research topic has not been studied a lot. The searches yielded 232 results based on relevant keywords and inclusion criteria. Studies deemed irrelevant have been eliminated after a close reading of the article's title, abstract or full text. After this process was completed, 29 articles remained. Consequently, every article was studied in order to gather the necessary information to answer the research question. Critical characteristics were extracted from each article (e.g., the type of study, the age, ethnicity, race, religion, culture and values of the parents, positive or negative reactions of the parents after the coming out of their child as non-heterosexual).

Various strategies were applied in order to come to a conclusion about the relevance of the articles. The first step was to perform a screening process which included reading the title of every article and deciding if it is relevant or not. Following this, every remaining article was studied and the ones that met all the necessary criteria were selected.

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

Data extraction and synthesis

The remaining 29 articles were studied carefully to extract all the significant information for the purpose of answering the research question. This information included the ethnicity of the parents (if they were part of an ethnic minority or not), their culture (maintaining a particular behavior in society), their religion status (religion views homosexuality as a sin), their age (younger parents in comparison to older ones) and the expectations that they had for the future of their child (a traditional marriage and biological grandchildren). Taking these characteristics into account aided in the development of themes.

Table 1
Overview of included references

	Reference/ country	Aim/ research questions	Type of study/ methodology	Participants	Parental reactions
1	Armesto & Weisman, 2001, US	Examine factors that contribute to parental rejection of gay and lesbian youth	Peer review article Quantitative Surveys	356 undergraduate psychology students (17-59 years old) Multi-ethnic	Negative relation between proneness of shame and acceptance Positive relation between proneness of guilt and acceptance
2	Baiocco, Fontanesi, Santamaria, Ioverno, Baumgartner & Laghi, 2016 Italy	Investigate the negative parental reaction to the disclosure of same-sex attraction and the differences between maternal and paternal responses	Peer review article Quantitative Questionnaires	164 participants identifying as gay or lesbian (18-26 years old)	Worry about what other people might think Deep feelings of shame

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

Table 1 (*continued*)

	Reference/ country	Aim/ research questions	Type of study/ methodology	Participants	Parental reactions
3	Baiocco, Fontanesi, Santamaria, Ioverno, Marasco, Baumgartner, Willoughby & Laghi, 2015, Italy	Investigate negative parental reaction to disclosure of same-sex attraction and the differences between maternal and paternal responses	Peer review article Quantitative Face-to-face questionnaires	164 participants who self- identified as gay or lesbian (18-26 years old) Italian	Shame Fear of judgment of other people e.g., about parenting skills The lower the age of disclosure, the more negative the parental reaction Mothers with a lesbian daughter respond more negatively than fathers with a gay son Maternal reaction towards lesbian daughter negative because of loss of dreams for their daughter's future and feelings of loss of the mother- daughter bond
4	Bregman, Malik, Page, Makynen & Lindahl, 2012, US	Examine the links between a multidimens ional model of LGB identity and parental support and rejection	Peer review article Quantitative Surveys	169 LGB adolescents and young adults (14-24 years old) Multi-ethnic	Moderate levels of parental rejection

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

Table 1 (*continued*)

	Reference/ country	Aim/ research questions	Type of study/ methodology	Participants	Parental reactions
5	Campbell, Zaporozhets, Yarhouse, 2017, US	Examine changes in parent-child relationships and the parents' Christian beliefs over time	Peer review article Qualitative Survey and interview	50 parents who self-identified as Christian (μ = 53.68 years old) Multi-ethnic	Initially negative More positive over time
6	Carnelley, Hepper, Hicks & Turner, 2011, UK	Examine the process of coming out to parents from an attachment theoretical perspective	Peer review article Quantitative Cross- sectional Surveys	309 LGB people (16-68 years old)	Parents who encourage independence more are more accepting Acceptance in childhood predicts acceptance about disclosure
7	Chrisler, 2017 US	Explain parental reactions after the coming out of their children as LGB	Peer review article Literature review	Not applicable	Child's LGB identity viewed as the source of future obstacles or challenges
8	Clark, Dougherty & Pachankis, 2021 US	Examine associations between parental response classes, parent and child sociodemog raphic characteristi cs, and	Peer review article Quantitative Survey	205 parents (μ = 47 years old) Children of parents (μ = 19 years old)	Racial/ethnic minority and more traditionally religious families often experience conflict between acceptance of their sexual minority child and conservative cultural values

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

Table 1 (*continued*)

Reference/ country	Aim/ research questions	Type of study/ methodology	Participants	Parental reactions	
	child's recent (last 6 months) mental health problems				
9	D'Amico, Julien, Tremblay & Chartrand, 2015, Canada	Examine parental reactions and the way those reactions contribute to the psychologic al adjustment of children after coming out as LGB	Peer review article Mixed design Interviews Surveys	53 parent-GLB child dyads: 13 mother-son dyads, 14 mother- daughter dyads, 11 father-son dyads, and 15 father-daughter dyads (children 15-25 years old; parents 40- 67 years old)	Initial reaction was to remember all the times in the past they had displayed homophobic attitudes in front of their child (e.g., jokes and other negative comments)
10	D'Augelli, 2005, US	Identify problems with current research on the families of GLB youth and describe a human developmen t model which can help direct future research efforts	Peer review article Qualitative Literature review	Not applicable	Initially upset Negative reactions generally become more positive over time More positive if already assuming child might be GLB More traditional values less accepting

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

Table 1 (*continued*)

	Reference/ country	Aim/ research questions	Type of study/ methodology	Participants	Parental reactions
11	D'Augelli, Grossman & Starks, 2008 US	Explore relationships between GLB youth, and their parents	Peer review article Qualitative Interviews	528 self- identified GLB youth (15-19 years old)	Contemporary parents much less likely to respond negatively than parents from early cohorts
12	Gattamorta, Salerno & Quidley- Rodriguez, 2019, US	Explore the impact on a sample of Hispanic parents of having a child coming out as lesbian, gay, or bisexual	Peer review article Qualitative Interviews	10 Hispanic parents/guardia ns of a GLB child (38-73 years old)	Initial disappointment, fear, shock, sadness, disillusionment, hurt Sense of relief when already expecting that child was GLB Fear of what others would think, of what it meant to be gay, or of the breakdown of hopes and dreams
13	Gorman- Murray, 2008, Australia	Explore experiences of youth coming out in supportive family homes and the reasons for and consequenc es of acceptance and support	Peer review article Qualitative Literature review	Not applicable	Tender Loving Accepting

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

Table 1 (*continued*)

	Reference/ country	Aim/ research questions	Type of study/ methodology	Participants	Parental reactions
14	Grafsky, 2014 US	Develop a deeper understanding of the parent perspective of the disclosure to family experience of SMY (Sexual Minority Youth)	Peer review article Qualitative Surveys Individual interviews	8 parents (34-57 years old) children (14-21 years old)	Reactions ranged from "very uncomfortable" to "very comfortable"
15	Heatherington & Lavner, 2008 US	Examine factors associated with the decision to come out and parents' initial reactions to the disclosure	Peer review article Literature review	Not applicable	Higher parent-child relationship quality before disclosure associated with greater likelihood of disclosure and more positive parental reactions to disclosure
16	Hillier, 2002, Australia	Chart young people's decision-making process about coming out to their parents and the price of telling or not telling for parent-	Book chapter Qualitative Surveys	745 same-sex-attracted young Australians (14-21 years old)	Strong religious or other conservative beliefs associated with negative reactions; in some cases associated with rejection and withdrawal of support Initial negative reactions, more positive after education

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

Table 1 (*continued*)

	Reference/ country	Aim/ research questions	Type of study/ methodology	Participants	Parental reactions
		child relationships			
17	Horn & Wong, 2017, US	Explore the positive aspects of the relationship between young gay men and their fathers through father's eyes	Peer review article Qualitative Written activities and interviews	5 fathers of young gay men (58-82 years old) White	Initial worry about sons' futures Initial shock about not knowing sons' gay identities, relief about knowing now Father-son relationships viewed as both changed and not changed after disclosure No feelings of loss or sadness All expressed love
18	Huebner, Roche & Ruth, 2017, US	How demographi cs impact parental responses	Peer review article Quantitative Survey	1195 Parents ($\mu =$ 49.5 years old) of LGB youth between the ages of 10-25	Parents with older children and African American and Latino parents reported the most difficulty
19	Lin & Hudley, 2009, US	Examine reactions by Taiwanese mothers to learning about their child's non- traditional sexual orientations and identities	Peer review article Qualitative One-to-one interviews	8 Taiwanese mothers (45-63 years old)	Initial shock/disbelief Eventually accepting, believing that child did nothing wrong Desire to see child happy Worry about society harming child

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

Table 1 (*continued*)

	Reference/ country	Aim/ research questions	Type of study/ methodology	Participants	Parental reactions
20	Mayeza, 2021, South Africa	Explore perceptions and realities of LGBTQP identifying youth regarding coming out to their parents and parental reactions in South Africa	Peer review article Qualitative In-depth face- to-face interviews	17 South- African LGBTQP identifying youth (19-32 years old)	Worldviews and parenting styles informed by orthodox religious doctrines associated with unsupportive reactions to same- sex sexual orientation Taboo around sex- talk between young people and their parents heightened if the topic is LGBTQP issues Silence as a response interpreted both positively and negatively by youth
21	Pearlman, 2005, US	Compare initial reactions of mothers prior to and following a time of marked changes in attitudes towards homosexual ity	Peer review article Qualitative In-depth interviews	40 mothers of lesbian daughters divided over three groups: 10 mothers interviewed in 1990 ($\mu = 51$ years old; Caucasian), 16 mothers interviewed in 2000-2001 ($\mu =$ 49 years old; Caucasian and one African- West Indian),	Initial reactions charged with fears/concerns primarily focused on violence and physical harm Expression of deep sense of loss of assumed mother- daughter connection based on traditional sex roles and interests Initial reaction levels ranged from concerned (focused on well-being) to

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

Table 1 (*continued*)

Reference/ country	Aim/ research questions	Type of study/ methodology	Participants	Parental reactions	
			14 mothers interviewed in 2001-2002 ($\mu = 46$ years old; Caucasian)	highly troubled (short-lived shock and grief) and profound crisis (extended shock, devastation, and grief) Mothers who were more accepting were younger and more educated Receptivity and acceptance of lesbian identity rests on multiple factors, e.g., personal characteristics, background, religious beliefs, exposure to gay and lesbian people, and/or whether daughter is "mainstream" in terms of appearance, gender behaviour, and politics	
22	Potoczniak, Crosbie-Burnett & Salzburg, 2009, US	Expand knowledge about experiences of diverse adolescents	Peer review article Qualitative Focus groups	Adolescents and counsellors from five GLBTQ support groups in public high schools	Initial reaction to the disclosure extremely negative, later tempered to allow the relationship to heal or improve

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

when
coming out (adolescents
14-18 years

Table 1 (*continued*)

Reference/ country	Aim/ research questions	Type of study/ methodology	Participants	Parental reactions
	to their parents		old; counsellors 45-55 years old) Multi-ethnic and multiracial	
23 Richter, Lindahl & Malik, 2017 US	Exploring the difference in reactions between ethnic minority parents and ethnic majority parents to the disclosure of their child being a part of a sexual minority	Peer review article Quantitative	90 parents (32– 63 years old) and their 90 LGB children (15–24 years old) Multi- ethnic	Ethnic minority (i.e., Black and Hispanic/Latino) parents reported greater parental rejection than ethnic majority (i.e., White, non- Hispanic parents)
24 Roe, 2017 US	Examine gay and bisexual adolescent experiences with parental and family support	Peer review article Qualitative Semi- structured interviews	Participants self-identified as (LGB) (16- 18 years old) White	Initial reactions of parents are most often not positive

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

25	Savin-Williams, 2001, US	Reviewing popular and empirical literatures regarding	Book chapter	Not applicable	Feelings of grief and mourning; denial, anger, bargaining,
----	--------------------------	---	--------------	----------------	--

Table 1 (*continued*)

Reference/ country	Aim/ research questions	Type of study/ methodology	Participants	Parental reactions	
	the relationship s sexual-minority youths have with their parents and what is known regarding the importance of parents for sexual-minority youths and the association between disclosure to parents and the youths' psychological health			depression, and acceptance Shock Isolation Young parents more accepting Adherence to traditional family values less accepting	
26	Savin-Williams & Dubé, 1998, US	Explore developmental stages characterizing parental reactions to disclosure and review	Peer review article Literature review	Not applicable	Initial negative reaction, eventually arrive at tolerance or acceptance through the developmental stages of shock, denial and

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

empirical
research
that
addresses
these stages

isolation, anger,
bargaining, and
depression

Table 1 (*continued*)

	Reference/ country	Aim/ research questions	Type of study/ methodology	Participants	Parental reactions
27	Widgerson, Lindahl & Malik, 2019 US	Examine associations between parent responsiveness and adjustment in GLB youth	Peer review article Quantitative Survey	36 parent-child dyads Parents (37-63 years old) Children (14- 21 years old)	Parental ambivalence was positively correlated to youth- report of parental rejection, but was unrelated to parents' self- reports of rejection
28	Willoughby, Malik & Lindahl, 2006, US	Investigate association between family dynamics before disclosure and parental reactions to their son's coming out	Peer review article Quantitative Surveys	74 young men self-identifying as gay whom disclosed this to at least one parent (18-26 years old) Multi-ethnic	Balanced family cohesion before disclosure associated with less negative initial response Balanced family adaptability before disclosure associated with less negative initial response Parents with authoritative parenting style respond less negatively than parents with authoritarian parenting style

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

29	Wisniewski, Robinson & Deluty, 2009, US	Reconceptualize the explanation and prediction of parental responses to	Peer review article Study 1: Quantitative Surveys Study 2: Quantitative	Study 1: 98 undergraduate students Study 2: 787 participants recruited	Biological mothers more distressed than biological fathers Biological mothers more coercive towards gay sons to
----	---	---	---	---	--

Table 1 (*continued*)

Reference/ country	Aim/ research questions	Type of study/ methodology	Participants	Parental reactions
	“coming out”	Survey	through gay social, political, internet, religious, and community health-related organizations or centres (18-68 years old) Multi-ethnic	change than biological fathers Negative relation between son's age at disclosure and paternal reactions Less distress and coercion experienced when coming out to both parents simultaneously

Ethics

Since a scoping review is a secondary analysis of a published literature an ethics approval is not required (Kaasbøll & Paulsen, 2019). This scoping review offers an overview about the way parents react after the disclosure that their child is LGB based on the already existing literature.

Results

Table 1 presents the studies generated from the screening process (N=29). Five themes are formulated based on the most prevalent results among the 29 articles. According to the selected studies the most common result is that parents (initially) respond in a discouraging way after the revelation that their child identifies as LGB (Willoughby et al., 2006). Moreover,

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

characteristics like parent's ethnicity, religiosity and age influence the way parents respond after the disclosure (Campbell et al., 2017; Grafsky, 2014; Richter et al., 2017).

Theme 1. Negative Parental Reactions

The consensus of the literature analysed is that parent's first response to the coming out of their children as LGB is negative (D'Amico et al., 2015; Huebner et al., 2017; Savin-Williams & Dubé, 1998). Research has revealed that the majority of parents experience negative emotions as pain, denial, guilt, shame, anger, and fear that their child might be impaired from discrimination associated with a non-heteronormative status (Savin-Williams & Dube, 1998). Parents have to adapt to their child's new identity which simultaneously gives a new identity to them (being the parents of a non-heterosexual child who also belongs to a stigmatized minority) (Boxer, Cook, & Herdt, 1991; Grafsky, 2014; Saltzburg, 2004). Several studies reviewed agree that the negative feelings that parents experience can last for a long time and even though it has been recorded that some parents respond with immediate acceptance to their child being part of a sexual minority, this is not the norm (Baiocco et al., 2015; Campbell et al., 2017; Grafsky, 2014; Potoczniak et al., 2009; Roe, 2017). Despite the common emotional struggles to initially finding out about a child's non-heteronormative identity, data from the qualitative literature indicates that parents do gradually adjust to the information that their child is part of a sexual minority (Campbell et al., 2017; D'Augelli, 2005; Lin & Hudley, 2009; Potoczniak et al., 2009; Savin-Williams & Dubé, 1998). In a particular study it was disclosed that families who have an overall good relationship and are emotionally close to each other showed statistically significant negative changes in the months directly following disclosure and significant positive changes after a few months had passed (Campbell et al., 2017). Time is a strong factor when it comes to acceptance because it yields opportunities for parents to navigate their own feelings and gain information about the situation (e.g., by reading related books and communicating with other parents who also have an LGB child) (Campbell et al., 2017; D'Amico et al., 2015; D'Augelli, 2005; Lin & Hudley, 2009; Potoczniak et al., 2009; Savin-Williams & Dubé, 1998). Unfortunately, the limitations of research do not allow to appreciate these evolving dynamics (Huebner et al., 2017). Moreover, through the data emerges that one of the main reasons for parent's negative reactions to the coming out of their child are them feeling shame and guilt (Armesto & Weisman, 2001). Parents who are more prone to feeling shame after the disclosure

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

appear to be less empathetic; those parents are more concerned about how the outside world will perceive their parenting and are intimidated by coming to terms with a child who will be socially stigmatized. On the other hand, guilt-prone parents focus more on the impact of their behaviour (they worry that they are the cause of their child's homosexuality) which leads to feelings of remorse and a desire to repair the situation (Armesto & Weisman, 2001). Consequently, prone to guilt parents (as opposed to prone to shame ones) tend to be more understanding.

Theme 2. Parental Future Expectations of Their Child

Parents who are confronted with the realization that their child is LGB might react in a negative way because they are expressing a deep sense of loss connected to the traditional future that they expected their child to have. For example, in a study that involved mothers and their lesbian daughters it was disclosed that mothers felt devastated because the heterosexual dreams that they had for their daughters were not going to be fulfilled (e.g., have a wedding with someone of the opposite sex, biological children) (Pearlman, 2005). Mothers also revealed that their daughter's non-heterosexual identity made them feel that they lost the connection that a mother and a daughter can have. Parents in general disclosed that they hoped that their children would have the same beliefs and values as them, would have a traditional marriage, children, and a closeness that would be maintained through sharing the same interests (Gattamorta et al., 2019). Moreover, it was disclosed that many parents feel sad that their child has lost the possibility of having a safe life without significant complications (Potoczniak et al., 2009).

Theme 3. Cultural Factors

Cultural factors have been found to be an important variable about how parents react to the coming out of their child as non-heterosexual and research has revealed that parents who are a part of an ethnic minority respond in a more negative way in comparison to parents who belong to ethnic majorities (Clark et al., 2021; D'Augelli, 2005; Gattamorta et al., 2019; Huebner et al., 2017; Pearlman, 2005; Richter et al., 2017). An ethnic minority is defined as (according to Oxford dictionary) *a group within a community which has different national or cultural traditions from the main population*. One article suggests that the social-cognitive-behavioural model theory (which explains that learning occurs in a social context with a dynamic and reciprocal interaction of the person, environment, and behaviour) offers a framework in order to comprehend potential ethnic disparities in parental rejection. This model explains that parental

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

reactions are connected to interpersonal aspects like homonegativity which is specified as adverse attitudes in relation to homosexuality (D'Augelli, 2005). Furthermore, parents from ethnic minorities tend to have strong cultural beliefs and traditional opinions regarding gender roles which makes them less accepting towards their LGB children as they are not 'part of the norm' (Huebner et al., 2017; Richter et al., 2017). For example, among Hispanic families the concept of *machismo* is frequently presented when a man has to be hypermasculine, sexual and aggressive (Gattamorta et al., 2019).

Some articles examined the way Hispanic parents respond to the coming out of their children. In one of these articles the results established that even though coming out is often tough for LGB youth and their families, these difficulties may be exacerbated for Hispanics due to cultural factors that contribute to children living at home for a longer period of time and negative reactions to not being heterosexual (Gattamorta et al., 2019). One other study focused on African American parents, and it was disclosed by their LGB children that their reactions to them coming out of the closet were extremely negative. Although the limited literature suggests that it is common for parents to react negatively (especially in the beginning), the authors of this article concluded that it is even more challenging for ethnic minorities parents to have a positive attitude towards their non-heterosexual children (Potoczniak et al., 2009). These studies are important because they shed a light on how cultural factors influence the way parents react to the coming out of their children.

Theme 4. Parental Age

A common theme that was found in the articles was that younger parents are more likely to have a positive response after the disclosure that their child is non-heterosexual and maintain a positive relationship with them (D'Augelli et al., 2008; Grafsky, 2014; Willoughby et al., 2006). The reason behind this might be that young parents are closer to the current generation than older ones which makes them more likely to be influenced by modern conceptions and adopt a contemporary view about sexuality. Similarly, older parents might react more discriminatory towards their LGB child because they have been raised in an era with more traditional values when visibility towards sexual minorities was not prominent at all (Grafsky, 2014).

Theme 5. Parental Religious Beliefs

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

The religious beliefs of parents have been addressed and analyzed in a few papers. Based upon the selected literature parents who are religious believe that the sexual life of their LGB children is sinful, as in their eyes heterosexual relationships are the only ideal ones (as established by their religion) (Baiocco et al, 2015; Campbell et al, 2017; Clark et al., 2021; Hillier, 2002; Mayeza, 2021). It is found that parents whose way of parenting and overall worldviews are coming from religious doctrines were associated with unsupportive reactions to same-sex sexual orientation. Such reactions involved straight-up rejection. Furthermore, one of the articles shows that children who are a part of the LGB community made the choice of whether to come out based on their parents' relationship with religion (it was more difficult for LGB children to come out when they knew that their parent's viewpoints were based on their religion) (Campbell et al., 2017). Not many studies examine the relationship between Christian parents and their children after them disclosing that they are non-heterosexual. However, a study in which Christian parents were interviewed revealed that their reactions post disclosure were mainly negative (Campbell et al., 2017). A particular study focused on how parents react after the revelation that their child is LGB, and it was discovered that their reactions were initially dominated by negative emotions. However, months after the revelation occurred significant positive alterations were described (Clark et al, 2021).

It needs to be illustrated that the way parents view Christian scriptures is a crucial factor that determines their reactions as the ones who describe the Bible as *authoritative* are strongly opinionated and against homosexuality. In a few studies it was also disclosed that an aspect such as religion can lead to bigger conflicts as their conservative nature keeps them from having a positive reaction towards their child's 'different' sexuality (Pastrana, 2015; Potoczniak et al., 2009). A study that centred on Italian parents also revealed that the ones with deeper traditional values had strong negative reactions as their traditional values can be a predictor of sexual prejudice (Baiocco et al., 2015). Moreover, several studies included in this review indicate that in countries (e.g., Italy) where religious beliefs are deeply ingrained in their culture (and overall lifestyle) it is common for youth who are a part of the LGB community to be clashed with based on religion homophobia (Baiocco et al., 2015; Clark et al., 2021; Hillier, 2002). Findings suggest that religious parents frequently face feelings of confusion regarding their faith and beliefs about homosexuality while having to come to terms with the fact that their child is non-heterosexual.

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

Furthermore, it was revealed that Christian parents felt vulnerable as they loved their child and it was hard to keep a positive relationship, while coming to terms regarding their belief system (Mayeza, 2021).

General Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore the way parents react after the disclosure that their child is part of the LGB community and synthesize the characteristics that might influence a more positive or negative parental reaction.

After charting and synthesizing the data it is revealed that parents are more likely to react in a negative way after the disclosure that their child identifies as lesbian, gay, or bisexual (Willoughby et al., 2006). The literature agrees that parent's initial reactions after the disclosure are rarely positive (Baiocco et al., 2015; Campbell et al., 2017; Grafsky, 2014; Potoczina et al., 2009; Roe, 2017). Unfortunately, not enough longitudinal studies have been conducted on how a parent's initial negative reaction is transformed over time, if total acceptance can be reached and in those cases that parents accept and embrace their LGB child over time, what components lead them to it. A few studies show that negative reactions tend to become more positive as the time passes which is a very encouraging sign and more research needs to be done on how initial negative parental reactions shift over time (Campbell et al., 2017; D'Augelli, 2005; Gattamortet et al., 2019). Moreover, the findings of this study underscore that certain characteristics impact parental reactions. More explicitly, parents who are deeply connected to their cultural roots are more likely to react in a negative way to the revelation that their child is LGB (Richter et al., 2017). Secondly, a common factor among the data was that parents who are younger are more accepting towards having a child who is part of a sexual minority compared to older parents (D'Augelli et al., 2008; Grafsky, 2014; Willoughby et al., 2006). Thirdly, Christianity is a detrimental factor that can influence a negative parental reaction (Campbell et al., 2017). Parents who view the world accordingly to their religious belief are associated with being unsupportive towards their children coming out as LGB (Campbell et al., 2017). The next common theme that was formulated from the data illustrated that parents might react in an unacceptable manner

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

because they feel that the expectations that they have for their children are not going to be fulfilled (a loss of dreams based on the expected heterosexuality of their children) (Pearlman, 2005).

For LGB youth coming out to their parents is a major decision that can cause them a lot of stress as they fear that they might be confronted with rejection and discrimination. It is inevitable that the family dynamic will shift after the disclosure that they have a child who identifies as lesbian, gay, or bisexual (Clark et al., 2021).

The most prevalent key finding identified in the literature is that parent's initial reactions after the revelation that their children are part of the LGB community tend to be negative (D'Amico et al., 2015; Huebner et al., 2017; Savin-Williams & Dubé, 1998). The reasons for not being acceptive towards their child's sexuality can vary for every parent. For some parents it is difficult to be positive because the prejudices that they have about homosexuality keep them from accepting their child (and they might feel shame about the fact that they are the parents of an LGB child) (Armesto & Weisman, 2001). Other parents tend to feel guilty after the disclosure, like their parenting style led to their children being LGB, failing to understand that sexuality is not a choice (Armesto & Weisman, 2001). For some other parents their reaction is not necessarily unacceptable or discriminative, but this new identity of their children leads to them struggling because they have to adapt to a new reality (Boxer et al., 1991). Moreover, after the initial shock that they might feel, parents react in a negative way because they know how prejudiced and dangerous other people can be; being LGB in a stigmatized society can cause both mental and physical harm. Therefore, they do not want their children to have to live a more difficult life (Armesto & Weisman, 2001). Although the before mentioned reasons can seem understandable, parental acceptance is significantly important for the LGB youth; even though LGB young people know that they are living in a society that can be discriminative towards sexual minorities, having their parent's support after coming out affects their mental well-being to a significant positive degree (Clark et al., 2021). Moreover, another key finding from the data is that family members who have a strong and healthy relationship with each other are likely to experience less severe conflicts after the coming out of the children as LGB (Campbell et al., 2017). This is comprehensible because although parents might need their time to adjust and accept that their child is LGB, having a meaningful relationship before the disclosure can

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

contribute to a more positive parental reaction, since they value their children's emotions and autonomy.

Another key finding from the literature was that after the coming out of their children some parents experience a situation similar to the five stages of grief that people might go through when they lose a loved one (Goodrich, 2009; Phillips & Ancis, 2008; Wakeley & Tuason, 2011). The five stages of the grieving process are: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance; the same analogy is used to describe the emotions that parents might experience after the realization that their child is LGB (they experience a sense of loss since to them their child is not who they expected) (Boxer et al., 1991). Going through denial is the first initial reaction for parents and they might reject the child's homosexuality as they perceive it to be only a phase (especially if the child is at a quite young age parents might think that they are just experimenting or going through a rebellious phase) (Willoughby et al., 2006). Other parents might choose to not discuss the issue at all hoping it will go away (Lin & Hudley, 2009). After the buffer zone has faded for the parents, they might feel anger and reject their child, moreover, they might even try to find an external reason for their child's homosexuality (e.g., their child's peers and friends are a bad influence). As it was already mentioned, parents might experience deep feelings of guilt and distinguishing an external cause can ease this. Trying to find their way towards acceptance, parents then might start to bargain with their children to not disclose their sexuality to anyone else (on some occasions even to the other parent). Moreover, parents might try hard to keep this a secret to protect their social status (Armesto & Weisman, 2001).

Depression is a situation that parents might experience as they try to navigate their emotions. Many parents might blame themselves for not being able to recognize the signs earlier or even feel responsible that their child is lesbian, gay, or bisexual. Moreover, parents might be deeply worried about the life that their child is going to have thinking that they are condemned to live a lonely one full of discrimination (Willoughby et al., 2006). This stage is difficult for the parents; however, they are starting to acknowledge that their child is non-heterosexual. The final step is acceptance which implies that parents have completed the mourning process and recognize that they are the parents of an LGB child. Unfortunately, the research is limited and there is not enough evidence on how many parents actually make it to this step. Some studies

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

though have revealed that the initial negative reactions of the parents wear off and they eventually accept their LGB child (Campbell et al., 2017).

Accepting that their child identifies as LGB can be challenging for many parents, but it can be even more difficult for those who are a part of an ethnic minority. According to the literature, this happens because they are attached to their cultural values and stereotypical perceptions about what a man's and a woman's role inside the family should be (Gattamorta et al., 2019). For example, Hispanic families tend to be highly group-oriented, and they hold a strong value of their family and their traditions. Moreover, keeping the family close and cultivating harmony and loyalty is a crucial element for Hispanic parents (Fontes, 2002; Zayas, 1992). Moreover, Latino parents tend to be described as authoritative and their children tend to have less autonomy as they depend on their parents (for example they are likely to leave the family house and move to their own at a much older age compared to other European countries) (Gattamorta et al., 2019). Strong cultural and traditional beliefs regarding gender roles might be associated with Hispanic parents as in many family's men are supposed to be hyper masculine and women feminine and maternal (Gattamorta et al., 2019). Consequently, it is explainable why parents who value tradition and have a strict perception of gender roles react in an execrably negative manner compared to parents who come from ethnic majorities and tend to value independence and autonomy more.

Moreover, children who are African American revealed that their parents reacted in an extremely negative way after them disclosing that they are LGB (Potoczniak et al., 2009). Although literature reveals that African American parents are less authoritative than Latino families, they still have the tendency to be quite authoritative and strict about the traditions of their culture (Fontes, 2002; Zayas, 1992). Therefore, for parents who are a part of an ethnic minority, homosexuality is viewed as something that overthrows their traditional perceptions. Consequently, this might make their LGB children hide their true sexuality in fear that they are going to be treated in a negative way from their parents after them coming out.

Another common finding from the data was that parents who are younger tend to react more positively to the disclosure that their child identifies as LGB compared to older parents (D'Augelli et al., 2008; Grafsky, 2014; Willoughby et al., 2006). An explanation for this is that younger parents are closer to this generation and therefore more easily influenced by it. Western

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

society is gradually adopting more progressive opinions regarding sexual minority people and in combination with the rapid development of media (and the internet in general) people can be informed and educated more easily on important topics (Grafsky, 2014). For the before mentioned reasons, younger parents might be more open minded because they have access to unlimited knowledge (through the internet) and their views can be shaped more easily compared to older parents as they might not be familiar with using the internet and social media platforms. Moreover, younger individuals tend to attend higher levels of education which is linked to them adopting a more progressive and spherical viewpoint about the world (Clark et al., 2021). Consequently, when people from younger generations have children, they are more likely to respond in a more positive way to a potential disclosure that their offspring identifies as LGB considering that they might be more educated about this matter. The findings related to age and the general positive nature of the coming out experiences described by the parents in these articles suggest that the dominant discourse of coming out to family may be changing. However, the age factor of the parents as a variable has not been systematically pursued. Consequently, future research needs to be done for this factor to be investigated (Baiocco et al., 2015).

According to data, religiosity is a crucial factor that can affect the way parents react after the revelation of having a child who is part of a sexual minority (Campbell et al., 2017). Parents who are religious and have a strong connection to a religious tradition are likely to react in a negative way to the coming out of their children (Maslowe & Yarhouse, 2015). For many people religion is strongly associated to their identity, and they tend to view the world according to their beliefs (which might be deeply shaped around their religion) (Baiocco et al, 2015). Most Christian denominations (e.g. the Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox church, the Oriental Orthodox church) are accepting individuals who are attracted to the same sex; however, they demonstrate that any homosexual act is considered not only inappropriate but a sin (Greatrick, 2022). Consequently, many people have been educated that the only acceptable romantic relationships are the heterosexual ones and when they become parents it can be a really challenging process to accept that their own child is part of a sexual minority (Greatrick, 2022). Some studies disclose that an aspect such as religion can lead to severe detrimental conflicts between the parents and their LGB children as the parent's conservative view of sexuality keeps them from reacting in a more accepting manner. It can be very challenging for religious parents

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

to overcome their prejudices against homosexuality, and therefore in some cases the relationship between the parents and their LGB child might be severely impacted (Cartabia, 2008; Lingiardi, Falanga, & D'Augelli, 2005). Religious parents might struggle significantly as they feel vulnerable after the coming out of their children because whilst they still love them, they have to come to terms with their religious beliefs; a situation quite difficult to face as they have to alter significant aspects of their principles and one of them is the belief that only heteronormative relationships should be accepted (Campbell et al., 2017).

The final key finding from the data described that parents felt like the dreams and expectations that they had for their children's future were not going to be fulfilled after the revelation that they are non-heterosexual (Grafsky, 2014). In a study that involved mothers the researchers asked them how they reacted after the disclosure that they have a lesbian daughter (Pearlman, 2005). Most of the mothers reported that they felt like the connection between them and their daughters was lost and irreparable. More explicitly, when the daughter admits to her mother that she is a lesbian the relationship between them might be put into question as the mother has to abandon her expectations (e.g., a traditional marriage and grandchildren) and even her whole parental philosophy (Pearlman, 2005). Citing a part of a mother's response from the interviews that Pearlman (2005) presented in her research it is apparent that parents can react in a harsh way after the coming out of their children:

I didn't care what she was going through. . . I didn't give a damn. . . I only know that it was causing me pain . . . shame that my daughter wasn't like other people's children. I wanted her to be perfect. I wanted her to be wonderful . . . smart . . . accepted socially. . .I wanted to be proud of her . . . see her get married . . . have children . . . my bubble was burst. I didn't know how to handle it.

Clearly, this is an individual statement, however, conducting this research the most common finding is that parents react in a negative way and their rejection can impact their children's emotional well-being detrimentally (Huebner et al., 2019).

Societal Changes Regarding LGB Individuals

In the last years the number of individuals who have come out as LGB has been substantially increased (Wilson, 2020). Unfortunately, still to this day society stigmatizes LGB

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

individuals, however, more and more people decide to disclose that they are part of the LGB community. Consequently, more awareness is spread which leads to an expanding number of international and national developments establishing the vital rights of LGB people (the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights is addressing legislative measures to improve the living conditions of LGB individuals) (Wilson, 2020). An essential change in viewpoints towards LGB is occurring, leading to a more inclusive society (e.g., now about 60% of Americans support marriage equality when less than a decade ago, that percentage of Americans were against gay weddings). Furthermore, in the US General Social Survey, LGB identification doubled from 2.7% in 2008 to 5.4% in 2016 (Witeck, 2014). A strong connection between legislation and attitude seems to exist since in countries where the laws are inclusive towards LGB people surveys show an increased acceptance towards them (Wilson, 2020). Although because of sociocultural factors coming out to parents is likely to be different for younger LGB generations, youth reports that they still fear being rejected by them. Negative responses from parents were prominent in most of the articles of this study, however, according to new research validating reactions from parents might be on the rise (Van Bergen, Wilson, Russell, Gordon, & Rothblum, 2021).

It is important for parents to acknowledge that social support groups exist and might help them navigate their emotions and process the revelation that they have an LGB child. Many social groups (e.g., PFLAG, Family Acceptance Project) aim to support LGB youth and their families by presenting education programs and opportunities to connect parents with their LGB children (Ryan, 2009). Counsellors and providers specialized in the subject can help parents alleviate their negative feelings and reconnect them with their children. Moreover, social support groups offer the chance for parents to interact and communicate with other parents who are experiencing a similar situation or who have already gone through the process of accepting their child's sexuality (Ryan & Chen-Hayes, 2013). Having access to efficient resources can encourage more children to come out and help parents through the acceptance process.

Because there is a small body of literature that focuses on the way parents react to the disclosure that their child identifies as lesbian, gay, or bisexual it is not possible to generate a full concept of the subject. The need for conducting more longitudinal studies is prominent because it is important to know if parental negative reactions shift over time and what are the components

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

that might lead to them becoming more accepting towards their children's sexuality.

Longitudinal studies are extremely beneficial because they deliver a more comprehensive approach to research; they extend over a long period of time and researchers are able to detect changes and identify important characteristics (Caruana, Roman, Hernández-Sánchez, & Solli, 2015).

Positive family relations are crucial for the wellbeing of the children and the parents (D'Augelli et al., 2008; Grafsky, 2014; Willoughby et al., 2006). It is devastating that this positivity might be disrupted after children disclosing that they identify as LGB because the consequences might be severe and irreversible for the mental health of the child (aggressiveness, substance abuse, depression and even suicide) (Auerbach et al., 2011). Unfortunately, most of the literature revealed that parent's initial reaction is likely to be negative, however, significant sociocultural steps have been made towards the acceptance of LGB suggesting a less discriminative and stigmatized future for LGB people (Savin-Williams & Ream, 2003). Additional research in the future will offer more data regarding parental reactions and the desirable outcome would be that their reactions are becoming more accepting.

Limitations

Many limitations exist in this study. The research on parental reactions after the revelation that their child identifies as LGB requires updated data to keep pace with the developments on this topic. However, due to inadequate research on parental reactions this study is not limited to the most contemporary studies (most of the studies are between 2008 and 2017) since it is important to map and synthesize sufficient information. Moreover, studies with white participants from ethnic majorities are over-represented and even though it is observable from the literature so far that cultural factors impact parental reactions more research needs to be done on that (Richter et al., 2017). Another limitation is that this study focuses on LGB youth and not on the whole spectrum of the LGBTQIA+ community separating sexuality from gender. Consequently, it is not possible to synthesize data on how parents react to the disclosure that their child does not feel comfortable with the sex that was assigned at birth for them. Most of the studies on parental reactions use qualitative methodologies which means that more proper measures need to be developed. It is possible to hypothesize and analyse bigger samples by using theoretical models on parental acceptance. For example, researchers can hypothesize more

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

complex factors (e.g., sociocultural and personal factors) associated to parental acceptance or rejection of LGB youth.

Recommendations for policy, practise, and research

Researchers, practitioners, and policymakers need to develop policies that will protect LGB individuals. For example, schools should develop strategies that will create a safe environment for LGB students (e.g., integrating topics about diverse sexualities in the curriculum and zero tolerance policies on bullying and harassment). Furthermore, an efficacious collaboration between school and parents would benefit both the child and the parents. For example, school can implement monthly meetings with the parents so they can discuss in depth a wide range of important topics including sexuality. Therefore, that implies that educators should have a training in LGB matters so they can effectively intervene.

The implementation of more interventions is crucial to help parents with the process of accepting that their child is LGB. Providers who work with parents should help them through the process of acceptance and encourage them to diminish their negative behaviours because they might put their children's mental health at risk. Moreover, more social support groups need to be formed as they can be a resource for parents where they can express their feelings and talk freely with other parents who are in a similar situation as them. However, a methodical and empirical testing that proves the effectiveness of these groups is lacking and therefore more research should be done to determine their impact (Huebner, Rullo, Thoma, McGarritty, & Mackenzie, 2013). Moreover, in every intervention and support group counsellors, practitioners and providers should receive special training on how they should work with LGB clients and their families.

The research on parents of LGB youth needs to expand more. Researchers should focus on more diverse samples including more parents from ethnic minorities and parents of colour as white participants from the US are over-represented in the studies (Abreu et al., 2019). Moreover, parent-LGB adolescent dyads as method research would demonstrate more efficiently the reactions of the parents and their effect on children because it would be possible to view the family (and how the family dynamics shift after the disclosure) as a whole, adding more clarity to the data. Furthermore, it would be a significant enhance to the literature studies that focus on more varied families. For example, how single parents respond to the disclosure since the mother

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN, GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

or the father figure is missing. Studies have shown that single parents spend more time with their children leading to a stronger bond between them, thus it would be interesting to research if this stronger bond would influence a more positive response to a potential coming out of their children (McLanahan & Sandefur, 2009). Finally, more longitudinal studies should be implemented since they can offer information on if and how negative parental reactions alter over time.

Conclusion

This study aimed to map and synthesize data on parental reactions after the revelation that their child identifies as lesbian, gay, or bisexual. Data disclosed that most parent's initial reactions are negative and factors like ethnicity, age, religion, and cultural values can influence a positive or negative reaction. Overall, parents who are part of an ethnic minority and/or have strong religious and cultural values are likely to have a strong negative respond. Moreover, younger parents tend to be more accepting and adjust easier to the coming out of their children. Future studies should explore parental reactions further and consider more complex polarisations than simply classifying their responses as negative or positive.

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

References

- Abreu, R. L., Riggle, E. B. D., & Rostosky, S. (2019). Expressive writing intervention with Cuban-American and Puerto Rican parents of LGBTQ individuals. *The Counseling Psychologist, 48*, 106-134. doi:10.1177/0011000019853240
- Armesto, J. C., & Weisman, A.G. (2001). Attributions and emotional reactions to the identity disclosure (“coming out”) of a homosexual child. *Family Process, 40*, 145-161. doi:10.1111/j.1545-5300.2001.4020100145.x
- Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist, 55*, 469–480. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.55.5.469
- Auerbach, R. P., & Bigda-Peyton, J. S., & Eberhart, N. K., & Webb, C. W., & Ho, M. R. (2011). Conceptualizing the prospective relationship between social support, stress, and depressive symptoms among adolescents. *J Abnorm Child Psychol., 39*, 475-87. doi:10.1007/s10802-010-9479-x
- Baiocco, R., & Fontanesi, L., & Santamaria, F., & Ioverno, S., & Baumgartner, E., & Laghi, F. (2016). Coming out during adolescence: Perceived parents’ reactions and internalized sexual stigma. *Journal of Health Psychology, 21*, 1809-1813. doi:10.1177/1359105314564019
- Baiocco, R., & Fontanesi, L., & Santamaria, F., & Ioverno, S., & Marasco, B., & Baumgartner, E., & Willoughby, B. L. B., & Laghi, F. (2015). Negative parental responses to coming out and family functioning in a sample of lesbian and gay young adults. *J Child Fam Stud, 24*, 1490-1500. doi:10.1007/s10826-014-9954-z
- Bregman, H. R., & Malik, N. M., & Page, M. J. L., & Makynen, E., & Lindahl, K. M. (2012). Identity profiles in lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth: The role of family influences. *J Youth Adolescence, 42*, 417-430. doi:10.1007/s10964-012-9798-z
- Boxer, A. M., Cook, J. A., & Herdt, G. (1991). Double jeopardy: Identity transitions and parent-child relations among gay and lesbian youth. In K. A. Pillemer & K. McCartney (Eds.), *Parent-child relations throughout life* (pp. 59–92). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

- Campbell, M., & Zaporozhets, O., & Yarhouse, M. A. (2017). Changes in parent-child relationships and religious views in parents of LGB youth postdisclosure. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 25, 336-344.
doi:10.1177/1066480717741650
- Carnelley, K. B., & Hepper, E. G., & Hicks, C., & Turner, W. (2011). Perceived parental reactions to coming out, attachment, and romantic relationship views. *Attachment & Human Development*, 13, 217-236. doi:10.1080/14616734.2011.563828
- Cartabia, M. (2008). Legal study on homophobia and discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation in Italy. *Vienna: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights*.
- Caruana, E. J., & Roman, M., & Hernández-Sánchez, J., & Solli, P. (2015). Longitudinal studies. *J Thorac Dis.*, 7, 537-40. doi:10.3978/j.issn.2072-1439.2015.10.63.
- Chatterjee, S. (2014). Problems faced by LGBT people in the mainstream society: Some recommendations. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Studies*, 1, 317-331. cae8049d138e24ed7f5azppd_597.pdf (ijims.com)
- Chrisler, A. J. (2017). Understanding parent reactions to coming out as lesbian, gay, or bisexual: A theoretical framework. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, 9, 165-181.
doi:10.1111/jftr.12194
- Clark, K. A., & Dougherty, L. R., & Pachankis, J. E. (2021). A study of parents of sexual and gender minority children: Linking parental reactions with child mental health. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*. doi:10.1037/sgd0000456
- Colquhoun, H. L., & Levac, D., & O'Brien, K. K., & Straus, S., & Tricco, A. C., & Perrier, L., & Kastner, M., & Moher, D. (2014). Scoping reviews: Time for clarity in definition, methods, and reporting. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, 67, 1291-1294.
doi:10.1016/j.jclinepi.2014.03.013
- D'Amico, E., & Julien, D., & Tremblay, N., & Chartrand, E. (2015). Gay, lesbian, and bisexual youths coming out to their parents: Parental reactions and youths' outcomes. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, 11, 411-437. doi:10.1080/1550428X.2014.981627
- D'Augelli, A. (2005). Stress and adaptation among families of lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, 1, 115-135. doi: 10.1300/J461v01n02_07

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

- D'Augelli, A., & Grossman, A. H., & Starks, M. T. (2008). Families of gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, 4, 95-115.
doi:10.1080/15504280802084506
- Drescher, J. (2015). Out of DSM: Depathologizing Homosexuality. *Behav Sci (Basel)*, 5(4), 565-75. doi:10.3390/bs5040565
- Fontes, L. A. (2002). Child discipline and physical abuse in immigrant Latino families: Reducing violence and misunderstandings. *Journal of counseling and development: JCD* 80, 31-40. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6678.2002.tb00163.x
- Freedman, L. (2008). Accepting the unacceptable: Religious parents and adult gay and lesbian children. *Families in Society*, 89, 237–244. doi: 10.1606/1044-3894.3739
- Gattamorta, K. A., & Salerno, J., & Quidley-Rodriguez, N. (2019). Hispanic parental experiences of learning a child identifies as a sexual minority. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, 15, 151-164. doi:10.1080/1550428X.2018.1518740
- Goodrich, K. M. (2009). Mom and dad came out: The process of identifying as a heterosexual parent with a lesbian, gay, or bisexual child. *Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling*, 3, 37-61. doi: 10.1080/15538600902754478
- Gorman-Murray, A. (2008). Queering the family home: Narratives from gay, lesbian and bisexual youth coming out in supportive homes in Australia. *Gender, Place and Culture*, 15, 31-44. doi:10.1080/09663690701817501
- Grafsky, E. L. (2014). Becoming the parent of a GLB son or daughter. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, 10, 36-57. doi:10.1080/1550428X.2014.857240
- Greatrick, A. (2022). LGBTQ+ asylum and transformative accommodations between religion, faith and sexuality in the UK. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*,
doi:10.1080/01419870.2022.2072175
- Heatherington, L., & Lavner, J. (2008). Coming to terms with coming out: Review and recommendations for family systems-focused research. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 22, 329-43. doi:10.1037/0893-3200.22.3.329
- Helsen, M., Vollebergh, W., & Meeus, W. (2000). Social support from parents and friends and emotional problems in adolescence. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 29, 319–335.
doi:10.1023/A:1005147708827

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

- Hillier, L. (2002). "It's a Catch-22": Same-sex-attracted young people on coming out to parents. In *New directions for child and adolescent development*, 75-91. doi:10.1002/cd.51
- Horn, A. J., & Wong, Y. J. (2017). Exploring the positive experiences of heterosexual fathers who parent gay sons: A phenomenological approach. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, 18, 268-279. doi:10.1037/men0000071
- Huebner, D. M., & Roche, K. M., & Ruth, K. A. (2017). Effects of family demographics and the passage of time on parents' difficulty with their lesbian, gay, or bisexual youth's sexual orientation. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 48, 1581-1588. doi:10.1007/s10508-019-1430-9
- Huebner, D. M., Rullo, J. E., Thoma, B. C., McGarrity, L. A., & Mackenzie, J. (2013). Piloting lead with love: A film -based intervention to improve parents' responses to their lesbian, gay, and bisexual children. *The Journal of Primary Prevention*, 34, 359-369. doi:10.1007/s10935-013-0319-y
- Kaasbøll, J., & Paulsen, V. (2019). What is known about the LGBTQ perspective in child welfare services? A scoping review protocol. *BMJ Open*, 9, e030675. doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2019-030675.
- LaSala, M. C. (2000). Lesbians, gay men, and their parents: Family therapy for the coming-out crisis. *Family Process*, 39, 67-81. doi:10.1111/j.1545-5300.2000.39108.x
- Levac, D. E., & Colquhoun, H., & O'Brien, K. (2010). Scoping studies: Advancing the methodology. *Implementation Science*, 5. doi:10.1186/1748-5908-5-69
- Lin, Y., & Hudley, C. (2009). Taiwanese mothers' reactions to learning that their child is lesbian or gay: An exploratory study. *Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling*, 3, 154-176. doi:10.1080/15538600903285605
- Lingiardi, V., Falanga, S., & D'Augelli, A. R. (2005). The evaluation of homophobia in an Italian sample. *Archives of sexual behavior*, 34, 81-93. doi:10.1007/s10508-005-1002-z
- Maslowe, K. E., & Yarhouse, M. A. (2015). Christian parental reactions when a LGB child comes out. *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 43, 352-363. doi:10.1080/01926187.2015.1051901

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

- Mayeza, E. (2021). South African LGBTPQ youth: The perceptions and realities of coming out and parental reactions. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies, 17*, 292-303.
doi:10.1080/1550428X.2021.1897051
- McLanahan, S., & Sandefur, G. D. (2009). *Growing up with a single parent: What hurts, what helps*. Harvard University Press
- Mehra, B., & Braquet, D. (2011). Progressive LGBTQ reference: Coming out in the 21st century. *Reference Services Review, 39*, 401-422. doi:10.1108/00907321111161403
- Moher, D., & Tetzlaff, J., & Tricco, A. C., & Sampson, M., & Altman, D. G. (2007). Epidemiology and reporting characteristics of systematic reviews. *PLoS Med., 4*, e78.
doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.0040078
- Munn, Z., & Peters, M. D. J., & Stern, C., & Tufanuru, C., & McArthur, A., & Aromataris, E. (2018). Systematic review or scoping review? Guidance for authors when choosing between a systematic or scoping review approach. *BMC Medical Research Methodology, 18*, doi:10.1186/s12874-018-0611-x
- Pastrana, A. J. (2015). Being out to others: The relative importance of family support, identity and religion for LGBT latina/os. *Latino Studies, 13*, 88-112. doi:10.1057/lst.2014.69
- Pearlman, S. F. (2005). When mothers learn a daughter is a lesbian. *Journal of Lesbian Studies, 9*, 117-137. doi:10.1300/J155v09n03_11
- Phillips, M. J., & Ancis, J. R. (2008). The process of identity development as the parent of a lesbian or gay male. *Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling, 2*, 126-158.
doi:10.1080/15538600802125605
- Pinto, N., & Moleiro, C. (2015). Gender trajectories: Transsexual people coming to terms with their gender identities. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 46*, 12-20.
doi:10.1037/a0036487
- Potoczniak, D., & Crosbie-Burnett, M., & Salzburg, N. (2009). Experiences regarding coming out to parents among African American, Hispanic, and White gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning adolescents. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services, 21*, 189-205. doi:10.1080/10538720902772063

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

- Richter, B. E. J., & Lindahl, K. M., & Malik, N. M. (2017). Examining ethnic differences in parental rejection of LGB youth sexual identity. *Journal of Family Psychology, 31*, 244-249. doi:10.1037/fam0000235
- Roe, S. (2017). "Family support would have been like amazing": LGBTQ youth experiences with parental and family support. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families, 25*, 55-62. doi:10.1177/1066480716679651
- Rosario, M., Schrimshaw, E. W., & Hunter, J. (2008). Predicting different patterns of sexual identity development over time among lesbian, gay, and bisexual youths: A cluster analytic approach. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 42*, 266–282. doi:10.1007/s10464-008-9207-7
- Ryan, C. (2009). *Supportive families, healthy children: Helping families with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender children*. San Francisco, CA: Marian Wright Edelman Institute, San Francisco State University
- Ryan, C., & Chen-Hayes, S. (2013). Educating and empowering families of LGBTQ K-12 students. In E. S. Fisher & K. Komosa-Hawkins (Eds.), *Creating school environments to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning students and families: A handbook for school professionals* (pp. 209-227). New York, NY: Routledge
- Saltzburg, S. (2004). Learning that an adolescent child is gay or lesbian: The parent experience. *Social Work, 49*, 109–118. doi:10.1093/sw/49.1.109
- Savin-Williams, R. C. (2001). Chapter 3: Relations with parents. In R. C. Savin-Williams, *Mom, dad, I'm gay. How families negotiate coming out* (pp.23-61). American Psychological Association. doi:10.1037/10437-003
- Savin-Williams, R. C., & Dubé, E. M. (1998). Parental reactions to their child's disclosure of gay/lesbian identity. *Family Relations, 47*, 7-13. doi:10.2307/584845
- Savin-Williams, R. C., & Ream, G. L. (2003). Suicide attempts among sexual-minority male youth. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, 32*, 509–522. doi:10.1207/S15374424JCCP3204_3
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *A Practitioner's Resource Guide: Helping Families to Support Their LGBT Children*. HHS Publication No.

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

PEP14-LGBTKIDS. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014

- Toomey, R. B., & Ryan, C., & Diaz, R. M., & Russell, S. T. (2018). Coping with sexual orientation–related minority stress. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *65*, 484-500. doi:10.1080/00918369.2017.1321888
- Tricco, A. C., & Lillie, E., & Zarin, W., & O'Brien, K. K., & Colquhoun, H., & Levac, D., ...Straus, S. E. (2018). PRISMA extension for scoping reviews (PRISMA-ScR): Checklist and explanation. *Ann Intern Med.*, *169*, 467-473. doi:10.7326/M18-0850
- Van Bergen, D. D., Wilson, B. D., Russell, S. T., Gordon, A. G., & Rothblum, E. D. (2021). Parental responses to coming out by lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, pansexual, or two-spirited people across three age cohorts. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *83*, 1116-1133. doi:10.1111/jomf.12731
- Wakeley, M. D., & Tuason, M. T. G. (2011). Tasks in acceptance: Mothers of lesbian daughters. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services: The Quarterly Journal of Community & Clinical Practice*, *23*, 1–29. doi:10.1080/10538720.2010.541027
- Widgerson, S., & Lindahl, K. M., & Malik, N. M. (2019). Parental responsiveness toward GLB children: Impact on mental health two years later. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, *15*, 326-341. doi:10.1080/1550428X.2018.1545620
- Willoughby, B. L. B., & Malik, N. M., & Lindahl, K. M. (2006). Parental reactions to their sons' sexual orientation disclosures: The roles of family cohesion, adaptability, and parenting style. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, *7*, 14-26. doi:10.1037/1524-9220.7.1.14
- Wilson, K. (2020). Attitudes toward LGBT people and their rights in Europe. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*
- Wisniewski, T. J., & Robinson, T. N., & Deluty, R. H. (2009). An evolutionary psychological investigation of parental distress and reproductive coercion during the “coming out” of gay sons. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *57*, 163-190. doi:10.1080/00918360903446077
- Witeck, B. (2014). Cultural change in acceptance of LGBT people: Lessons from social marketing. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, *84*, 19-22. doi:10.1037/h0098945

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S COMING OUT AS LESBIAN,
GAY, OR BISEXUAL: A SCOPING REVIEW

Zayas, L. H. (1992). Childrearing, social stress, and child abuse: Clinical considerations with Hispanic families. *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless*, 1, 291–309.
doi:10.1007/BF01073955