Discrimination as a Development Barrier

Possible effects of Discrimination and Fear of Discrimination on Sexual Minorities:
A Capabilities Approach to Development Perspective

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This master’s thesis is carried out as a part of the education at the University of Agder and is therefore approved as a part of this education. However, this does not imply that the University answers for the methods that are used or the conclusions that are drawn.

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This work is dedicated to all those individuals whose identities, sexualities and forms of expression are silenced due to the internal and external unfreedoms that inhibit them.
Abstract

The main objective of this study was to explore local people’s perceptions on Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Transvestite (LGBT) people in San Juan de Pasto (Pasto) in Colombia and how discrimination or fear of discrimination may have affected LGBT people’s capabilities and agency using the capabilities approach to development. To do this, two central concepts in the capability approach to development were employed. These concepts are capabilities and agency. Capabilities can be seen as institutional or cultural barriers to the realisation of the self, defined as real freedoms to choose between different ways of living one’s life. Agency is thought of as a good derived from capabilities, where increased freedoms through increased capabilities lead to increased self-determination. In other words, increased agency allow an individual to act on his ambitions and aspirations. Through the application of the capabilities approach to development as a theoretical framework four research questions were examined and discussed: How do local people perceive LGBT people in Pasto? How do LGBT People in Pasto think local people perceive them? How can local perceptions on LGBT people affect the capabilities of LGBT people in Pasto? How can LGBT people in Pasto’s perceptions of how local people perceive them affect individual agency?

The findings suggest that it may be useful to promote self-identification as gay men to allow homosexual men who do not identify as such to embrace their sexual identity rather than oppressing it unsuccessfully. Lesbians on the other hand appeared to have higher agency than gay men, while enduring lower capabilities. This suggest that more pressure towards an perceived undesirable outcome may in fact increase an individual’s agency.
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# Table of Contents

## Part 1: Theory

### Introduction
1. Relevance to development management ................................................................. 4  
2. Research objective and research questions.......................................................... 7

### Research Site
1. Human and LGBT Rights in Colombia................................................................. 9  
2. City of San Juan de Pasto ................................................................................... 12

### Literature Review
1. Minorities in Sustainable Development.............................................................. 13  
2. Sexual Minorities in Development.................................................................... 16  
3. Heterosexism and Heteronormativity................................................................. 17  
4. The HIV Epidemic...................................................................................... 19  
5. LGBT Ontology and Its Implications................................................................. 21  
6. Literature Review: Rounding Up....................................................................... 22

### Theoretical Framework
1. The Capabilities Approach and Sexual Minorities and Discrimination......... 28

## Methodology
1. Methodological Considerations .......................................................................... 30  
2. Research Design................................................................................................. 32  
3. Data Collection Methods and Sampling............................................................. 34  
4. Data Analysis...................................................................................................... 40  
5. Ethical Considerations....................................................................................... 43  
6. Research Limitations.......................................................................................... 44

## Part II: Empirical

### Findings
1. Introduction........................................................................................................... 46  
2. How do local people perceive LGBT people in Pasto?....................................... 48  
3. How do LGBT people in Pasto think local people perceive them?.................... 51  
4. Other relevant findings....................................................................................... 56

### Discussion
1. How can local perceptions on LGBT people affect the capabilities and agency of LGBT people in Pasto? ................................................................. 57  
2. Emerging patterns and prospects....................................................................... 66

### Conclusion
1. Summary............................................................................................................. 68  
2. Significant findings and possible implications.................................................. 69

### References


Part 1: Theory
Introduction

The development debate has concerned itself with issues regarding gender, sexuality and sexual health for quite some time. Gender equality, maternal health and HIV prevention are deeply ratified in core development frameworks such as the Millennium Development Goals and The Human Rights framework. Three of the Millennium development goals touch upon issues of sexuality; goal number three, which is to “promote gender equality and empower women”; goal number five “improve maternal health” and goal number six, “combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases” (UN, 2010). Development has also concerned itself with rape, genital mutilation and other socio-cultural sexuality related topics relevant to people’s well being (Jewkes, Penn-Kekana & Rose-Junius, 2005; UN, 2012; WHO, 2008). However, sexual orientation is a topic many development actors have been avoiding for a long time, until recently. In 2011 the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) released a report on discriminatory laws and practices and acts of violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity (UNHRC, 2011). There are also suggestions and movements for adding freedom from discrimination due to sexual orientation to the Human Rights Declaration. When addressing these issues it is important to adopt a complex understanding of sexuality, and that it is about more than just sex. Sexuality is about the “social rules, economic structures, political battles and religious ideologies” that govern, limit and liberate expressions of intimacy, family values and social interaction between people (Cornwall, Corrêa & Jolly, 2008, p. 5).
Independent authors have addressed the human rights situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people for many years. The term LGBT is intended to represent the most common sexual minorities, as opposed to ‘the gay community’ which is very male-dominated, but may also include lesbians. There are several other variations, such as LGBTQ or LGBTI or even LGBTQI. These initialisms are intended to include queer and/or intersex persons as well, however this study will only deploy the term LGBT because the other categories are too narrow and are generally not used. (Out&Equal, 2009). International development agencies, such as the UN are now adding sexual minorities to their agenda is seen as a major achievement by human rights activists. Several independent organisations and scholars, including the UN’s official report on the matter confirms that many who deviate from cultural images of heterosexuality and attached gender roles are subject to several human rights violations, most notably article 3 “the right to life” (UNHRC, 2011, p. 5). As an example, after Uganda re-implemented sodomy laws that punishes homosexuality with life imprisonment or death several development actors reacted strongly, resulting in reduced aid among other things (The Guardian, 2014). USAID in cooperation with the Swedish development organisation SIDA have adopted a development approach sensitive to the human rights of sexual minorities (USAID, 2013).

There is no particular reason Pasto, Colombia was chosen as a case, it was not expected to have any unique LGBT rights phenomenon occurring there. The reason Colombia was chosen for this study is because Colombia has an emerging gay movement; it is in the middle of legal reforms regarding LGBT rights, including the right to same-sex marriage (El Tiempo, as cited in Step, 2014). Simultaneously, Colombia is also facing a decades long struggle with guerrilla groups, known to execute large numbers of human rights activists, a large, unknown number of LGBT people, and people living with HIV (IRBC, 2013). Despite these risks, the LGBT movement in Colombia is gaining momentum. This study was inspired by this rapid change Colombia is going through in terms of human rights enforcement, anti-discriminatory laws and the rapid progression of sexual rights and policies. However, it appears that the culture is lagging behind the legislations, as machismo attitudes and a culture of sexual silence still dominates in practice (De La Cruz, 2013, p. 1-3). It appears all the major cities in Colombia host one or more LGBT organisations (ColombiaLGBT.com, 2013). However, Colombia is criticised for having a very low standard of sexual education, causing emotions of shame and reactions of silence to sexual health topics (Colombia Reports.co, 2014).
This study centres around the city of San Juan de Pasto (Pasto for short) which is one of the cities lagging behind in terms of acceptance and tolerance for LGBT people. Pasto, being the old theological capital of Colombia and one of the last cities to receive independence from Spain, is considered to be more conservative than smaller cities elsewhere in the country (Solarte & Ramos, 2014). This might prove LGBT rights in Pasto harder to enforce than elsewhere, for example Bogota or Medellin and it is an assumption of this study that as a result, LGBT people are more hidden and more likely to be deprived in Pasto than other major cities in Colombia.

In essence, this thesis sets out to capture which prejudices deprive the LGBT population in Pasto using two theoretical concepts; agency and capabilities. These two concepts are central to the capabilities approach to development, which serves as theoretical framework for this study. Agency is how the individual restricts itself for various reasons, capabilities seeks to comprehend how society, both the public and social settings enhances or deprives someone. These terms in addition to the capabilities approach to development will be outlined in the theoretical framework section. The discussion and conclusions following later in this thesis will reflect on how discrimination- or fear thereof can have developmental outcomes both at individual and societal level.

1.1. Relevance to development management

“Development management will often remain an ideal rather than a description of what takes place”
(Thomas, 1999, p. 17).

This work places itself within the field of development management, also known as management of sustainable development. As such, it will be outlined here why development management should be concerned with sexual minorities.

Development management is a rather new field within the sustainable development discourse. It is believed to derive from development administration, a field often criticised for being highly neo-colonial. Development administration usually concerned itself with how to make developing country governments quickly reform so that they resemble the government structure of developed countries.
As the development discourse went on and the mainstream development debate became more fragmented by the introduction of paradigms such as human development, sustainable development, anti-development and many other approaches, the controversial top-down field of development administration was partially replaced by other discourses, such as development management (Thomas, 1996, p. 96-99).

Alan Thomas (1999, p. 11), one of the pioneers of development management identifies three development and management perspectives that resulting in three approaches to development management:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development as:</th>
<th>Development management as:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historical change process</td>
<td>Management in development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliberate efforts at progress</td>
<td>Management of development (efforts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on progressive change</td>
<td>Management for development</td>
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In essence, the first development definition sees development as a process of change on which humans have little control. Coping in this uncontrollable, rapid societal change becomes management in development – one basically makes the best of things and keep society ‘up to date’ in order to not fall behind. This view of development management is not very relevant to us today, he argues, as it is not compatible with current, social-constructivist views of social and economic processes, such as development (Thomas 1996, p. 105). It may thus seem that the effort of managing the direction and outcomes of development have been abandoned all together, in favour of more tailored policies. The second perspective is the development management definition concluded with being the definition that best captures the essence of development management in Thomas’ first attempt at reaching a definition. It sees development management as empowerment of the powerless, management as enabling people and an arena for conflict resolution and consensus. In other words “management of intervention, with conflicts of goals” (Thomas, 1996, p. 105).
Management of development efforts seek to capture the management of individual development projects, attainment of development goals and appears to include a more country tailored perspective to development. In a later paper Thomas (1999) adds the perspective of “management for development” (p. 11). This approach to development management does not see development as a historical process nor a particular set of interventions. Rather, it sees development as “a particular kind of orientation, an orientation towards progressive change” (Thomas, 1999, p. 10). This development orientation should not focus on particular development interventions but should have a holistic approach that sees development as part of all tasks carried out by organisations and actors, inside and outside of development as such. This means that businesses and consumers and anyone who do in some way impact on development can in theory manage for development. (It is unclear whether one can manage against development, but presumably management decisions that seeks to exploit people, destroy the environment etc. Would be seen as counter-developmental). He once again underlines the importance of empowerment, and how for example participation and capacity building should always be in focus in any organisation or management context even though it may not always lead to increased profits.

Despite rejecting development as a historical process (on which humans have little influence) he notes the importance of progressive change. Progressive change should be “not just change towards one’s particular ideal but change which builds on previous development and in turn lays the basis for further development” (Thomas, 1999, p. 15). The goal of any management task should then be to enable “all human beings to realize their full capacity” (Thomas, 1999, p. 16). The points Thomas point out here are not very different from how management is normally carried out in respectable companies, where employees are already expected to educate themselves, attend courses, receive training and thus increase their capacity. In a development context it is still interesting, because it proves that top-down management that does not increase employees’ capacities are thus anti-developmental, and discrimination and reduced determination due to fear of discrimination could be defined as obstacles to development. Here I would like to argue that management for development is at the core of the capabilities approach to development, which shall be examined further in the theoretical framework. In essence, the capabilities approach, in which development’s goal is to remove “major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or overactivity of repressive states” (Sen, 1999, p. 4). Management for development is thus “a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy” (Sen, 1999, p. 4), and can be done at all levels, not only by managers.
1.2. Research objective and research questions

The main objective of this study was to explore local people’s perceptions on LGBT people in San Juan de Pasto (Pasto) in Colombia and how discrimination or fear of discrimination may have affected LGBT people’s capabilities and agency using the capabilities approach to development.

1.2.2. Research Questions

1. How do local people perceive LGBT people in Pasto?

2. How do LGBT People in Pasto think local people perceive them?

3. How can local perceptions on LGBT people affect the capabilities of LGBT people in Pasto?

4. How can LGBT people in Pasto’s perceptions of how local people perceive them affect individual agency?
In order to get a better understanding of the assumptions, choices and limitations behind this study it is necessary to elaborate on the site where the data was collected. In section 2.1 an outline of Colombia as a whole will be presented, with especial attention to the LGBT situation in the country. Since the study was based in San Juan de Pasto (Pasto) some information on Pasto will be provided as well. However Pasto lacks official reports on its LGBT population so there were no local data to base the research on, and national data was used instead.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>45,745,783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Mixed 58%, White 20%, Afro-Colombian 21%, Indigenous 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>90% Roman Catholic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Age</td>
<td>Male: 27.6 years - Female: 29.5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanization</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDI Index Score</td>
<td>0.719 (1 is the maximum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV Prevalence</td>
<td>0.5%*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (CIA, 2014).

*LGBT HIV prevalence is reported to be 35 times higher, but a major limitation to this study is that participants can easily lie about their sexual orientation (Baral, et. al, 2007, p. 1904).
2.1. Human and LGBT Rights in Colombia

There is currently an ongoing academic debate as to why there is such a sudden surge in LGBT rights movements in South America as of late. Argentina, Brazil Colombia, Ecuador and Uruguay all legalised same-sex partnerships more than five years ago, while Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay upgraded these rights to full marriage rights in 2013, while Colombia annulled same-sex partnerships (Pierceson, Crocker & Schulenberg, 2013, p. 54-65). Similarly, Chile has an on-going debate, and was a major issue in its 2013 elections, where winning president Bachelet made it a priority issue to have a same-sex union bill passed (Santiago times, 2014).

Additionally, said countries have adopted anti-discrimination laws against certain minorities (De La Cruz, 2013, p. 1-2), including sexual minorities, but discrimination still persists:

“Many Latin American countries have laws that defend sexual freedom and orientation. For example with law reform in Nicaragua and Panama over the past 12 months, there are now no states in Latin America which criminalize homosexual relations. Yet Latin America is widely regarded as having a long way to go to successfully counter homophobia, or “fear or hatred of homosexuals.” According to the UN, homosexual and trans people are frequently insulted, fired from jobs, and barred from community activities” (UNAIDS, 2009a).

The academic debate around this topic is twofold: how can such a surge in LGBT rights emerge in a continent so strongly rooted in machismo and Roman Catholic traditions? (De la Cruz, 2013) Secondly, arguably Latin America is yet to reach a post-materialist age, where basic needs are met, so how did Latin America reach a ‘cultural shift’ towards post-materialism at such an early stage? (Encarnación, 2011) In the case of Colombia this shift towards a strong focus on human rights and anti-discrimination, at least from the legislative point, may be rooted in its decades long conflict.

The conflict broke out after an event known as La Violencia, triggered by the assassination Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, a popular left wing presidential candidate in 1948 after which liberal and conservative supporters engaged in a one day long civil war known as Bogotazo. Internal struggles lasted until the beginning of the 1960s until the United States started having a stronger presence in the country, fearing that the grouping of liberal and communist Colombians would gain political power. The opposition later broke off, and some went on to form guerrilla groups, the most known and the largest being FARC (Chacón, Robinson & Torvik, 2011, p. 384-385; Cook, 2011, p. 20)
The FARC claims to be fighting for social equality and agrarian reform, but have been more involved in terrorist attacks and drug trafficking during the last half of their existence. The FARC is accused of major human rights violations, including the execution of LGBT people and people living with HIV, in an act known as social cleansing. The Colombian government on their side claims to be fighting for stability and peace and the rights and interests of the citizens (Norman, 2003, p. 102-110; Cook, 2011, p. 33). In recent years the government is more of a coalition between liberals and conservatives, but the people in general are said to have a tense relationship to socialism and equality in politics, as these concepts may be associated with FARC campaigns (Mejia, 2011, p. 62-70). The civil war is still ongoing despite current peace talks (BBC, 2013).

“Should the talks fail, the largest human rights risk would be what we might call the “Sri Lanka scenario”: a no-holds-barred military offensive with numerous non-combatant casualties. If this fourth attempted peace process collapses, political and military leaders will be tempted to finish the FARC off, once and for all, through scorched-earth tactics.[...] Even if talks are interrupted by Colombia’s upcoming elections, an agreement before the end of 2014 is a real possibility. Should that happen, a series of new security and human rights challenges would emerge in post-conflict Colombia” (Isacson, 2013, p. 16-17).

Throughout the conflict thousands of labor and human rights activists have been killed and many more threatened. This has created a rather difficult landscape for ensuring and protecting human rights in Colombia (Isacson, 2013, p. 14-15). There have been many attempts at ensuring rights for all parts of the population through various initiatives and laws (UN 2013, p. 4). However, Colombia is still often referred to as “worst human rights record in the western hemisphere” (Bains, 2008, p. 1). During the fieldwork conducted in Colombia for this research there appeared to be many human rights activists, LGBT parades and numerous organisations. It is unclear whether the national strive towards human rights have been successful or not, but through a very strict focus on human rights since 2010 and training for the police (Colombian Police, 2010, p. 58-63) and various attempts at implementing human rights in school (OHCHR, 2012, p. 1, 3), there appears to be a changing human rights landscape in Colombia. It is possible that writings on the current state of human rights in Colombia are tainted by writings on its bloody past, but that is not within the scope of this study to conclude. Either way, Colombia now has a growing LGBT movement that has achieved a lot in just a few years.
A shadow report to the UN on the human rights situation of the LGBT population in Colombia states that: “Even though the Constitutional Court has developed an extensive jurisprudence, mostly on the rights of same-sex couples, discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity persists” (Colombia Diversa, 2010).

This suggests that there is still a lot of work to be done, but also that the juridical part is in place, but social attitudes and stigma still remains. The report also mentions that human rights such as the right to life and freedom of expression is violated, even by the police, despite laws aimed at preventing such behaviour. It notes that despite several complaints and accusations aimed at police officers harassing LGBT people, especially transgender people, the police denies that such accusations have been reported. Colombia Diversa also reports that they have looked into several homicides, which appear to be hate crimes, but all 67 cases of homicide between 2006-2007 were denied by the police to be hate crimes as such and were investigated only as regular murders (Colombia Diversa, p. 5, 14). They also report that especially human rights and LGBT rights defenders are at risk, because many of them have been found tortured and executed in their homes. The report also criticises the state for not looking into this and refusing to investigate these crimes as hate crimes (Colombia Diversa, 2010, p. 5-7).

On the topic of prejudices the report mentions that it is common to think of all transvestites as prostitutes, and that all homosexual men have AIDS (Colombia Diversa 2010, p. 17). These sources all stem from before the major reforms and law implementations aimed at protecting LGBTs people and other minorities. As mentioned earlier, some of these sources appear to be in quite stark contrast to what can be witnessed on the ground, where LGBT organisations appear to be thriving and bars and support groups for young LGBT people and people living with HIV are plentiful. This contrast between modern anti-discriminatory legislation and the cultural values held in society might be due to the latter academic problem examined earlier; that post-materialist values are promoted and implemented, but a cultural shift, as such, is yet to take place (Encarnación, 2011). It is also important to remember that a lot has been achieved in the conflict against the FARC and other terrorists in recent years, suggesting that a new report may be needed.
2.2. City of San Juan de Pasto

Pasto is a city in South-Western Colombia, bordering Ecuador, and serves as capital of the department of Nariño, the westernmost department in Colombia. At an altitude of 2500 meters above sea level (ColombiaLink, 2010) Pasto is the largest city in Andean Colombia, and holds approximately 417,000 inhabitants (Municipality of Pasto, 2011). The city is the cultural and religious administrative center of the region and has served as such since colonial times (Pasto Office of Tourism, 2014). It is thus often considered a conservative city. It is also known as ‘The Surprise City’ because when following the main road from the base of the Andes the city suddenly appears as one rounds the corner of the mountains. The people living in Pasto are called Pastusos or Pastos, named after the indigenous tribe that inhabited the valley in which Pasto was situated prior to The Spanish Colonisation (Pasto Office of Tourism, 2014).

Economically, Pasto and its department, Nariño are among the poorest in Colombia, as indicated on the map to the left. It is believed that this is a result of large parts of the population works in the informal sector, and that the department is mostly rural, also the cities lack industrial specialisation (UNDP, 2011, p. 20-22; De la Hoz, 2007, p. 70).
“Discrimination and stereotyping... have been found to lower the self-esteem, effort, and performance of individuals in the groups discriminated against. Those who expect to be discriminated against in a particular labour market...will tend to invest less in acquiring the type of human capital that the market rewards. This reduces their potential for individual growth and their ability to contribute to the economy” (UNDP 2010, p. 5).

3.1. Minorities in Sustainable Development

Even though sustainable development holds a strong position within international and national policy making, efforts at defining what it is and how it is to be carried out still have not succeeded. A common definition is “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, see: IV. Conclusion §1). Academics and policy-makers alike have voiced concerns over its ambiguity and vagueness and some even fear that any sort of development can be made to sound sustainable as long as one can argue for it. However, the trend in scholarship on sustainable development appears to be that it is an approach which should strive to maximise social and economic gains while minimising impact on the environment. The terrain becomes easier to manoeuvre by illustrating the so called ‘three pillars of sustainable development’ as done to the left. It is then possible to place the various variations of sustainable development and its deviations. Minorities and marginalised people have played a key role in
sustainable development since the school of thought first originated, commonly defined as after the publication of Our Common Future. Below follows some examples from the report that illustrates how the sustainable development paradigm aims to make development more inclusive towards minorities and marginalised groups:

“The unemployed, the elderly, and racial and ethnic minorities can remain trapped in a downward spiral of degradation and poverty. [...] Tribal and indigenous peoples will need special attention as the forces of economic development disrupt their traditional life-styles - life-styles that can offer modern societies many lessons in the management of resources in complex forest, mountain, and dryland ecosystems. Some are threatened with virtual extinction by insensitive development over which they have no control. [...] Hence new approaches must involve programmes of social development, particularly to improve the position of women in society, to protect vulnerable groups, and to promote local participation in decision making” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, §16 §46 §43).

Naturally, there are marginalised peoples and minorities that are visible, such as elderly people, heavily disabled people and ethnic minorities. However, there also exist so called ‘invisible’ minorities that cannot be easily identified, but may still be marginalised (SAMHSA, 2012, p. 1-2; Herek, Chopp & Strohl, 2007, p. 1). Invisible minorities may or may not disclose their minority status, but may in some cases fear to be identified as an outsider. Both visible and invisible minorities may get a feeling of alienation, feeling out-of-place (Factor, Kawachi & Williams, 2011, p. 1293, the difference is that invisible minorities are only identified upon disclosure of their minority status, such as openly admitting one’s homosexuality, while visible minorities may face marginalisation on the grounds of their appearance, such as severe disability or skin colour. Also, an individual may belong to two or more minority groups, and are thus at risk of being particularly vulnerable to marginalisation. For example arab-american homosexuals (Minwalla et. al., 2005, p. 113-114, 123-126).

This study was first and foremost motivated by a gap in the development literature addressing invisible minorities such as sexual minorities. Due to the nature of the problems and discrimination the two types of minorities face, their problems are different and must be tackled in different ways. Invisible minorities are able to hide their minority status, but may find it harder to organise due to the fact that they cannot identify (any or all of) their peers. International development actors have traditionally paid little attention to the frustration and health implications sexual minorities are assumed to experience
when they cannot love freely, marry freely, disclose important health information and organise freely around issues that matter to them (Lind, 2010, p. 1-10).

Colombia is a prime example of a country that has been ridden with conflict due to oppression by the elite. Even though few people support Colombian guerrilla today, as examined in chapter 2, most of the guerrillas in Colombia initially organised around liberal and socialist movements aimed at implementing agrarian reform (De Luca & Sekeris, 2010, p. 1), as Colombia has a very uneven land distribution, with 0.4% of the population owning 62% of the most suitable agricultural land (USAID, 2010, p. 3). Therefore, a sustainable development’s approach to conflict resolution should include the marginalised and the minorities in politics and empower the disadvantaged so as to create more equity between people of different ethnic, gender and linguistic backgrounds and identities (Reiter & Lezama, 2013, p. 207-208).

Inclusion and empowerment are also central aspects of ‘good governance’, often considered an important prerequisite for sustainable development. An important point here is that in order to avoid the tyranny of the majority, the majority should not pass legislations affecting the minorities without including them in the decision-making processes (Cheema & Maguire, 2002, p. 14). By empowering and including minorities, conflicts can be avoided and it can even help to remove the obstacles that keep disadvantage people trapped in poverty. Good governance has thus become an important part of the post 2015 sustainable development agenda:

“Although the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) did not include a goal or targets on governance, the Millennium Declaration, adopted by the world's leaders in 2000, recognized the vital link between good governance, development and human rights. Based on over a decade of experience with development progress and challenges, there are now widely accepted arguments that governance should play a stronger role in the post-2015 development agenda: effective governance institutions and systems that are responsive to public needs deliver essential services and promote inclusive growth, while inclusive political processes ensure that citizens can hold public officials to account” (UNDP, 2014, p. 2).
This section has underlined that minorities play an important role of sustainable development’s vision of being inclusive and participatory. If marginalized people are discriminated on, a series of outcomes negative to development might occur, such as conflict or leaving the marginalized with a feeling of alienation and of being out of place. It is important that minorities get equal access to justice, education and health, so that the MDGs can be attainable also for the most marginalized of minorities (UNDP, 2010, p. 1). Below follows a brief outline current literature on sexual minorities in development:

3.2. Sexual Minorities in Development

Among the first development organization to put LGBT rights on their development agenda was the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA):

“In a formal decision of the Swedish Government, [SIDA] was given the assignment of making a special study and in-depth analysis of ways in which issues concerning lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues are treated in the Swedish development policy and Swedish development cooperation. The aim of the study is to obtain an overview of the ways in which Swedish policy and practice treat LGBT issues in relation to the ambitions expressed in the Government bill of 2002 Shared responsibility – Sweden's Policy for Global Development” (SIDA, 2005, p. 54).

SIDA argues that sexuality and LGBT rights are human rights, and that the countries that have signed the human rights declaration have responsibilities also towards LGBT people’s rights (SIDA, 2005, p. 14). The agency also points out that denying the existence of LGBT individuals and intersex persons makes it ‘virtually impossible’ to assume a fight for rights. They also underline that the discrimination, fear of discrimination and the lack of power LGBT people may experience can cause psychological stress, low self-esteem and a feeling of powerless to improve their situation. This is highly related to the capability approach to development which will be examined in the theoretical framework (SIDA, 2005, p. 17).

Since then, an important part of SIDA’s work has been to establish LGBT organizations in developing counties, such as Vietnam (SIDA, 2013). In 2013 USAID joined forces with SIDA in their new LGBT Global Development Partnership (USAID, 2013).
In 2008 the UN General Assembly raised the issues surrounding the rights of sexual minorities for the first time, with the reaffirmation of 66 countries. They stated for the first time that “the principle of non-discrimination, which requires that human rights apply equally to every human being regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.” (UN, 2008, p. 3) and said sexual minorities in all countries may face “violence, harassment, discrimination, exclusion, stigmatization and prejudice” (UN, 2008, p. 3).

In a later report by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) dedicated to discriminatory laws towards sexual minorities the office underlines the obligations of the state to protect sexual minorities from acts of violence under international human rights law. The report pays special attention to the state’s obligation to protect the right to life, and condemns torture, life imprisonment and death sentence as punishment for homosexuality. The OHCHR also states sexual minorities who fear persecution “may be considered ‘particular social group’. State parties to the Convention should ensure that such individuals are not returned to a State where their lives or freedom would be at risk” (UNHRC, 2011, p. 5-6). To protect sexual minorities from discrimination is also considered important, and that the denial of one’s human rights on the ground of sexual orientation would be a breach of the declaration (UNHRC, 2011, p. 7).

3.3. Heterosexism and Heteronormativity

Discrimination and negative attitudes and prejudices towards LGBT people are most commonly known as homophobia. In the EU, homophobia is defined as “irrational fear of and aversion to homosexuality and to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people based on prejudice” (European Union Fundamental Rights Agency, 2009, p. 26).

Recently however, the term has been criticised for not fully describing the phenomenon it seeks to define. Primarily, homophobia appears to lack the element of anxiety, a prerequisite for phobia disorders (Herek, 1984, p. 2-4). Rather, homophobia is characterised by negative attitudes and emotions towards LGBT people. It appears people showing attitudes described as homophobic are in reality displaying emotions of anger and disgust rather than anxiety (Haaga, 1991, p. 1; Herek, 1984, p. 2-4). Also, a phobia normally manifests itself with avoidance whereas people and actions thought to be homophobic often have more of an aggressive expression (Haaga, 1991, p. 1).
Secondly, phobias normally describe anxiety towards irrational fears, but some argue negative emotions surrounding homosexuality may be completely rational, for example if an individual feels distress or uncertainty when confronted with homosexuality (Adams, Wright & Lohr, 1996, p. 440).

Conclusively, it appears that homophobia cannot be correctly labelled as a phobia, and the term should be abolished (Logan, 2010, p. 31). Alternative terms have been proposed instead, such as sexual prejudice or heterosexism. Sexual prejudice refers to as negative attitudes towards an individual based on their sexual orientation, and includes: “heterosexuals’ negative attitudes toward (a) homosexual behavior, (b) people with a homosexual or bisexual orientation, and (c) communities of gay, lesbian, and bisexual people” (Herek, 2000, p. 19). However, heterosexism has emerged as a more commonly used and appropriate term (Smith, Oades & McCarthy, 2012, p. 5). Herek (1992, as cited in Smith, Oades & McCarthy, 2012, p. 6) defined heterosexism as “an ideological system that denies, denigrates, and stigmatizes any non-heterosexual form of behavior, identity, relationship or community”. As such, heterosexism includes all sexual minorities, and includes various forms of manifestation that differ from those of phobia:

“Heterosexism also centres on the normalising and privileging of heterosexuality, rather than merely a fear of homosexuality. It is therefore not limited to the phobia or fear of homosexuals, or to violent episodes, but conceptually includes prejudice toward bisexual men and women as well, thus preventing the assumption that only ‘homosexuals’ suffer from the effects of discrimination due to sexual orientation” (Smith, Oades & McCarthy, 2012, p. 7).

The negative effects of discrimination due to sexual orientation varies, but a series of studies on LGBT youth and adults show that discrimination occurs in different ways at different stages in life. A study by Kosciw, Greytak & Diaz (2009) shows that LGBT youth face violence, physical harassment and verbal remarks. The study reports that harassment at school may cause LGBT students to be more absent from school, have lower academic attainment and show more psychological distress than their heterosexual counterparts. Other studies also report that such harassment cause LGBT youth to have increased alcohol consumption, drug abuse and suicide rates than heterosexual youth (Birkett, Espelage & Koenig, 2009, p. 997-998). Discrimination also seems to be more common in rural schools than schools located in urban areas (Kosciw, Greytak & Diaz, 2009, p. 985). However, all of these studies fail to include sexual minorities who are not open about their sexual orientation despite the fact that research suggests that fear of discrimination is a major cause of depression and low-self esteem in LGBT youth (Almeida, et. al., 2009, p. 1010).
Heteronormativity, also known as the heteronorm is a related term. The heteronorm is the assumption that everyone is a heterosexual until they have stated otherwise (RFSL, 2009, p. 8). Seemingly normal questions such as ‘do you have a wife?’ or ‘are these flowers for your girlfriend?’ etc. constitute the heteronorm (RFSL, 2009, p. 8). Because of this, it is expected of sexual minorities that they need to ‘come out’, or to disclose their sexual orientation in order to avoid stigmatisation. Whether ‘coming out’ leads to positive or negative outcomes is likely to depend on the acceptance and prejudices in that particular community (RFSL, 2009, p. 8). A study by Zoeterman and Wright (2014) suggests that ‘openness’ is important for positive sexual identity development and that acknowledging and disclosing one’s sexual orientation improves the mental health of LGBT people over time (p. 347-348). The study did however find that the positive effects of disclosing one’s sexual orientation may be less significant for ethnic minorities due to their increased struggle with accepting their sexual identity (p. 347).

3.4. The HIV Epidemic

In 2012 there were an estimated 35.3 million people living with HIV in the world (UNAIDS, 2012). Men-who-have-sex-with-men (MSM) are one of the high risk groups (UNAIDS, 2009b, p. 2). It is difficult to get reliable data on how many MSM are living with HIV because of disclosure bias, but it is almost universally higher than the general population prevalence. The reason MSM are at particular risk of infection is that “unprotected receptive anal sex poses a much higher risk than unprotected receptive vaginal sex, whether that anal sex is heterosexual or homosexual” (UNAIDS, 2009b, p. 2). Moreover, MSM often live in secrecy and prefer short, anonymous sexual encounters to avoid detection. Studies have shown that self-reported condom use is generally low, even though many MSM are educated of the HIV risk and are concerned about infection (Fisher, et al., 1998, p. 110-111). In addition, some MSM experience and fear violence, racism and humiliation, in combination with self-discrimination, external discrimination and lack of access to health information is shown to be challenging obstacles to HIV prevention (Mizuno, et. al., 2011, p. 725, 733). Reaching this particular risk group is particularly important in HIV reduction strategies because many MSM have sex with women also or are married. Thus, [a]ddressing the HIV epidemic among marginalized groups is not just important in and of itself; it is often one of the most effective strategies to reduce heterosexual spousal transmission and avert larger heterosexual epidemic (UNAIDS, 2009b, p. 3).
In many countries where topics of sexuality are taboo there may be little focus on sexual minorities in education and national health programs. Young LGBT people may therefore be uneducated on important topics, such as how HIV is transmitted and how to avoid getting infected (MSMGF, 2010, p. 2-3). In countries with anti-LGBT laws it may even be problematic for LGBT people to inform medical personnel about their LGBT status out of fear of legal persecution. This effectively prevents many LGBT people from obtaining information, HIV tests and prevention (MSMGF, 2010, p. 3). In countries that criminalise homosexuality it may be difficult to run NGOs that provide MSM or LGBT related services. The UN and other global actors recognise this issue, first and foremost due to the direct link between discriminatory laws and increased HIV prevalence among sexual minorities, including MSM persons (UN, 2011, p. 18, 21). It is also important to note that criminalisation does not stop homosexual acts from happening, it simply pushes them underground, making these individuals even harder to reach by HIV prevention programs and exposing the family to HIV risks (UN, 2011, p. 18).

As mentioned in the first paragraph, many individuals engage in risky same-sex sexual behaviour even though their intention is to stay safe. Studies have shown that even though people's knowledge on HIV transmission is high, risky behaviour persists. As we have seen, discrimination, racism and shame related to one’s sexual orientation are important factors in risk behaviour. However, it appears that even though some individuals leave from home with the full intention of using prevention and practicing safe-sex, some may choose to ditch the prevention in the ‘heat of the moment’ (Shuper & Fisher, 2008, p. 445). Researchers in this field calls out that HIV prevention programs directed at MSM need a new approach. An approach that does not evolve around information and prevention, but rather about behavioural intervention, honesty and non-discrimination as well as MSM participation program design and implementation (Higa, et. al., 2013, p. 1239-1242). One major limitation to current HIV prevention programs is also that they do not take drug and alcohol use into account in practice, and they often fail to target minority MSM due to HIV prevention work often being conducted directly through LGBT communities (Higa, et. al., 2013, p. 1240).
A major challenge to HIV containment is the underground sub-culture known as ‘barebackers’. Barebackers typically refuse to use condoms and actively demonstrate against their use in their community (Dean, 2009, p. 5). The most extreme case of barebackers are those known as ‘bug chasers’ (Malkowski, 2014, p. 211). Bug chasers are HIV negative individuals who wish to become infected with HIV in order for them to be sexually liberated. In the sub-culture, the HIV positive participants are referred to as ‘gift givers’ and are thought of as liberators by those who wish to become infected (Malkowski, 2014, p. 213). It is believed the liberation term refers to the participants will to become liberated from the fear of HIV infection by becoming infected, thus enabling them to and participate in unsafe sex within the community (Dean, 2009, p. 66-67, Malkowski, 2014, p. 218). The fact that HIV infected MSM including barebackers and bug chasers participate in sex outside their communities has major implications for HIV prevention strategies (Malkowski, 2014, p. 213). A common approach is to promote honesty and non-discrimination, in that the MSMs must not discriminate HIV positive partners, but rather accept and embrace them as long as they disclose their status, are on retroviral therapy and use protection. The implication of denying HIV positive partners is believed to lead to dishonesty and thus, more infections due to partners being afraid of discussing their HIV status prior to ‘hooking up’ (Higa, et. al., 2013, p. 1239-1242).

3.5. LGBT Ontology and Its Implications

Ontology is a term in the metaphysical branch of philosophy that deals with reality and “the nature and structure of things [...] independently of any further considerations, and even independently of their actual existence” (Guarino, Oberle & Staab, 2009, p. 2). When applied to sexual orientation it thus refers to the objective nature of non-heterosexual orientations. In general, the differing views can be divided into essentialist views and constructivist views of sexuality. The essentialist views sexual orientation as something that is natural and exists in the individual from birth, while the constructivist believes that sexual orientation is constructed through interaction with others. There appears to be scientific consensus that gender expressions and sexual orientations manifest themselves as social constructs due to the sub-cultures which shapes the discourses and symbols within them (Sutton, 2011, p. 51, 56-57. On the other hand, homosexuality has occured in many cultures from the Andes (Horswell, 2005); Classical Athens (Fisher, 2013) to Ancient Japan (Leupp, 1997). This was a different kind of
homosexuality however, vastly different from today’s ‘gay culture’. This may be because the concept sexuality and ‘homosexual’ was not in use yet (Crawford, 2012). In societies where ‘homosexuality’ and ‘heterosexuality’ are not very central cultural concepts, the two appear to float more than in western culture where the divide is very strict. In fact, some authors criticise the LGBT movement for almost completely ruling out the bisexuels, seeing bisexuality as simply a phase, confusion, that later will lead to homosexuality or heterosexuality. This means that very little is known about bisexuality and in HIV programmes they only included after the emerging MSM term.

The essentialist debate should be seen as independent from the debate on the anthropological studies on LGBT people and MSM, which mainly refers to LGBT culture and different ways of expressing sexuality. Rather, ontology when applied to sexual orientations should be associated with the debate on whether the existence of non-heterosexual beings is a biological, natural fact or whether it is a social-construct (Fox, 2012). This strain of thought has lead some to believe that the homosexual community is a social construct while the phenomenon homosexuality, as in sex with a member of the same gender is not (Fox, 2012, p. 66-68). This strain of thought gains further momentum through biologist’s findings showing a large number of species have a significant percentage of their members who practice homosexual sex, some members exclusively with their same gender (Bailey & Zuk, 2009, p. 440).

Other studies, in particular studies in biology science are striving to discover a gene that may trigger homosexuality. One of these studies, a so called twin study, claims that homosexuality could be caused by dormant biological factors and then triggered by social factors. The implications for this debate is huge, and could potentially help to justify or abolish discrimination towards sexual minorities (Långström, et. al., 2010, p. 77-79). Twin studies are studies where identical twins of different sexual orientation is compared generically, and is often considered the most valid way of researching LGBT ontologies by natural scientists (Långström, et. al., 2010, p. 75-76).

One can also argue that considering homosexuality as a social construct also exacerbates discrimination towards homosexuals in the sense that decreased acceptance of homosexuality and decreased information and exposure to it would naturally lead to fewer homosexuals. This could give increased motives for executions of LGBT people and increased censorship rather than increased freedom. Moreover, evidence suggests that no matter how little information is provided on homosexuality and transvestism, and no matter how unaccepted it is, the phenomenon still occur (De Lamater & Hyde, 1998, p. 14-16).

3.6. Literature Review: Rounding Up
Even though the presence of LGBT topics in major development journals is rather limited, there exists a lot of academic content on homosexuality, lesbians transvestites, identity development, discrimination and HIV/AIDS, as we have seen here. The fact that the UN and its underlying agencies are taking up the fight for LGBT rights I would argue is a major step forward in realizing human rights also for sexual minorities. With recent developments in eastern Europe, legalization of same-sex marriage in many European countries, in Uruguay, Brazil and Argentina (BBC, 2013a) it may seem the trend is yielding towards the liberal side of social policy. At the same time, Indian Supreme Court deemed homosexuality illegal after legalizing it in 2009 (BBC, 2013b), and Uganda reaffirmed its intent to utilize life sentence for homosexual acts (BBC, 2014). The public health and human rights needs of the LGBT populations across the world are huge. However, it still remains to be seen whether science will discover whether homosexuality and transvestism is a birth trait or a product of upbringing, but either way I suspect gay rights will be a contested but important terrain across the social sciences in the years to come.
The main focus of development discourse as shifted over time, from the early years of economic development until the present focus on sustainable, economic and human development. The capability approach is a normative framework to development, and thus seeks to conceptualize the means and end to development in a philosophical and ideological manner, but does not seek to explain how to go about doing development (Wells, 2012). The capability approach is usually considered to fall under the human development paradigm, as its ultimate goal is to increase people’s quality of life through increased autonomy and freedom to make choices. The capabilities approach is strongly rooted in human rights, and recognizes the importance of rights, freedom and equity. In its essence, the capabilities approach to development focuses on:

“(1) the assessment of individual well-being; (2) the evaluation and assessment of social arrangements; and (3) the design of policies and proposals about social change in society. In all these normative exercises, the capability approach prioritizes certain of peoples' beings and doings and their opportunities to realize those beings and doings” (Robeyns, 2011)

“Freedoms are not only the primary ends of development, they are also among its principal means. [...] Development requires major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or overactivity of repressive states” (Sen, 1999, p. 10, p. 3).

“Development requires the removal of major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or overactivity of repressive states” (Sen, 1999, p. xii).

4.1. The Capabilities Approach to Development

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The capabilities approach to development depends on five key terms in order to conceptualize the means to increasing human and societal development. These are as follows:

**Resource**

A person may have access to material or non-material resources such as food or education (Wells, 2012).

**Functionings**

Functionings can be defined as “the various things a person may value doing or being” (Sen, 1999, p. 75). Functionings are the states which constitute a person’s well being, such as being safe, well nourished and/or educated.

**Capabilities**

A person’s capabilities are the factors that enable or prevents a person from enjoying his functionings. In order words, capabilities are the factors that impacts a “person’s freedom to lead one type of life or another” (Sen, 1999, p. 40). Thus, capabilities are the substantive freedoms to choose from different ways of living out one’s life. Increasing a person’s capabilities would then entail reducing the institutional, bureaucratic, legal and other external factors that diminish and limit a persons freedom and autonomy (Robeyns, 2011). Sen underlines the importance of capabilities as freedoms (in plural) a person has reason to value, meaning that capabilities should not increase the freedom to do harm, for example.

**Agency**

An agent can be defined as “someone who acts and brings about change” (Sen, 1999, p. 19). Then, a person’s agency would be determined by their self-determination, their ability to make informed decisions and carry these decisions out in reality; the degree to which the individual carries out the goals they set for themselves. The goal of development Sen argues is “the removal of various types of unfreedoms that leave people with little choice and little opportunity of exercising their reasoned agency” (Sen, 1999, p. xii) Thus, removing power imbalances and institutional unfreedoms so that people may expand their capacities and set their determination to good use are central ideas to the capabilities approach. Similarly, discrimination that leads to helplessness, despair, fear and depression would be factors that rob people of their agency, thus being anti-developmental (Sen, 1999, p. xi-xii).
Utility

When an agent sets about a change, such as making an informed choice to improve their nutrition, the improved nourishment is the utility. Utility can be compared to output or end result. In the capability approach to development utility is most commonly referred to in positive terms, where the aim of development is to increase utility using the means of increasing capabilities and agency (Wells, 2012).


I have chosen to interpret the capability approach to development as a cycle, where resources can be put to good use and become functionings. When poverty is addressed, institutional barriers to development should be abolished, and human rights and justice strengthened for people’s agency to increase. When all these conditions are in place, it leads to various utilities, defined as positive outcomes, such as innovation, increased productivity and increased production, thus leading to more resources. Discrimination, low self-esteem and depression would then be factors that diminish agency.
Nussbaum argues that even though it is up to the agents’ own agency to define the agenda in any country, a series of universal functionings and capabilities need to form the foundation for justice (Nussbaum, 2000, p. 78-80):

“1. Life: Being able to live to the end of a human life of normal length; not dying prematurely, or before one's life is so reduced as to be not worth living.

2. Bodily health: Being able to have good health, including reproductive health; to be adequately nourished; to have adequate shelter.

3. Bodily integrity: Being able to move freely from place to place; to be secure against violent assault, including sexual assault and domestic violence; having opportunities for sexual satisfaction and for choice in matters of reproduction.

4. Senses, imagination and thought: Being able to use the senses, to imagine, think and reason; being able to use imagination and thought; being able to use one's mind in ways protected by guarantees of freedom of expression with respect to both political and artistic speech, and freedom of religious exercise; being able to have pleasurable experiences and to avoid non-beneficial pain.

5. Emotions: Being able to love, to grieve, to experience longing, gratitude and justified anger, not having one’s emotional development blighted by fear and anxiety.

6. Practical reason: Being able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one’s life (this includes liberty of conscience and of religious observance).

7. Affiliation: (A) Being able to live with and toward others, to recognize and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms of social interaction; to be able to imagine the situation of another (this includes freedom of assembly and political speech). (B) Having the social bases of self-respect and non-humiliation; being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others (this includes non-discrimination).

8. Other species: Being able to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and the world of nature.

9. Play: Being able to laugh, to play and to enjoy recreational activities.

10. Control over one’s environment: (A) Political: Being able to participate effectively in political choices that govern one’s life; having the right of political participation, protections of free speech and association. (B) Material: Being able to hold property (both land and movable goods), and having property rights on an equal basis with others; having the right to seek employment on an equal basis with others; having the freedom from unwarranted search and...”
seizure. In work, being able to work as a human being, exercising practical reason and entering into meaningful relationships of mutual recognition with other workers.

4.2. The Capabilities Approach and Sexual Minorities and Discrimination

Notice how most, if not all of these suggestions can be related to minority rights and the rights of sexual minorities to live healthy lives, with bodily autonomy and enjoy their sexuality and love whomever they want to. Philosopher Martha C. Nussbaum has applied the capabilities approach to sexual right and what she calls ‘social justice’ and ‘politics of humanity’ versus ‘politics of disgust’ (Nussbaum, 2010, p. 1-3). What Nussbaum essentially does is that she examines various legal and social factors that are often used to discriminate on sexual minorities. She does this through her politics of disgust framework, in which she breaks down the arguments legal and social institutions hold towards sexual minorities and relates it to irrational disgust. Nussbaum notes that “[i]t is possible to view another human being as a slimy slug or a piece of revolting trash only if one has never made a serious good-faith attempt to see the world through that person’s eyes or to experience that person’s feelings” (Nussbaum, 2010, p. xvii).

Social justice, which is another term she adds to Sen’s Capabilities Approach to Development, is based on the right of all human beings to be free and be treated equally, as long as they do not do each other harm (Clark, 2005, p. 5-7, 11)). In her legal analysis she goes on to argue that any law that takes such freedoms away from people is based on ignorance and/or disgust. In the case of sexual minorities, she criticizes vague sodomy laws that severely punish people for engaging in same-sex sexual activity under mutual consent. It is important to note that sexual minorities do not deserve rights or freedom due to their status as sexual minorities, the argument is that they deserve the same rights and opportunities as all other humans. This includes the right to marry, choose their partners freely, the right to life, the right to health and so on. Nussbaum argues strongly for and urges for a social change focused on freedom and non-discrimination:

“We should not think that legal change can effect social change on its own. That did not happen with race, and it will not happen here [with sexual minorities]. Law however, can set out parameters that express equal respect, ruling certain odious arrangements off-limits and guaranteeing all citizens equal protection of the laws that exist. In this way law protects the rights of the vulnerable and sends a signal to the whole society that liberty and equality are made for us all” (Nussbaum, 2010, p. 209).
It is not known whether legal processes can initiate social processes, or to what degree. However, legal protection of minorities, sexual or otherwise, means that minorities can pursue legal recourse. Also, institutional change may initiate or affect social attitudes in the long term.
Methodology

5.1. Methodological Considerations

In research there are generally two approaches to inquiry; qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative research is an approach to inquiry used in the social academic disciplines, such as the social sciences, psychology, business and market research. The qualitative researcher seeks to understand complex phenomena such as the motivations, behavior, decisions and thoughts of the respondents. In general, qualitative studies have a limited number of participants in order to obtain as much data as possible from each one of them. Qualitative studies explore ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions, and rarely touch upon ‘when’ ‘what’, ‘where’ questions. Qualitative studies are often considered non-generalizable but is rather considered to apply to the particular case under scrutiny.

Quantitative research on the other hand is the systematic empirical investigation of a phenomena using statistical and numerical data. Qualitative methods is derived from the natural sciences and aims to study social phenomena in an objective manner. Its objective is to develop hypothesis, gather statistical, numerical data and apply this to social phenomena. Through this process quantitative researchers aim to explain social phenomena without long replies that can be converted into yes/no, numbers or percentages. A quantitative researcher asks the respondents narrow, specific questions and add some numerical value to the reply. It is common that respondents quantify their reply by themselves through for instance a questionnaire. The researcher then proceeds to analyze the findings using statistical tools such as for instance bivariate analysis or regression analysis. The goal is normally that the data derived
from the analyses will be generalizable to the whole population, not just the sample participating in the research. As such, validity and reliability are very central terms in quantitative research, without which the research may be biased and non-generalizable.

The struggle between quantitative and qualitative methods have a deep academic roots, and some researchers find that the best of both worlds is needed in order to get a full understanding of a phenomena. As such, mixed-methods approaches have emerged and a growing number of scientists now apply mixed-methods approaches to their data collection and analysis. A mixed methods approach to inquiry consists of quantifiable responses that are supplemented with in-depth responds that gives the participants a voice in the data analysis.

Qualitative and quantitative methods of inquiry both come with their own set of norms and assumptions. These assumptions are often called epistemological and ontological standpoints:

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Epistemology refers to “what is (or should be) regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline” (Bryman, 2012, p. 27) In other words, how to obtain said knowledge. Similarly, ontology concerns itself with physics, or the true nature of knowledge and existence.

In the social sciences, one can say that qualitative studies are based on an epistemological stance that phenomena that includes humans must be subject to interpretation. This is because anything that humans interact with is believed to be given meaning according to our cultural norms and discourses. As a result, all knowledge is created and then re-created according to our socially-constructed concepts and understanding of the world. This ontological stance is known as constructionism.

Quantitative researchers on the other hand assume the epistemological approach of positivism/post-positivism or realism. This means that methods of studying the natural sciences are applied to the study of social phenomena. These approaches are grounded in the belief that it is possible to obtain objective knowledge about a phenomena and the verification or dismissal of hypotheses. Post-positivism puts a stronger focus on objectivism, assuming that the researcher needs to take great care in
not influencing the participants responses through his/her own values and interaction. Thus, objectivism whose goal is to conduct value-free research is the ontological approach behind qualitative methods.

This study employed a qualitative approach throughout the design, data collection, sampling and analysis process. This decision was made on the grounds of perceptions on a phenomenon such as perceptions or possible impacts on capabilities/agency being hard to quantify. The main goal of this study is to share the intertwining narratives of poverty, discrimination and sexuality and their implications through a capabilities perspective. Thus, a qualitative approach based on interpretivism and constructionism seemed appropriate. As a result, the research questions were formulated as ‘how’ questions.

The study was designed as an inductive study, meaning that its primary aim was not intended as creating theory, but rather to report observations and findings for future theory. However, by analyzing the findings using the capabilities approach to development the study aimed at creating some theory as well.

5.2. Research Design

At the idea-phase it was not easy to decide between a case-study design and a phenomenological design. A phenomenological study aims to uncover and interpret the how the participants experience a phenomenon mentally and physically. In its essence, the phenomenological study should seek to put the reader into the participants shoes, allowing for a full understanding of the problem under scrutiny. The reader should be left with feeling that “now I understand what it is like to have experienced that particular phenomenon.” (Worthington, 2013, p. 1).” As such “a phenomenological research is well suited for studying affective, emotional, and often intense human experiences” (Merriam, 2009, as cited in Worthington, 2013, p. 1).

Similarly, a case study is appropriate when “your research questions seek to explain some present circumstance (e.g., “how” or “why” some social phenomenon works), the more that the case study method will be relevant. The method also is relevant the more that your questions require an extensive and “in-depth” description of some social phenomenon” (Yin, 2009, p. 4). Case studies are limited in scope, and may employ all available data collection techniques that can shed light on the phenomena under investigation. A single case study is not considered generalizable, so studies aimed at creating theory should involve multiple cases for increased validity (Baxter and Jack, 2008, p. 548).
According to Bryman (2012, p. 70) a case study usually studies a community or an organization. This makes things a bit problematic because the LGBT community is very disorganized and underground, and may in fact not be classified as a community as such. However, as the LGBT respondents were contacted through Facebook groups, these groups will serve as online communities. Bryman mentions that in an ‘exemplifying case’ the case “merely provides an apt context for the working-through of these research questions” (2012, p. 70). Therefore I find that an exemplifying case is the most suitable for my research. Two more arguments in favor of this decision is that such a case would enable the researcher to examine and describe in detail social processes, and allowing for the use of a wide selection of data collection methods. However, because the present study also aims to share the lived experiences of the respondents through narratives and descriptions, it is appropriate conclude that a phenomenological case study design was employed. This implies a stronger focus on the experiences and stories told by the respondents according to the limitations provided by the case.

According to Baxter and Jack (2008, p. 544) qualitative case studies can, and should deploy a variety of data collection methods. “This ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather through a variety of lenses, which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood” (Baxter and Jack, 2008, p. 544). One of the determinant elements of a case study is interestingly enough deciding what is the case, or unit of analysis. The unit of analysis can be challenging to define, especially for complex topics. In a phenomenological case study such as this, the unit of analysis is the phenomenon under scrutiny. Here, the unit of analysis is not the city of Pasto per sé, since the thesis is not on the general population of Pasto. As such, the unit of analysis is set to ‘a small group’, namely ‘a selection of LGBT people from three Pasto-based Facebook communities’. It is hoped that the narratives and perceptions gathered will reflect the experiences of the general LGBT population in Pasto in 2014. Cases should also be bound by any of the following: time; place; activity; definition and/or context. Different combinations of these restrictions create different types of cases, such as phenomenological case studies, exploratory case studies, multiple-case studies, explanatory case studies, descriptive case studies and intrinsic case studies (Baxter and Jack, 2008, p. 548).
5.3. Data Collection Methods and Sampling

5.3.1. Semi-Structured Interviews

Interviews can be used as a primary data gathering method to collect information from individuals about their own practices, beliefs or opinions (Harrel & Bradley, 2009, p. 24). This study is primarily based on semi-structured interviews in order to accommodate open replies and personal narratives from the LGBT participants. The research questions were used as inspiration for the interview guide. The interview guide was kept very simple in order to accommodate the emergence of personal narratives/stories. This allowed the researcher to have the opportunity to pick up and change the questions if more information was needed. The participants consisted of three groups: LGBT people, experts and ‘local people’.

Brief notes were taken after the semi-structured interviews with the police and organization members but only of the information that seemed hard to remember. Notes were not taken during the interviews but instead immediately after. The LGBT respondents received Facebook messages and replied in the same manner, eliminating the need for conventional note taking. The three groups of respondents were recruited and interviewed in the following manner:

Sample 1: LGBT Sample

The LGBT respondents were recruited from three Facebook groups. Facebook groups are user-driven online communities organized around a topic of choice. Facebook users can join these groups or be invited into them. This study used the Facebook groups ‘GAY PASTO’; ‘Pasto Gay’; ‘Pasto – LGBT’. The groups had 719, 504 and 425 members respectively with significant overlapping. Groups appearing to be active on the front page (wall) of these groups were contacted through Facebook’s integrated private message system. This system is similar to e-mail and is only visible for the recipient in their inbox. Members who did not have their hometown set to Pasto were not contacted. People who were active in more than one group were only contacted once. An effort was made to include the same amount of men and women, and some transvestite members. However, it turned out that the groups had a large majority of male members, and very few transvestites. Due to the fact that there are fewer transgender members than bisexual and homosexual people, only four transvestites wishing to
participate were found. The groups have some university students as members and the group creators were typically university graduates. These respondents were particularly helpful in providing narratives with a high level of detail and argumentation.

The rationale for sampling participants through social media was that these participants could be contacted throughout the entire duration of the study without requiring the researcher to be present in the field (Bryman, 2012, p. 654). Moreover, LGBT people use the internet to search for sex and relationships more frequently than their heterosexual counterparts (Lever, Grov & Royce, 2008). By using modern communication tools like social media both sampling and data collection is made easier for several reasons. The reason being that possible participants are already members of groups relevant to the research, meaning that identifying their otherwise invisible LGBT identity is made easier. Also, when contact is made through email or social media it is easy and convenient for the researcher and the participants to keep in touch throughout the research should a need for additional data arise (Bryman, 2012, p. 668). When the selected participants were contacted a message was sent asking whether they wished to participate in the study, saying what the topic and goal is, and that participation is anonymous and voluntary. It should be noted that a large majority of the Facebook profiles did not have face pictures so they were impossible to identify, giving participants an extra sense of anonymity. The Facebook profiles did show the participants’ names, but I made no attempt to try to verify whether the name was real or an alias. Bryman (2012, p. 668) points out that researchers have to decide whether to provide the participants with all the questions straight from the start or whether to ask the questions one by one. I decided to conduct normal semi-structured interviews by asking one and one question, allowing participants to reply in a natural manner before moving on to the next question. An effort was
made to try to respond straight away in order to engage in a dialogue with the participants, and normally this succeeded. However, due to the nature of online communication and that Facebook saves the conversation in its inbox system, it was easy to get back in touch with respondents at a later point. Bryman also points out that because the researcher is easily available when doing interviews through e-mail or social media, communication over time may increase the respondents trust in the researcher due to the fact that he or she is readily available (Bryman, 2012, p. 668).

Sample 2: Expert Sample

What is an expert? In general one can distinguish between realist and constructivist approaches to expert knowledge (Bogner, Littig & Menz 2009, p. 3). Using a constructivist approach one could consider the LGBT respondents experts on their own situation, similarly, due to their socially constructed reality various factors such as fear of discrimination could cause the opinions of the LGBT respondents to be experienced in a stronger way than what is the actual situation (Bogner, Littig & Menz 2009, p. 3-5). Similarly, a realist approach would say that only professionals and scholars on the subject are experts, and that it may be possible to get a genuine objective and impartial view of a situation by becoming an expert on the topic (Bogner, Littig & Menz 2009, p. 3-5). This study does not aim to settle this debate, but for practical reasons both internal and external knowledge has been used in order to get a nuanced perspective on the research questions.

The expert opinion interview is a common and frequently used data collection method within social sciences (Bogner, Littig & Menz 2009, p. 1). Interviewing experts is generally seen as a complementary data collection approach and should thus be combined with other data collection methods. A common way of collecting expert opinions in a broad manner is the Delphi Method, in which a series of experts have to conduct a questionnaire to map their opinions on a matter, such as policy (Yousuf, 2007). After the questionnaire has been completed and submitted back to the researcher, the researcher carefully chooses expert panel members in a way that will provide as many differing viewpoints as possible on the topic. Unfortunately due to time, culture and resource limitations I did not succeed in designing a Delphi expert panel. I also did not include a strong opposition to the expert opinions provided for the research. Nevertheless, normal semi-structured interviews with experts on a given topic can provide a
valuable foundation for further in-depth exploration, and it is also considered a good way to obtain contacts.

Originally the idea was to get an expert opinion from a local LGBT organization called Diversidad Pasto. While the study was still in its infancy, at the time when I was writing the research proposal Diversidad Pasto was contacted by phone and contact was kept regularly through Facebook. Upon arriving in Pasto and visiting the address provided by Diversidad Pasto nothing but houses were found. After checking the internet for the address I came upon a different address, and at this location there was a building with Diversidad Pasto’s logo on it. However, there was no answer at the door, no activity for two months on Diversidad Pasto’s Facebook page and nobody answered when phone calls were made to the phone number provided. A police officer standing on patrol nearby was approached and was asked whether the organization is still active. The officer did not know but he provided a phone number belonging to the human rights officer at the Pasto Police Department. The next day an interview was scheduled with Officer Lida, the human rights officer.

Officer Lida wished to be mentioned by name in the study, while the organization leaders and the activist wished to remain anonymous because their accounts were of a personal nature.

Sample 3: Local People in Pasto Sample

Pastusos (people from Pasto) were randomly engaged with in conversation in various spaces throughout the city, and were asked about their general attitudes towards LGBT people. These respondents were not sampled using any particular method, but people appearing to be in a hurry or uninterested were not approached. These interviews were short, and were conducted as conversations on the LGBT movement in Pasto and in Colombia. The goal of these conversations was to see how non-LGBT people perceived LGBT people and why they held their perceptions. During this part of the fieldwork there was a yearly event happening known as ‘Blacks and Whites' Carnival’, during this festival topics of diversity often emerge and it was rather easy to get into the subject of sexual minorities and attitudes towards these minorities. During the Blacks and White’s Carnival there are a lot of people in
the streets and the park in the days before and after the carnival itself. Thus, there were lots of spaces in which one could easily engage in discussions on LGBT people with local people.

The findings derived from this sample were hard to understand and hard to interpret. Also, it appeared to be culturally awkward to ask people to take a stance on controversial topics with an outsider. The reason this sample was not dropped altogether is that the data was still useful in mapping perceptions on LGBT people. The three groups sampled are in no way generalizable on the reality LGBT people face in Pasto or in Colombia, but the case study, limited as it is, may provide useful insights on LGBT people, perceptions held towards them and how they may have been affected by discrimination or fear thereof.

For research questions one and two I will employ thematic analysis in order to identify themes and perceptions frequency of occurrence. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns or themes within data. To this study it is an important notion that when using a thematic analysis approach the researchers do not need to develop a theory based on the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 81). Links to the existing academic literature on relevant topics such as Latino LGBT studies, machismo and the capabilities approach were made, but due to the study’s exploratory nature no significant new theory were created.

5.3.2. Participant Observation

Participant observation is accepted almost universally as the central and defining method of research in cultural anthropology and became a common feature of qualitative research in a number of disciplines (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002, p. vii). The participating observer immerses him/herself in a group for an extended period of time, observing behavior, listening to what is said in conversations both between others and the fieldworker, and ask questions (Bryman, 2012, p. 432).

Participant observation provided some useful information on the current state of LGBT rights in Pasto, as well as the general attitudes towards traditional gender roles. Throughout the duration of the fieldwork I also visited other cities for recreational purposes, which provided useful comparison material. One can argue that researchers cannot ‘switch off’ their senses. As a result, the researcher is constantly receiving impressions and unconsciously constructs his or her own view of the situation.
Participate observation as such did not constitute a major part of the data collection in the study, but the researcher cannot deny having been affected by observing and talking to local people, both participants and non-participants. Similarly, the Facebook groups were also subject to participant observation at some level, because the activity in the public spaces (on the groups’ ‘walls’) were openly visible to the researcher. Observing what was said and done in the Facebook groups allowed the researcher to get useful insights into what people seek, and how people strive to remain anonymous and also how they share general opinions and rants about LGBT life in Pasto. Some of these observations are used in the data analysis as this information can be considered public, as messages posted on the ‘group wall’ are visible to everyone. The Facebook groups are not closed to the public, and no membership application is needed. Group members are aware of this fact, as they normally do not have photos of themselves or their full names on their Facebook profiles. 

Bryman (2012, p. 659-661) notes that online ethnographies and online participant observations are becoming more and more relevant, as certain cultures and sub-cultures are rooted in cyberspace. The same can to a large degree be said about the LGBT community, where much of the dating and mate seeking appears to happen online.

As Bryman (2012, p. 494) pointed out, the participant observer is in much closer contact with people for a long period of time and participates in many activities as a member of the cultural setting being studied. During the entire duration of the study I did not participate as a LGBT person in the community, in Pasto or on Facebook, but rather observed and experienced the culture and attitudes in the city and the online groups. During two visits to Pasto I actively participated in daily activities, met and talked to people and noted various attitudes towards LGBT people. Due to a lot of slang words, nicknames and such it was of crucial importance to have a local with me to decode not only the meanings but also the connotations of the language terms being used in order to fully understand the attitude of people. It was my aim to get sufficient trust from the people I observed and talked with as to avoid that they filtered their answers when being approached by an outsider.

There are some disadvantages to participant observation. Data collected through participant observation are harder to code and categorize for analysis purposes. While conducting participation observation, the researchers will have to actively participate in day-by-day issues and events. In this situation researchers may not have enough time to simultaneously take notes and record data, and thus risk forgetting key events and phenomena. These issues were not overly present during this study, as the
primary data collection method was semi-structured interviews and the observations were only used to give added meaning to the data during the data analysis.

5.4. Data Analysis

You can say something about how your data analysis has been arranged around the research questions

**RQ1: How do local people perceive LGBT people in Pasto?**

This research question is aimed at the ‘local people’ sample, whose methodological approach was mentioned in section 5.3.1. Each time a perception regarding LGBTs was mentioned directly or vaguely it was noted and counted as one occurrence during the coding process. This information provided the data for the themes presented in RQ1’s findings section. This data illustrates how often the participants mentioned some perceptions or prejudices towards LGBT people. In the findings section, perceptions that were not common, such as those held by one individual were not considered a finding and were thus excluded. Perceptions that are strongly positive or negative were still included as quotes, to underline points during the data analysis. The data analysis and discussion aims to provide explanations for some of the perceptions people hold and how to work on changing them. However, the main objective of the present research question is mapping and categorizing local people’s LGBT perceptions so that human rights workers, organizations, academics and decision makers can work actively to increase local people’s awareness of the consequences of discrimination and ‘the politics of disgust’.

**Rq2: How do LGBT People in Pasto think local people perceive them?**

This research question is aimed at the ‘LGBT people’ sample, whose methodological approach was mentioned in section 5.3.1. The LGBT respondents were asked to talk about life as a LGBT person in Pasto, whether they considered themselves ‘open’ about their sexual
orientation and what local people in Pasto think about homosexual people and transvestites. The LGBT participants were also asked whether they had any examples of situations in which they had been harassed or discriminated, or witnessed such events. This information provided the data for the narratives and themes presented in RQ2’s findings section. The data aims to portray a series of narratives that reflect the fear of exposure and fear of discrimination among LGBT people in Pasto. In addition to narratives, thematic analysis was also applied in order to shed more light on what the narratives have in common. This was done in order to create a kind of shared experience about the discrimination and fear thereof. Originally, the idea was to use the LGBT peoples responses to map perceptions on LGBT people through thematic analysis, however, at a later stage in the study it was decided that narratives may provide more useful insights on the phenomenon. Moreover, it was not deemed methodologically correct to use both local people’s and LGBT people’s accounts of the perceptions towards LGBT people as these two phenomenon are not the same thing, thus jeopardizing the validity of the research. This research question served as a basis for the data that is analyzed through research question four, in which fear of exposure and fear of discrimination is analyzed using the term agency [LINK]. Those respondents who had accounts of actual events including harassment and discrimination have their narratives presented in the research question three findings section, which aims to outline the local people’s effect on LGBT peoples capabilities [LINK].

**Rq3: How can local perceptions on LGBT people affect the capabilities of LGBT people in Pasto?**

The third research question was analysed after using the data derived from the semi-structured interviews with the local people in Pasto. Interview data from the LGBT respondents who claimed to have suffered or witnessed harassment and/or discrimination was also analyzed using the concept of capabilities. It should also be noted that due to my presence in the field, where I took in a lot of impressions and observed a lot of things, this may have colored my analysis somewhat as well. This research question aspires to demonstrate how discrimination that comes from the community (i.e. external actors) can affect LGBT peoples capabilities in terms of effective freedoms, such as career options, studies etc.. According to Sen, there may exist certain barriers to capabilities rooted in discrimination, which is a statement this research question seeks to examine using narratives and thematic analysis. It is important to note that a thematic analysis can be either realist/essentialist or
constructionist in its approach, and the ontological approach held will affect the analysis. With a
realist/essentialist approach it is assumed that language inherently reflects meanings and experiences
(Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 85). A constructionist approach however, sees meanings and experiences as
socially produced and reproduced, i.e. as social constructs.

Note that this study used two approaches to ontology, one for the methodologies and one for sexual
orientation. As a reminder, an essentialist approach to sexual orientation takes for granted that
sexuality and gender identity is a birth trait, while constructionists argue sexuality and gender is socially
constructed (Marinucci, 2012, p. 5). For the purpose of this study an essentialist approach was assumed
in the context of sexuality, meaning that homosexuality as an occurring phenomenon is not something
that has been socialized but the standpoint held here is that it is a natural phenomenon. The social
construct is merely how homosexuality manifests itself and how it is understood.

For the thematic analyses and narratives it is important to remember that language has to be carefully
seen in its social context. Linguistic differences might affect the discourses and meanings of key
concepts, like ‘gay’, ‘straight’, ‘married’, ‘transvestite’, some of these differences can be anticipated by
throughly studying a culture before doing research within its contexts, but one might argue it is
impossible to learn all the subtle differences between discourses taking place in various languages and/
or dialects. It was important for the study to keep this in mind because it could very well happen that
when I formulated a question using a concept such as ‘homosexual’ or ‘gay’, this meaning was
understood with a slightly different connotation by the respondents. For this reason, all the narratives
and the views presented within the themes should be considered social constructed realities.

Rq4: How can LGBT people in Pasto’s perceptions of how local people perceive them affect individual agency?

The fourth research question was analyzed using the data obtained from the semi-structured interviews
conducted with the LGBT sample from Facebook. The same considerations outlined for RQ3 apply
here as well. The LGBT people’s narratives of their own situations were grouped by theme and
analyzed using the concept of agency outlined in the theoretical framework chapter. Agency, as we
have seen, as opposed to capabilities, refers to the internal barriers to freedom experienced by an
individual. Fear of discrimination, fear of harassment and fear of being exposed as an LGBT person
were factors assumed to limit a person’s determination and self-worth, possibly leading to a feeling of helplessness according to my interpretation of the agency term.

5.5. Ethical Considerations

Great care must be taken in order to ensure that: no harm is caused to any participants; confidentiality and anonymity is maintained; participation is voluntary; and that participation is based on informed consent (Bryman, 2012, p. 135). In order to do this, participation in this present research required that:

- All participants gave their informed consent to participate (state their opinions) in the semi-structured interviews. Rather than signing a document the participants were informed that they are not obliged to answer to the private messages received on Facebook. Participants encountered face-to-face were also informed that they can choose not to comment.

- Participants were informed about the objectives and purpose of the research and that the study is to be published as a master’s thesis.

- The anonymity of all the participants were ensured, no participants will be referred to by name except Officer Lida who agreed to have her name published.

- The participants were informed that they may withdraw their statements from the study throughout the duration of the data collection and analysis process. None of the respondents chose to do so.

- The research follows the ethical code of conduct that the Pasto Police Department operates by, including respecting their professional duty of confidence towards clients and that nobody should be referred to by name or traits that make them easily identifiable. This policy was extended to all the participants.

- Observations made in the Facebook groups can be considered part of the public domain (Bryman, 2012, p. 679), and the people expressing themselves on the public ‘wall’ of the Facebook groups are normally aware of this and took the necessary steps to ensure their own anonymity themselves. These steps include not having a face picture displayed, posting by a first
name that may or may not be their real name and normally the group members were utilizing a second Facebook profile for the LGBT related groups that were only used for communication within the LGBT groups.

5.6. Research Limitations

- When researching invisible minorities such as LGBT people and MSM, it becomes difficult to identify who is LGBT/MSM and who is not. The only way to identify people as members of these communities is by approaching the community through bars, clubs, organizations or Internet communities targeted at LGBT people. This means that any LGBT person or MSM person not present in these fora could not be identified as a potentially appropriate participant for the study.

- The selection bias mentioned above is skewed further by the fact that the most marginalized and poor LGBT and MSM people might not use Facebook. People who are not using Facebook communities and/or visiting LGBT organizations might feel more discriminated than those who are part of an organized community. However, as these people are hard to identify it was not feasible to include them in the research design and sampling process. It should be noted that I was under the impression that there are few people in Pasto who are too poor to own a smartphone and be available on Facebook, so the biggest limitation to online participation may be age and technology literacy rather than income.

- The study is of an exploratory nature, and its main contribution is the narratives and accounts of the hardships faced by sexual minorities in Pasto and elsewhere. It did not generate any new theory and does not aim to be generalizable to other places.
Part II: Empirical
“Concepts of homosexuality in the Americas are highly influenced by culture. The English, Dutch, and French-speaking regions of the continents have inherited a northern European perspective that identifies any individual who has sex with another member of the same sex as either homosexual or bisexual.

The Spanish and Portuguese-speaking regions, by contrast, have inherited the perspective of Mediterranean Europe, in which only effeminate, submissive men are thought of as “homosexual.” By contrast, men who have sex with other men but who are perceived as sexually dominant and macho are not generally considered “homosexual” at all, and suffer little if any social stigma” (Reding, 2003, p. 2-3).

Findings

6.1. Introduction

Note: all the data reported in this chapter are from the fieldwork unless otherwise stated.

This chapter will present (is dedicated to the presentation of) the findings from the semi-structured interviews and observations made during my two field visits to Pasto, and the semi-structured interviews with LGBT respondents from Pasto using (through) Facebook as a interview media.

As explained in chapter five, three types of respondents participated in this study, and can be broken into the following categories (groups):

- LGBT people contacted privately through Pasto-based LGBT Facebook groups, hereby referred to as ‘LGBT respondents’.
- Experts, including a longer semi-structured interview with a human rights representative at the Pasto Police Department (PPD) and some organization leaders whose phone numbers were provided by PPD.
- People contacted throughout the city of Pasto, hereby referred to as ‘local people’.
Breakdown of respondents:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LGBT People</td>
<td>44 (60 sampled)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local People</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>57 (83 sampled)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*16 LGBT people stopped responding after less than four messages, and were thus deducted. This was done because the participants did not reply to the initial message nor the reminder message were considered as not wishing to participate in the study.

As a reminder, the research questions were as follows:

1. How do local people perceive LGBT people in Pasto?
2. How do LGBT People in Pasto think local people perceive them?
3. How can local perceptions on LGBT people affect the capabilities of LGBT people in Pasto?
4. How can LGBT people in Pasto’s perceptions of how local people perceive them affect individual agency?

These research questions will serve as structure to the remainder of this chapter, with the findings relevant to each research question presented in its respective chapter. The table below illustrates who provided what data, and summarizes the data analysis chapter, as a reminder:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LGBT people</th>
<th>Experts</th>
<th>Local People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ2</td>
<td>RQ1</td>
<td>RQ1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(RQ3)*</td>
<td>RQ3</td>
<td>RQ3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Only LGBT people who claimed to have suffered actual discrimination and harassment.
6.2. How do local people perceive LGBT people in Pasto?

The ‘local people’ sample of a total of 20 persons were used for exploring this research question. This research question was separated from research question two, due to external and self-perceptions being two different things. By separating this research question in this manner it allowed for an examination of how local people in Pasto viewed LGBT people, as well as what perceptions LGBT people thought other Pastusos held against them. Note that locals were asked about their perceptions on homosexuals and transvestites, while the term LGBT was not used for practical reasons. Bisexuals were omitted from the findings, as most respondents did not differentiate between homosexuals and bisexuals in their responses. The experts were consulted for this research question as well, because they were assumed to have a good understanding of which perceptions existed on LGBT people in Pasto. The most common perceptions can be split into six themes, and constitute the sub-sections of section 6.2.

6.2.1. Homosexuality as a condition or sickness

This is the most common perception on homosexuality, with nine (9) local people speaking about homosexuality as a condition or sickness (Spanish: condición enfermedad). It is unclear whether references such as ‘their condition’ is made with a negative connotation, because all the locals who used this type of vocabulary did so in a subtle manner. Sickness carries a more negative connotation, but is less used. An example of how subtle the perception of homosexuality as a condition can be, a good illustration would be ‘it does seem as though the condition [homosexuality] is more common these days’. Interestingly enough, the experts also mentioned that homosexuality is commonly thought of as a mental condition, while less than half of the local people interviewed appeared to have this perception. When the people who spoke of homosexuality as a condition or sickness were asked whether homosexuals need therapy of some sort to overcome their condition they responded that they had not heard of such therapy that works.
6.2.2. Homosexuals as flamboyant

Eight (8) respondents talked about homosexuals in a way that can be themed as effeminate or flamboyant behavior. Examples of such statements include ‘I can usually notice when someone is gay’ and ‘they are effeminate’ similarly, another respondent said that ‘they usually have a certain attitude’ which is what I mean by flamboyant. These perceptions are not necessarily negative if they are not used in a negative or hateful manner, and in a society that embraces diversity such differences among people could even be embraced. However, due to the strict gender roles expected of men and women, respectively -in Pasto, effeminate men are normally mentioned using a negative connotation. Moreover, there are a lot of LGBT people who are not effeminate, and there even exist LGBT people who loathe effeminate and flamboyant people (Bailey, et. al. 1997, p. 167-170).

6.2.3. Homosexuality as temporary

Eight (8) local people talked about homosexuality as something belonging to a particular phase in life or something that happens between men on occasion. These respondents expressed that it is common that people can stop being homosexual, and that some might resort to homosexuality on occasion. This finding is interesting because the same thing can rarely be observed in Europe or North America (Frabe, 1997, p. 8), where people are homosexual on occasion after early teenage-hood. The belief that homosexuality is a temporary trait is further strengthened by participants accounts of claiming to have heard of cases where people had gone through a period of homosexuality, especially in the case of young adults. Furthermore, one respondent had heard about men who had been ‘caught in the act’ with another man, and gotten married later on. However, the respondent did not deny the notion that it is possible he still had occasional homosexual sex. Nevertheless, stories such as these might give way for notions of homosexuality as temporary or occasional, and that it is not a ‘either- or’ case like what appears to be the case in the West (Frabe, 1997, p. 8). None of the respondents had opinions on lesbian sex and whether lesbianism occurs in Pasto.
6.2.4. Homosexuality and HIV/AIDS

Four (4) respondents linked the conversation towards topics of HIV/AIDS when discussing homosexuality. This is not all that surprising, because as shown in the literature review, LGBT people have increased risk to contracting HIV/AIDS. It only becomes problematic when the link is made too quickly, like if all LGBT people are assumed to be HIV positive or to have AIDS. This did not appear to be the case in Pasto, as none of the local people interviewed made the link so strongly. However, the four respondents did show that some prejudice exists, beyond solely being educated on the issue. Some negative connotations were used, such as claims that ‘many of them have AIDS’. Respondents seemed to have little understanding about HIV/AIDS and Offider Lida claimed the prevalence in Pasto is very low, but that cities like Bogota represent most of the HIV positive LGBT people in Colombia.

6.2.5. Homosexuality and Drug use

Three (3) local people mentioned that people who engage in homosexuality also use drugs. Interestingly these three respondents were also among the four who linked homosexuality to HIV/AIDS. While the literature suggests the same, that in general homosexual people consume more alcohol and drugs than their heterosexual peers, I was unable to find data from Pasto. Offider Lida did not mention increased drug use among in the LGBT community but was also not asked about drugs. Either way, this perception could increase the taboo of homosexuality by linking it to a criminal, destructive lifestyle.

6.2.6. Transvestites

The conversations with the local people never transitioned to the topic of transvestites, so towards the end of the conversations I had to inquire about whether there are transvestites in Pasto and what the respondents know about them. Only six (6) respondents had a good concept of what transvestites are, and knew that transvestites are something else than feminine men and masculine women. These six respondents appeared to have sympathy for transvestites on another level than what was shown for homosexuals. All six who had a clear concept of transvestites as persons who do not identify with their
birth gender believed transvestites should be treated as the gender they identify with (a male or a female), rather than as a transvestite. The remaining fourteen (14) local people whose concepts of what transvestites are were less defined, and for some non-existent, appeared to hold more negative perceptions towards transvestites. These respondents expressed frustration over not understanding what transvestites are and what are their purpose. As an example, two women expressed that ‘I do not have much experience with such people, but I am not sure how I would treat them’ and ‘There are people who I can’t tell whether they are men or women, and it is confusing because I do not know how to address them’.

Note that in Spanish all the adjectives are gender specific, for example to say ‘do you travel alone?’ would be difficult to say without knowing the person’s gender, because you need to formulate it as ‘¿usted viaja sola/solo?’ where the gender determines whether one is to say ‘sola or solo’ for ‘alone’. This issue is less problematic in general, hypothetical situations where the masculine form is always used, but in this case it would be rude to look at a woman and addressing her using the male ‘-o’ ending. This problem may arise in most languages, such as in English in the example of polite speech using Mr/Ms, Mrs or Miss. However, it appears that information and education is an effective way to tackle these frustrations and to get people used to the idea of diffuse gender identities as the six (6) people who had clear concepts of transvestism demonstrated.

6.3. How do LGBT People in Pasto think local people perceive them?

Note that this research question addresses how LGBT people in Pasto think local people perceive them, and not how LGBT people perceive themselves. Again, I wish to underline that the perceptions listed in this chapter is not how LGBT people see themselves, but how they believe they are seen to others. To avoid confusion, I will refer to this phenomenon as reflexive perceptions, where reflexivity is defined as “the regular exercise of the mental ability, shared by all normal people, to consider themselves in relation to their (social) contexts” (Archer, 2007, p. 4).
The ‘LGBT people’ sample of a total of 44 persons were used for exploring this research question. This research question was separated from research question one so that differences in external perceptions and reflexive perceptions could be analyzed. Note that some reflexive perceptions did not manifest themselves among the local people interviewed as presented in chapter 6.2.. Thus chapter 6.3. has some themes that are not present in chapter 6.2..

6.3.1. Homosexuality as a disorder

This is the most common reflexive perception among the LGBT people, with 38 respondents mentioning that ‘people’ view homosexuality as a condition, disorder or sickness. The most common perception reported among the homosexual participants is that they believe people in Pasto and in Colombia in general consider homosexuality to be ‘like a mental condition’. Officer Lida and one of the lesbian activists also mentioned that homosexuality is commonly thought of as a mental disorder. This is also the most common perception among the local people, which suggests that LGBT people have reason to state they are perceived as people who suffer from a disorder.

6.3.2. Homosexuality as temporary

It was a bit difficult to code the semi-structured interviews for this theme, because respondent had different ways of talking about self-identification and how homosexuality is perceived as temporary. First, a small majority (33) respondents expressed that Pastusos often see homosexuality as a phase of life. As one respondent said ‘it can be hard for people to understand that it is about not only sex, but love also’. This was further underlined in another interview where it was stated that ‘gay relations (relaciones = relationships) are not taken seriously’. Rather, homosexuality was said to be seen as two men ‘losing control to their urges’. However, the LGBT people themselves who identify lesbian, gay or bisexual did not agree with this perception, and thus, they also believe that sexual orientation is unchangeable. Most of them (27 - out of the 33 mentioned above) believed that it is a birth trait while six (6 out of 33) believed it is a permanent social construct. When talking about the reflexible perceptions of homosexuality being temporary the respondents blamed the MSM for creating this view mentioned above that same-sex love might not be real.
This might be related to self-labeling, which is according to Latino specific LGBT literature very common, and for this reason the MSM term is more commonly used in works concerning Latino homosexualities (Diaz, 1997, p. 4-7). Here MSM are still grouped as LGBT because one can argue that despite not self-identifying themselves these individuals are practicing homosexuality and bisexuality to varying degrees, and they even pursue same-sex partners.

Even though not a reflexive-perception, one of the most interesting finding from the interviews with the LGBT sample is that a large minority (21) of the LGBT respondents claimed that they have not defined themselves as homosexuals or bisexuals. About half of the respondents did in fact say that they are undefined, in a period of experimentation or self-discovery. Three homosexual respondents were sharing a similar story on how they had been in a somewhat committed relationship with someone in the past, who now are in a heterosexual marriage with children. When asked whether their ex-boyfriend had previously been identified as homosexual and bisexual, all three responded that they had not really been concerned with such labels at the time, but that they pay more attention to sexual orientation now than before. The topic of floating sexualities, and/or how the heteronorm causes people to engage in heterosexual marriage because not doing so may be unthinkable in certain cultures is a topic for future research.

Respondents who said they are in a period of experimentation were not present in the LGBT online communities only for the purpose of looking for random sexual encounters. Some were also looking for romance, despite planning on marrying into a heterosexual marriage later. When digging deeper into this topic respondent’s answers were slightly vague, but it appears that the majority of the MSMs who do not identify themselves as LGBTs do not mind marrying heterosexually later on. One respondent confessed that enjoying the company of another male is one of the perks of being young, but that a natural part of growing up and becoming a man is to have a wife and start a family. It was interesting to note that two non-self-identified-LGBT (MSM) respondents reported being pasivo, meaning they take on the female role during their same-sex sexual and relational activities. It is also unclear whether those who do marry into heterosexual marriage are able to put their same-sex desires behind them. Some respondents claim there are married men present at some of the gay bars in Pasto, but the extent is not known. None of the LGBT interviewees claimed to be married.
6.3.3. Homosexuality and disgust

A majority of the LGBT respondents (31) claimed that in general local people tend to view homosexuality as disgusting, and that this is probably the main reason behind discrimination of LGBTs. A majority of these believed that the disgust has religious origin, while a minority suggest that the disgust may not be with homosexuality as such, but with anal sex and the dirtiness associated with it. Two respondents also linked this disgust to STDs, especially HIV/AIDS, which may be yet another reason why homosexuals may be perceived as disgusting. A finding that may be relevant to this category is that through observation the researcher found that LGBT people in Pasto and the Facebook groups appear very concerned with gender roles, in other words, who assumes the active or passive role in sex and otherwise. In the Facebook groups and in general people express and often state very clearly whether they are pasivo or activo, and it appears people experience greater disgust towards pasivos. Similarly, for lesbian women the opposite was stated, that the reflexive perception for lesbians is that lesbians are even more disgusting than that of men, because women are not supposed to follow their sexual urges.

This may be because of the machismo culture where men are expected to be risk-takers, spontaneous, courageous, and sexually dominant towards women (and at times effeminate men). In the machismo culture pasivos are considered homosexual while activos are not necessarily labeled. Pasivos are often considered “failed men” (Diaz, 1997, p. 64). It appears that LGBT people who openly are (or are suspected to be) pasivo are more likely to be discriminated due to the added stigmatization due to their strict defiance with the gender roles expected of them.

6.3.4. Homosexuality and HIV/AIDS

None of the LGBT respondents reported having been suspected of being HIV positive or having been subject to HIV- or AIDS-based insults. This may be due to the fact that none of the respondents are open to the general public about their sexual orientation. However, a majority (32) of the LGBT respondents assumed people are aware that LGBT people are a high-risk group when it comes to HIV and that it is probable that people may use HIV or fear of HIV as grounds for discrimination as well. Interestingly, nearly all (41) of the LGBT respondents reported that LGBT people in Pasto are not very concerned with safe-sex, but they also believe that the HIV prevalence is low in Pasto compared to the
big cities. No Pasto-specific data could be found, only national data as presented in the literature review.

Health aspects were also mentioned in this context, as a large minority (19) of the respondents expressed concerns that the pressure to be either very masculine (activo) or submissive (pasivo) made safe sex difficult. The person assuming the role of activo, often thought of as masculine and impulsive, was assumed to be unlikely to offer safe sex, while the pasivo was assumed to be unlikely to ask for it, wanting to retain the submissive role. According to some respondents, this situation in combination with the fact that encounters often happen impulsively and sporadically may be one of the reasons for the difficulty of combating HIV among Latino cultures.

6.3.5. Homosexuals as flamboyant

A large majority of the LGBT respondents (38) said that LGBT people are perceived to be effeminate or flamboyant. These respondents said that many people do not know the difference between homosexuality and transvestism, and that there are people who believe that homosexuals long to- and try to be women. According to Officer Lida, transvestites are the most discriminated and stigmatized because they are so easily identified in public, as they often behave and look a lot like the opposite gender. Some (4) of LGBT respondents also expressed concerns that when transvestites behave in an effeminate manner it impacts negatively on the whole community, because transvestites can be mistaken for homosexuals by heterosexual people. These LGBT people therefore fear that because of the flamboyant personality expressed by some transvestites, it will further stigmatize homosexuals. One of the LGBT respondents who is also a university student explained how male students constantly judge and evaluate each other’s masculinity, based on clothing and body language, as well as drinking and sex habits. Students who are not considered masculine enough, can easily be labeled a sissy, the student said.

6.3.6. Homosexuality and drug use

None of the LGBT respondents mentioned that they believe LGBTs are perceived as heavy drug users. However, a large majority (37) of the LGBT respondents reported that marijuana smoking and to a lesser extent the use of various drug pills is common in the Pasto gay nightlife. The respondents were not asked about personal drug consumption.
6.4. Other relevant findings

Possibly the most interesting observation made from the field study is that the organized LGBT community in Pasto mostly consists of lesbians and transvestites. Homosexual and bisexual males appeared more interested in random sexual encounters, and only a small minority appeared to be organized or involved with LGBT rights. Lesbians constitute the majority of the membership in Pasto’s LGBT rights groups, which is the opposite of how often is in the west (Ryding, 2010, p. 2) and the author’s own observations. Transvestites also appear to be mostly organized and involved in LGBT rights, though most commonly in their own organizations for transvestites. During the marcha gay (LGBT parade) in Pasto the majority of the participants were lesbians while a small minority were transvestites and homosexual males, according to Officer Lida. The nominated parade queen turned out to be a male-to-female transvestite. According to Officer Lida it is however not common in Pasto for transvestites to have any surgical assistance in changing their gender. It is merely a matter of different gender expression in other words, they express their gender as the opposite of their biological gender.
7.1. How can local perceptions on LGBT people affect the capabilities and agency of LGBT people in Pasto?

In the theoretical framework I outlined what is known as Nussbaum’s framework of Social Justice [LINK] which is an extension of the capabilities approach to development. The framework lists a set of universal capabilities and conditions for agency (the points that apply to other marginalized groups than LGBT people were left out) will serve as a guide for the discussion.

As a reminder, Individual capabilities refer to the external possibilities and limitations posed by the external environment and may limit or increase a person’s agency. Agency refers to an individual’s own determination, and factors influencing their determination/motivation/opportunity to improve on their current situation (see: theoretical framework). This chapter discusses research questions three and four based on the findings, literature and the theoretical framework. The chapters follow the structure of Nussbaums Social Justice framework also known as “central human functional capabilities” (Nussbaum, 2000, p. 78) and is explained on page 27 in the theoretical framework chapter [LINK].
7.1.1. Life

“Being able to live to the end of a human life of normal length; not dying prematurely, or before one’s life is so reduced as to be not worth living” (Nussbaum, 2000, p. 78).

CAPABILITIES

There are examples of kidnappings, torture and brutal murders of LGBT activists in Colombia (see page 10) however, there was no Pasto-specific sources available. As a result of this fear of suffering violence or death it is likely that people are slightly reluctant to organize themselves, especially in high profile positions within LGBT and human rights organizations. According to Officer Lida the situation has been improving since the onset of the LGBT movement in Colombia in 2010. However, there are still a lot of work to be done before the human rights situation in the country will improve, and a lot will depend on the on going peace talks between the Colombian government and the guerrilla.

AGENCY

A small majority (32) of the LGBT respondents said that they to some degree fear exposing their sexual orientation as a result of the above mentioned events. However, none believed that death was a common or likely outcome of being exposed as a LGBT person anymore. Three LGBT respondents expressed concerns that they might not be able to stand the shame of their parents finding out, but did not specify which action they would take if this were to happen. Since LGBT people in Pasto appear to put so much effort into remaining anonymous it is likely that the fear of shame and discrimination is very high, and there is a risk that for some such a life would be ‘reduced as to be not worth living’ as Nussbaum put it.

7.1.2. Bodily health

“Being able to have good health, including reproductive health; to be adequately nourished; to have adequate shelter” (Nussbaum, 2000, p. 78).

CAPABILITIES
The literature review makes clear the connections between fear of discrimination and HIV due to increased risk taking. Combined with cultural factors such as excessive masculinity expressed through the machismo culture this means that it is hard to successfully implement HIV awareness programs in a Latin American setting. The findings from the field backs these factors up, as a majority of the LGBT respondents reported high prevalence of unsafe sex and little concern about sexual infections. However, the community in and around Pasto still provide some positive capabilities due to the presence of non-discriminatory laws and LGBT organizations. Moreover, there are no laws criminalizing homosexuality in Colombia.

AGENCY

Except for a small minority (5), most of the LGBT respondents did not appear to be very concerned with sexual health, and assumed the HIV prevalence to be very low in Pasto. The few respondents who were concerned about sexual health were university students who identified themselves as upper middle class. Respondents did not mention concerns about other sexually transmittable diseases. It appears as though impulsive urges often come first, and that the LGBT community may be split between those who seek friendship and romance and those who seek random encounters with ‘anyone’. It is not easy to draw a conclusion as to whether people may be compromising their own sexual health due to discrimination, but it is plausible to assume that people would find it easier to engage in relationships if living together with a person of the same gender was more accepted.

14 of the respondents expressed concerns that the pressure to be either very masculine (activo) or submissive (pasivo) made safe sex difficult. The person assuming the role of activo, often thought of as masculine and impulsive, was assumed to be unlikely to offer safe sex, while the pasivo was assumed to be unlikely to ask for it, wanting to retain the submissive role. According to some of said respondents, this situation in combination with the fact that encounters often happen impulsively and sporadically may be one of the reasons for the difficulty of combating HIV among Latino cultures, both in Colombia and abroad.

7.1.3. Bodily integrity
“Being able to move freely from place to place; to be secure against violent assault, including sexual assault and domestic violence; having opportunities for sexual satisfaction and for choice in matters of reproduction” (Nussbaum, 2000, p. 78).

CAPABILITIES

A major implication for many transvestites in Pasto, as for all over Latin America, is that they often struggle to find work and to assume a career, and thus, many transvestites engage in prostitution due to lack of opportunities. A shadow report from Colombia Diversa confirms that this happens in Colombia (Colombia Diversa, 2010, p. 8), I was however not able to identify any transvestite prostitutes during the fieldwork in Pasto. A small minority of the LGBT respondents reported to have been abused sexually by presumably heterosexual men in the past, some of which had been contacted voluntarily.

AGENCY

A few of the respondents claimed to have been abused (or heard of abuses) in such a manner during the compulsory military service in Colombia, and that easily identifiable LGBT people who are sent to military training are easy targets for such behavior. When asked whether such incidents were reported a large majority of the LGBT respondents answered that fear of rejection, shame and fear of exposure may be common reasons not to report the incidents.

7.1.4. Senses, imagination and thought

“Being able to use the senses, to imagine, think, and reason -- and to do these things in a "truly human" way, a way informed and cultivated by an adequate education, including, but by no means limited to, literacy and basic mathematical and scientific training. Being able to use imagination and thought in connection with experiencing and producing works and events of one's own choice, religious, literary, musical, and so forth. Being able to use one's mind in ways protected by guarantees of freedom of expression with respect to both political and artistic speech, and freedom of religious exercise” (Nussbaum, 2000, p. 78-79).

CAPABILITIES
Education appeared to be important to reduce prejudice and to reduce negative perceptions of minorities. Even though it is outside the scope of the present study to draw a conclusion on that fact, transvestites appear to be more understood and to have deeper understanding and less negative perceptions from the local people who had knowledge on transvestism.

When it comes to ‘events of one’s own choice’ Pasto has held a LGBT parade every year since 2010, according to Officer Lida.

**AGENCY**

As mentioned in the previous chapter there appears to be a higher presence of lesbians and transvestites in the LGBT organizational life in Pasto. Homosexual men appear to not show much interest in increasing their visibility through parading and organizational life. This may suggest that lesbians in Pasto for some unknown reason are more active and thus show a higher level of agency than gays. This is a major finding because it contradicts the situation in Europe and USA where LGBT parades and organizations are very male-dominated, as previously mentioned. It is possible that increased hardship on lesbians and a higher pressure to fit into a predefined role may increase rather than decrease agency.

### 7.1.5. Emotions

“Being able to have attachments to things and people outside ourselves; to love those who love and care for us, to grieve at their absence; in general, to love, to grieve, to experience longing, gratitude, and justified anger. Not having one’s emotional development blighted by fear and anxiety (Nussbaum, 2000, p. 79).

**CAPABILITIES**

The lack of opportunities to show one’s emotions towards others, ones couple and to not be able to share one’s struggles with friends and family are possibly one of the biggest challenges LGBT people have to go through. Even though institutional barriers such as legal barriers have been removed, and anti-discriminatory laws are in place, family acceptance and the culture of shame appears to be a big barrier to people’s ‘coming out’ process.
One of the respondents told that he wish he would be able to be more open about a romantic relationship he was engaged in. Not being able to tell people about one’s partner, show affection in public or among family and friends made it feel like less of a relationship the respondent said. Respondents also noted how it gets very tiresome to fend off rumors and to fake interest in the opposite sex. For example, a university student outlined how tiresome it gets over time to agree and to seem excited when her friends show interest in boys. Also, a majority (33) of the respondents reported to having had feelings towards a close friend, without having told them about these feelings. For example, the university student mentioned two sentences ago shared how frustrating it is when close girlfriends are spending so much time pursuing men, when she wish they would notice her. It seemed as if the biggest factor preventing LGBT people from disclosing their sexual orientation was fear of putting the family to shame, as well as fear of violence.

A large majority (38) of the LGBT respondents believe that the cultural pressure to get married and have children is one of the largest obstacles to a happy, meaningful life for LGBT people in Pasto. A few (4) of the respondents reported that people with whom they had previously been in a romantic relationship is now married with children. It is unknown how many of the homosexuals and bisexuals who engage in a heterosexual marriage continue to practice and pursue sex with the same gender outside their marriages. The four respondents referred to above speculated that the number might be high, because they reported having been approached by married men both old and young on several occasions. Interestingly, homosexual unions are legal in Colombia, and give the same legal rights as a marriage. However, at the time of this study there were strong movements across Colombia for and against same-gender marriage.

### 7.1.6. Affiliation

“Being able to live with and toward others, to recognize and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms of social interaction; to be able to imagine the situation of another. […] Having the social bases of self-respect and non-humiliation; being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others. This entails provisions of non-discrimination on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, caste, religion, national origin” (Nussbaum, 2000, p. 79-80).

CAPABILITIES
Nearly all of the respondents reported that there is a certain shame associated with being either a lesbian, homosexual, bisexual, or transvestite. Identified as belonging to a sexual minority or being suspected of being non-heterosexual is usually highly stigmatized in Pasto.

**AGENCY**

Being associated with or in support of LGBT causes is something only a small majority of the respondents (of which a majority are Lesbian) admitted to support in the open. Thus, even though there is freedom of speech around these topics few respondents feel comfortable showing affiliation positive to LGBT people. Interestingly enough, in the Pasto-based Facebook groups and the gay bars in Pasto, it is common to see MSM who shun feminine men. In the Facebook groups’ wall one can observe that members commonly announce that they are looking for a partner, but this partner must be masculine and have a total absence of *plumas* (plumes; feathers, as in peacock’s feathers, a term used to describe flamboyant homosexuals).

### 7.1.7. Control over one’s environment

**CAPABILITIES**

As far as political control over LGBT people’s lives go, it is currently not possible to engage in same-sex matrimony. Public LGBT politics are for the most part taking place in Colombia’s capitol city Bogota, where I witnessed large scale demonstrations after Bogota’s previous mayor had been removed from office. It was my impression after engaging in casual conversation and reading the Colombian newspaper that LGBT people were demonstrating because the former mayor of Bogota were pro-LGBT rights, while the new major is not.

**AGENCY**

A few respondents (4) reported being open about their sexual orientation at work, but the rest of the LGBT respondents were afraid if ‘word got out’ their job security could be jeopardized. None of the respondents reported being in a legally binding partnership. Only six respondents said close friends and family hears about their current or past relationships.
7.1.8. More on LGBT people's capabilities

It was mentioned above that religion could affect people’s agency due to the internal struggle of facing the shame vs. facing ones self-discovery. Religion also acts as a factor influencing LGBT people’s capabilities, where as the Roman Catholic Church’s (as an institution) official stand on sexual minorities may boost or limit LGBT people’s capabilities. Internal movements within the Roman Catholic Church after Francis assumed Papacy in 2013, aiming to include sexual minorities in the Catholic Church do not appear to have taken effect in Colombia yet. The findings showed that a large portion of respondents claimed that the church is responsible for many of the negative perceptions and the attitudes of disgust towards LGBT people. It is even believed that forces within the Roman Catholic Church in Colombia are influencing the decision-making process of same-sex marriage in Colombia. One example of this struggle is how the Colombian congress legalized same-sex unions in 2013, shortly after a high-profile conservative judge has publicly announced that he will annul any union arrangements between same-sex couples, for moral reasons. This suggests that there are in fact forces within Colombia working to reduce the freedoms in terms of capabilities on religious grounds, despite the state’s efforts at inclusive development. Inclusive development may sound like a fad when coming from a country like Colombia, however, I was very convinced of the inclusiveness shown and exercised by the Pasto Police Department. According to Offer Lida, after 2010 every police officer needs training in how to handle various minorities, including LGBT people in a respective and sensitive manner. The struggle between liberal and conservative forces has a long history in Colombia, and has caused civil wars and guerrillas to spring up, and it appears the internal struggles are not over yet, albeit less violent these days. However, the fact that the struggle goes on underlines the need for LGBT people, especially male homosexuals, to organize themselves and let their voice be heard.

7.1.9. More on LGBT people's agency

A major factor limiting the agency of LGBT people seemed to be their struggle between the discovery of their sexual orientation on one side and their religious beliefs forbidding their desires on the other. Shame and the gender ideals seem to put a lot of pressure on flamboyant LGBT people, with the highest pressure being on the transvestites. Transvestites, however, appear to be more accepted on moral grounds, because they are not in general perceived as disgusting. Local people tend to not perceive transvestism as something sinful and and locals appeared to have sympathy for them, even though the majority of local people found it difficult and confusing to conceptualize what transvestism

64
is. However, the fact that one can observe transvestite prostitutes and that reports from Colombia Diversa claims that many transvestites end up unemployable and thus resort to prostitution is alarming. Officer Lida explained how transvestites in Colombia are not offered sex change operations unless they can pay for it out of their own pocket. This means that for the majority of transvestites sex change is probably out of reach economically, and thus they are forced to remain in a body they do not feel comfortable in. Gays and lesbians can, as outlined earlier, hide their sexual orientation, and apparently many do so their whole life, throughout relationships and marriage. Thus, the fear of ‘coming out’ as a homosexual can rob people of the freedom to choose who to love, and pushes them to lie throughout life. The implications of living such double lives are twofold. First, the fear of exposure (low agency) removes the possibility of shaping one’s own life, and secondly it can become a habit to seek out secret, spontaneous sexual encounters with other members of the same gender. From a development and health perspective, the effect of denying ones sexual orientation out of fear of discrimination is huge as it puts the whole family at risk of contracting HIV and may greatly reduce quality of life.

Organizational life also becomes very difficult when such fear of exposure and discrimination is present. It appears to be the case in Pasto, as most homosexual and bisexual men prefer looking for anonymous encounters rather than risk exposure through fighting for their rights. Pasto, as explained earlier, is a case that differs greatly from the gay movement in Europe and USA by the fact that most organization leaders and activists are lesbian or transvestites. It is not clear why it is like this, as it did not emerge from the interviews. However, one possibility is that increased pressure on women to get married and have children due to the machismo culture gives them increased agency. Also, transvestites appear not to be able to hide their gender identity, and thus may not be able to successfully act out the role of their birth gender. Could this mean that under certain circumstances increased pressure and discrimination can enhance agency? Given the accounts that emerged from some of the interviewees, it could seem that this is possible; some of the organization leaders appeared to have gone through a lot of hardship to get to where they are today. It may also explain why lesbians, who according to Colombia Diversa’s report are more susceptible to discrimination than homosexual males are more organized than their male counterparts.
7.2. Emerging patterns and prospects

7.2.1. Rethinking the agency concept

“Lesbians are generally less visible in Latin American culture, and more prone to sexual abuse and assault by men. From a machista perspective that sees sex largely in terms of dominance and submission, it is difficult for men to conceive of women finding sexual gratification in anything but a ‘real man’ (hombre de verdad). It is commonplace to hear men say the only reason a woman is with another woman is that she has not yet experienced sex with a “real man” (Reding, 2003, p. 2-3).

The quote above clearly states how women are expected to fit into certain gender roles, which supposedly are designed to please men. Throughout this study a series of hardships faced by lesbians, including the perception of lesbians as ‘women with an appetite for sex’, but most common of all, a total ignorance to their existence in Pasto. Despite the expectation that women are supposed to get married, have children and suppress her sexuality many lesbians in Pasto have organised themselves to a larger degree than their gay counterparts and many appear to enjoy greater freedom than homosexual males. As we have seen, this contradicts other notions of lesbians often being excluded from LGBT spaces, and insinuates that increased hardship (lower capabilities) have somehow contributed to increased agency among lesbians in Pasto. More research is needed on the application of the capability approach to development, and examining the linkages between capabilities and agency in practise could help to develop the framework further.

7.2.2. A case for LGBT self-identification

Another interesting aspect of the Pasto LGBT communities is that it appears that a lot of MSMs are found in the community. MSM are people who do not identify themselves as gay, but still practise (but not necessarily exclusively) homosexual sex. It appears as though in cultures such as that found in Pasto, and possibly throughout the Andes or even Latin America, men do not necessarily identify as homosexuals just because they engage in homosexual sex a few times. Some of the respondents appeared very comfortable with not defining themselves as LGBT, and simply noted they were only experimenting or exploring their sexualities. Similarly, the literature suggests that in Latino culture,
assuming the active role and taking advantage of other, younger and more feminine men is considered by some to boost one’s masculinity. The fact that some of these men continue this behaviour after marrying somebody of the opposite sex, sometimes even in the pasivo role, has large HIV implications. One of them is that MSM are harder to reach for HIV awareness and sex education campaigns, the other being that frequent infidelity without protection carries the risk of infecting the spouse, heterosexuals and other MSM as well. Thus, adopting a culture of self-labeling and a more effective sexual education programme in schools that teach students about self-exploration and self-labeling could possibly avoid that MSM who practise underground, secret homosexual sex remain so hard to reach. It appears as though the respondents who embrace their non-heterosexuality and do self-identify as LGBT are more informed on LGBT-relevant issues, such as power relations, condom use and a desire for a more accepting society.
“This idea of human dignity has broad cross-cultural resonance and intuitive power. We can think of it as the idea that lies at the heart of tragic artworks, in whatever culture. Think of a tragic character, assailed by fortune. We react to the spectacle of humanity so assailed in a way very different from the way we react to a storm blowing grains of sand in the wind. For we see a human being as having worth as an end, a kind of awe-inspiring something that makes it horrible to see this person beaten down by the currents of change - and wonderful, at the same time, to witness the way in which chance has not completely eclipsed the humanity of the person” (Nussbaum, 2000, p. 79-80).

Conclusion

8.1. Summary

There are many aspects to development that can be expanded to include the protection of sexual minorities. This present study started by arguing why development should, and has touched upon topics of sexuality and sexual orientation indirectly, and directly throughout the evolution of the development discourse. Human rights approaches to development as well as the sustainable development paradigm are all concerned with marginalized groups and minorities. Until recently international development agents have been reluctant to include sexual minorities in their development strategies and frameworks, but as the theoretical part of this present study argued, current development approaches include LGBT people both on moral grounds and on the grounds of global health.

The main objective of this study was to explore local people's perceptions on LGBT people in San Juan de Pasto (Pasto) in Colombia and how discrimination or fear of discrimination may have affected LGBT people's capabilities and agency using the capabilities approach to development. To do this, two central concepts in the capability approach to development were employed. These concepts are capabilities and agency. Capabilities can be seen as institutional or cultural barriers to the realization of the self, defined as real freedoms to choose between different ways of living one’s life. Agency is
thought of as a good derived from capabilities, where increased freedoms through increased capabilities lead to increased self-determination. In other words, increased agency allow an individual to act on his ambitions and aspirations.

Through the application of the capabilities approach to development as a theoretical framework four research questions were examined and discussed:

How do local people perceive LGBT people in Pasto?

How do LGBT People in Pasto think local people perceive them?

How can local perceptions on LGBT people affect the capabilities of LGBT people in Pasto?

How can LGBT people in Pasto’s perceptions of how local people perceive them affect individual agency?

The first two research questions were approached in an empirical manner, whereas research questions three and four discussed the empirical findings using the concepts of capabilities and agency.

8.2. Significant findings and possible implications

The study found that among local people in Pasto homosexuality is often considered a temporary mental condition or sickness. There is little knowledge among the local people of people embracing their identity and choosing to live out their lives in a non-heterosexual relationship. The perception held by certain local people that homosexuality is temporary caused great distress for some of the respondents, some of which claimed that it is hard to be taken seriously even if an attempt is made to disclose that one has a same-sex partner. Also, a majority of the LGBT respondents believe they are perceived as disgusting, rather, it was more common for local people to perceive LGBT people as flamboyant or effeminate rather than disgusting. How these findings affect capabilities and agency is not easy to define, however, some general patterns emerged.

LGBT people’s capabilities appear to be restricted by family expectations, gender identity norms and feelings of shame, possibly due to religion. Moreover, LGBT people in Colombia are legally deprived of certain capabilities due to lacking marriage equality laws and a failure to ensure the human rights due to historical and on-going conflicts in the country. However, anti-discrimination laws and efforts by
the government to cater to the needs of sexual minorities appear to have increased the capabilities of LGBT people after 2010.

LGBT people's agency appear to be inhibited by shame, fear of discrimination and harassment as well as fear of being exposed. Many of these fears are due to the shame it would inflict on the family rather than the individual. The evidently most negative outcome of such shame is that certain homosexual men commit to a heterosexual marriage while continuing to see other men. This finding hints that it may be useful to promote self-identification as gay men to allow homosexual men who do not identify as such to embrace their sexual identity rather than oppressing it unsuccessfully. Lesbians on the other hand appeared to have higher agency than gay men, while enduring lower capabilities. This suggests that more pressure towards a perceived undesirable outcome may in fact increase an individual's agency.
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