

Pangasinan State University HUMSS Students' Level of Knowledge and Stance on LGBTQ+ Practices

Great I Am W. C. Gismundo, RSW, Joseph C. Barrera, RSW, Catherine Anne Atutubo, RSW, Donabel C. Sabas, RSW
Pangasinan State University

Jayson P. Molina, RSW, Richard A. Dizon, RSW
Urduaneta City University

Abstract

In this study, a team of Social Workers from Pangasinan aimed to explore the knowledge, determine how open are the respondents to LGBTQ+, and the level of support of HUMSS students towards the LGBTQ+ community for determining their stance on current issues on the matter. During the academic year 2018 – 2019, a survey for the Senior High School students of Pangasinan State University taking Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) was distributed through questionnaire and brief interview for some follow-up or sensitive questions. The percentage of HUMSS students who respond to the survey have no local trainings or seminars pertaining to the LGBTQ+. Despite that, the level of awareness on same-sex marriage as not legal in the Philippines is high. Majority of the respondents who identified themselves as LGBTQ+ states that they cannot express their gender to both friends and family. The major findings on this study shows that a great number of PSU HUMSS students are (a) highly knowledgeable/aware on LGBTQ+ current realities and trends, (b) accepting the LGBTQ+ community and related practices, and (c) have low frequency of actions on supporting the LGBTQ+ community.

Keywords: Gender, Senior High School, HUMSS, Humanities and Social Sciences, LGBTQ+

INTRODUCTION

In many countries, it is given that being a member of LGBTQ+ means living with daily discrimination. Philippines is considered to be a LGBTQ+-friendly country (Tubeza, 2013) but despite claiming that title, lots of members of the LGBTQ+ are experiencing discrimination and victimization due to the different perspectives and lack of knowledge with the differences of sexual orientation or who the person is attracted to, gender identity or how they define their selves, and gender expression or how can they show their selves through clothing and others. For years, Filipinos attitude are more just being tolerant but not really accepting the LGBTQ+ community and their practices (Casal, 2018).

Nowadays, LGBTQ+ people are battling their civil rights legally and in the streets. There are also well-known figures that are discussing their sexual orientation in public. But despite these advances in our country, LGBTQ+ members still find themselves faced with greater challenges, compared to the cis-gendered youth. In many cases, LGBTQ+ people are being victimized by name-calling and bullying. (Street, 2016).

Schools should be a place where one finds acceptance as we expect that everyone can be open-minded. But here in the country, students who identify themselves or are labeled as LGBTQ+ experience bullying, discrimination, and in some extreme cases, physical assault. Efforts on addressing discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community have reached lawmakers and school administrators. On the present day, lack of information and additional resources is still encountered. Even the religious leaders participated on addressing discrimination but in practice, most of the sectors resisted laws and policies that would protect LGBTQ+ rights (Human Rights Watch, 2017).

Fighting for LGBTQ+ rights does not require one to be a part of the community. Regardless of one's sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, one can help support the community directly and indirectly through being informed, speaking up, and supporting equality. Openness refers to the expression of beliefs and feelings, being able to grasp new ideas, and being accommodating to the trend of LGBTQ+.

In our technology today, people who want to come out as a member of LGBTQ+ is easier (Abcede, 2017). Through the use of different social media platforms, people are being exposed to the matters relating to the LGBTQ+. Promoting or advocating is more convenient than ever.

Profile of the Respondents

The respondents consist of 69 participants ages 16 – 18 and are all graduating of Senior High School. Majority or 54 of the respondents are female.

There are at least 8 or 11.6% identified themselves as LGBTQ+. The 87% of those who identified themselves as LGBTQ+ states that they cannot express it to their friends and 89.9% says that they cannot express it to their family.

The majority, with a frequency count and percentage of 56 and 81.2% the respondents have no record of attending trainings or seminars related to LGBTQ+ for the past 2 years.

Knowledge and Awareness on LGBTQ+ Current Realities and Trends

Table 1 depicts the results on the level of knowledge and awareness of the HUMSS students on LGBTQ+ Current Realities and Trends.

Table 1 Level of Knowledge and Awareness on LGBTQ+ Current Realities and Trends

Knowledge and Awareness Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Meaning
1. I am familiar with any local and national law/policy/ordinance/bill supporting LGBTQ+ in the Philippines	2.77	Highly Knowledgeable/ Aware
2. I know associations both locally and nationally that advocate LGBTQ+	2.58	Highly Knowledgeable/ Aware
3. I know the difference among the terms: Asexual, Bisexual, Homosexual, and Heterosexual.	2.91	Highly Knowledgeable/ Aware
4. I know the difference between Gender and Sex.	3.51	Fully Knowledgeable/ Aware
5. I know the term "cisgender".	1.61	Slightly Knowledgeable/ Aware Not
6. I know the difference among sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.	2.78	Highly Knowledgeable/ Aware
7. I am aware that same sex marriage is currently not legal in the Philippines.	3.59	Fully Knowledgeable/ Aware

8. I am aware that same-sex couples are not allowed to legally adopt a child.	2.72	Highly Knowledgeable/ Aware
9. I am that being attracted to opposite sex could be a result of a genetic abnormality.	2.43	Slightly Knowledgeable/ Not Aware
10. I am aware that being attracted to opposite sex could be a result of an environmental factor.	2.48	Slightly Knowledgeable/ Not Aware
Overall Weighted Mean:	2.738	Highly Knowledgeable/ Aware

Descriptive Equivalent: 4- Fully Knowledgeable/Aware; 3- Highly Knowledgeable/Aware; 2- Slightly Not Knowledgeable/Aware; 1-Not Knowledgeable/Aware

Looking at its entirety, the level of knowledge and awareness of the respondents on LGBTQ+ current realities and trends is highly knowledgeable on LGBTQ+ current realities and trends with an overall weighted mean of 2.738.

As shown in the table, respondents are knowledgeable/aware on LGTBQ+ current realities and trends. Knowing that same-sex marriage is not legal in the country got the highest mean rating of 3.59. Meanwhile, it shows that indicator "I know the term 'cisgender'" the lowest mean rating of 1.61.

Acceptability on LGBTQ+

Table 2 portrays the results on the level of acceptability on LGBTQ+ practices. It can be gleaned that the level of acceptability of respondents on LGBTQ+ practices is highly acceptable as shown in the overall weighted mean of 2.635.

Table 2 Level of Acceptability on LGBTQ+

Acceptability Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Meaning
1. It is normal for an individual to become a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, etc.	3.28	Highly Acceptable
2. An LGBTQ+ can partake or occupy any positions in Academic Setting.	3.14	Highly Acceptable
3. An LGBTQ+ can partake or occupy any positions in Political Institution.	3.13	Highly Acceptable
4. An LGBTQ+ can partake or occupy any positions in Religious Sector.	2.42	Slightly Acceptable Not
5. An LGBTQ+ can partake or occupy any positions in Army.	2.93	Highly Acceptable
6. A transwoman can partake on any beauty contest that are intendedly designed for females.	2.30	Slightly Acceptable Not
7. A transman can partake on any beauty contest that are intendedly designed for males.	2.20	Slightly Acceptable Not
8. A transwoman can partake any physical competition that is intended for female.	2.51	Highly Acceptable
9. A transman partake any physical competition that is intended for male.	2.43	Slightly Acceptable Not
10. Same-sex romantic relationship.	2.46	Slightly Acceptable Not
11. Gender Cross-Dressing of office, school or any formal uniform.	2.20	Slightly Acceptable Not
12. Provision of separate comfort room for the LGBTQ+ community.	2.62	Highly Acceptable

Overall Weighted Mean:	2.635	Highly Acceptable
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Descriptive Equivalent: 4- Fully Acceptable; 3- Highly Acceptable; 2-Slightly Not Acceptable; 1- Not Acceptable

More to the point, acceptability indicators with the highest acceptability is: 'it is normal for an individual to become a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, etc.', with a mean of 3.28. On the other hand, both acceptability indicators: 'a transman can partake on any beauty contest that are intendedly designed for males' and 'Gender Cross-dressing of office, school or any formal uniform' with the least weighted mean of 2.20.

Actions on Promoting and Advocating LGBTQ+

Table 3 portrays the results on the frequency of actions on promoting LGBTQ+

It can be gleaned that the frequency of actions of respondents on promoting LGBTQ+ practices is got an overall weighted mean of 2.305.

Table 3 Frequency of Action on Promoting LGBTQ+

Frequency Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Meaning
1. Joining an organization that promotes LGTBQ+ empowerment.	2.23	Sometimes
2. Joining an advocacy/movement for the LGTBQ+ empowerment.	2.22	Sometimes
3. Promoting the rights of LGBTQ+ by sharing posts in social media.	2.48	Sometimes
4. Facilitating a group of LGBTQ+ youth in the community.	2.22	Sometimes
5. Using gender neutral terms in class and other form of communication.	2.49	Sometimes
6. Asking how someone should be addressed regardless of their gender expression.	2.58	Often

7. Reading articles and news that are related to LGBTQ+ cases.	2.58	Often
8. Mainstreaming LGTBQ+-related situations on worship meeting.	2.06	Sometimes
9. Advocating LGBTQ+ to your family members.	2.16	Sometimes
10. Promoting same-sex relationship.	2.03	Sometimes
Overall Weighted Mean:	2.305	Sometimes

Descriptive Equivalent: 4- Always; 3- Often; 2- Sometimes; 1-Never

Based on the table, both the indicators 'asking how someone should be addressed regardless of their gender expression' and 'reading articles and news that are related to LGBTQ+ cases' got the highest mean of 2.58. Meanwhile, the indicator that got the lowest mean (2.03) is 'promoting same-sex relationship'.

By looking the above table as a whole, the respondents' frequency of action got as low as 2.305 with a descriptive meaning of sometimes.

CONCLUSIONS

From the results acquired, the following conclusions were established:

The Senior High School students of Pangasinan State University lack trainings and seminars pertaining to the LGBTQ+. The Senior High School students of Pangasinan State University have a high level of knowledge and awareness on LGBTQ+ current trends and realities. The Senior High School students of Pangasinan State University have a high level of acceptability on LGBTQ+ community and The Senior High School students of Pangasinan State University got a low frequency of action on supporting the LGBTQ+ community.

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