



LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, AND QUEER (LGBTQ+) ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN RELATION TO EMPOWERMENT

Cleta A. Ratio

Private Sector, Kamay ni Hesus Lucban, Quezon

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore the relationship between issues and challenges and empowerment of LGBTQ+ members in Lucban, Quezon. Data from 60 LGBTQ+ members were collected through convenient sampling. Descriptive-correlational design was used in this study. Correlation and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. The result revealed that most of the respondents were 24 years old and above, majority were gays, and most of them were college graduate. Moreover, the LGBTQ+ members in Lucban, Quezon were able to positively attained physical, emotional, and social behavior. Furthermore, respondents less experience violence, employment discrimination, and discrimination against religious freedom. And somehow never experience discrimination inside their home. Results also showed that there was significant relationship between issues and challenges and empowerment. Several recommendations were given in order to empower more the LGBTQ+ members, like Local Government Unit might develop of community norms and supports that contribute to the ability of LGBTQ+ members and community to thrive while addressing associated violence, hate crimes, employment and religious discrimination.

INTRODUCTION

Most of the research related to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community has surfaced issues related to the challenges that hindered LGBTQ empowerment. Researchers have been able to relate these issues to poor social acceptance and attitudes towards LGBTQ+ people in the community (Kosciw, et.al 2012).

At the time when lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBTQ+) individuals are an increasingly open, acknowledged, and visible part of society, they are also prone to different abuses. They mainly experienced violence, housing discrimination, and employment discrimination, and interfered with religious freedom. Although a modest body of knowledge on LGBTQ+ health has been developed over the last two decades, much remains to be explored.

According to Constantino (2005), the queer community's presence continues to increase in the Philippines, while more individuals become visible throughout workplaces. An increasingly diverse workforce leaves organizations struggling to leverage the knowledge and experience lesbian and gay leaders bring to discussions. Limited research informs organizations of the strategy's lesbian and gay people in leadership roles use to navigate their ascension into their positions while managing the

disclosure of their sexual orientation and professional identity.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive-correlational research design was utilized in the study to determine the relationship between issues and challenges of LGBTQ+ and sense of empowerment. This design was used to give a detailed description of the nature and status of the study under investigation and to analyze the extent to which each of the variables fluctuates regarding each other (Varalakshmi and Suseela, 2005). The descriptive method was used to describe each variable and the correlation was used to examine the relationship between two or more variables to show the type and strength of the relationship (Burns and Groves, 2008).

The purpose of utilizing a correlation design is to explain, through quantitative analysis, the probable relationship among variables to make inferred associations. Descriptive measures such as percentage, the measure of central tendency, and measures of variability were used to describe and the sample correlation was to measure the strength of the relationship (Newton and Rudestan, 2012).

Purposive sampling was observed in the conduct of the study. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method and it occurs when "elements selected for the sample were chosen by the judgment of the researcher. The reason for purposive



sampling was the better matching of the sample to the aims and objectives of the research, thus improving the rigor of the study and the trustworthiness of the data and results.

The researcher purposely selected all the forty-seven (47) LGBTQ+ members in the selected barangay in Lucban, Quezon, who will respond to the questionnaire. However, due to the current situation because of the COVID-19 pandemic, thirteen (13) of the respondents answered the questionnaires online.

The respondents of the study were sixty (60) LGBTQ+ members in Lucban, Quezon. The said respondents were chosen using convenient sampling.

In collecting data for this study, various methods were employed. The researcher's study started after the approval of the title. The researcher preceded with the readings and research data collections from various libraries via internet research websites, and different resources. He also sought the help and guidance of his adviser for the comments and suggestions. Afterward, the research instruments were developed. Then the researcher submitted letters and addresses to the respondents demanding inclusion in the analysis.

For the validation of the questionnaire, the researchers asked the validators. Subsequently, they revised it as required. The research was then sent to the office of the chosen barangay letter of consent and addresses. After the questionnaire had been accepted, the LGBTQ+ performed the questions selected. It was followed by barangay interviews, and

then the collection the requisite data. Table of outcomes, mathematical treatment, and explanation is provided.

A modified type of questionnaire was used by the researcher to facilitate the study. It is composed of four parts. The research instrument was subjected to experts' validation composed of panel members and the adviser.

The data gathering tool was divided into four parts. The first part is about the profile of the respondents and then followed the issue and challenges of LGBTQ+. This study uses a Likert scale questionnaire to explore the challenges and discrimination faced by LGBTQ+. Likert scale was used to determine the challenges and discrimination faced by LGBTQ+ members.

Statistical Treatment

The profile of LGBTQ+, the percentage was used, and then the others tables were analyzed using the weighted mean (WM) method.

The weighted mean, Standard Deviation was used to determine the LGBTQ+ Empowerment is related to issues and challenges.

The weighted mean and standard deviation were used to treat the gathered data from the respondents.

To determine the significance of the LGBTQ+ empowerment in relation to issues and challenges, the data were treated statistically using the analysis of variance.

Table 4. Statistical Treatment Used

Statement of the Problem	Statistical Treatment
1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of: 1.1 Age 1.2 Gender; and 1.3 Educational Attainment?	Weighted Mean and standard deviation
2. What are the perceived behavior of the respondents in terms of: 2.1 Emotional Behavior; 2.2 Physical Behavior; and 2.3 Social Behavior?	Weighted Mean and standard deviation
3. What are the issues and challenges that they encounter by LGBTQ+ as to: 3.1 Violence 3.2 Employment discrimination; 3.3 Housing Discrimination 3.4 Religious freedom?	Weighted Mean and standard deviation
4. What is the sense of empowerment experienced by LGBTQ+ members in terms of: 4.1 Skill 4.2 Training 4.3 Activities and projects	Weighted Mean and standard deviation
5. Is there a significant relationship between the sense of empowerment and issues and challenges of LGBTQ+?	Correlation Coefficient



RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Profile of the LGBTQ+ Members

The profile of the LGBTQ+ members was described according to age, gender preference, and educational attainment.

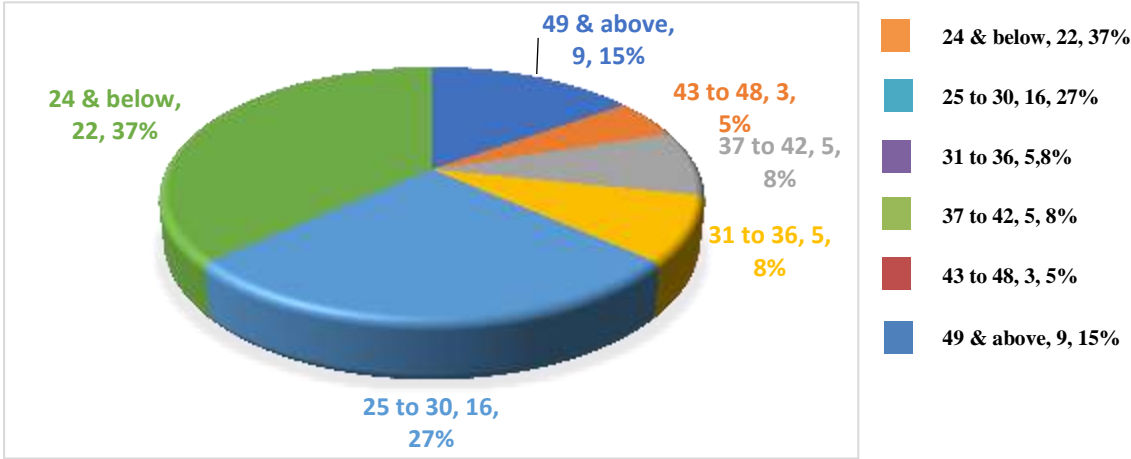


Figure 2. LGBTQ+ Members' Demographic Profile as to Age

Figure 2 shows the age of the LGBTQ+ members. The biggest percentage are those who are 24 years old and below (37%), followed by those who are 25 to 30 years old (27%). 9 LGBTQ+ members are 49 years old and above (15%). The same percentage are those who are 31 to 36 years old and from 37 to 42 years old (8%). Only a very small percentage are those with age that ranged from 43 to 48 (5%). This means more than half of the LGBTQ+

members are below 30 years old. It is inferred that majority of LGBTQ+ members in Lucban, Quezon are in middle age or young adult. The reason behind this was because the vast majority of LGBTQ say that they were in their teens or younger when they realized that they are not straight. Based on the of LGBTQ+ Americans of Pew Research Center (2013), 17 is the median age at which LGBTQ+ knew their identity.

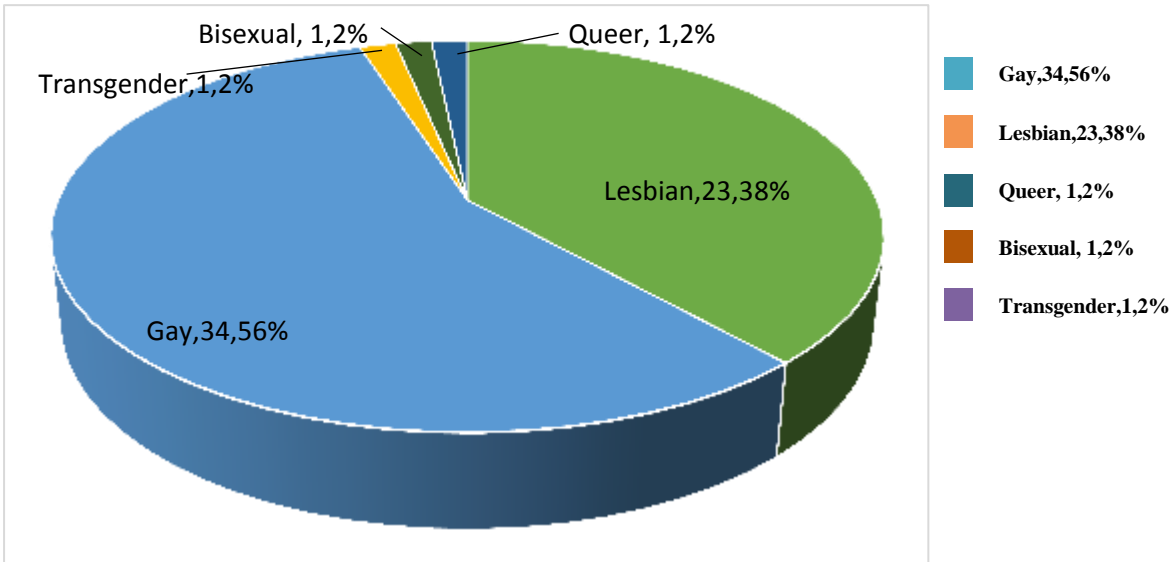


Figure 3. LGBTQ+ Members' Demographic Profile as to Gender Preference

Figure 3 shows the gender preference distribution of the LGBTQ+ members. Data revealed that 56% (n=34) were gay, 38% (n=23) were lesbian, 2% (n=1) were

same for transgender, bisexual, and queer. The data shows that the majority of the LGBTQ+ members in Lucban, Quezon were gays. It is followed by lesbians



which second-biggest chunk in the gender preference. In the study conducted by Pew Research in 2013, second to dominated gender preference is gay and

lesbian. Therefore, the majority of the respondents were gays and lesbians.

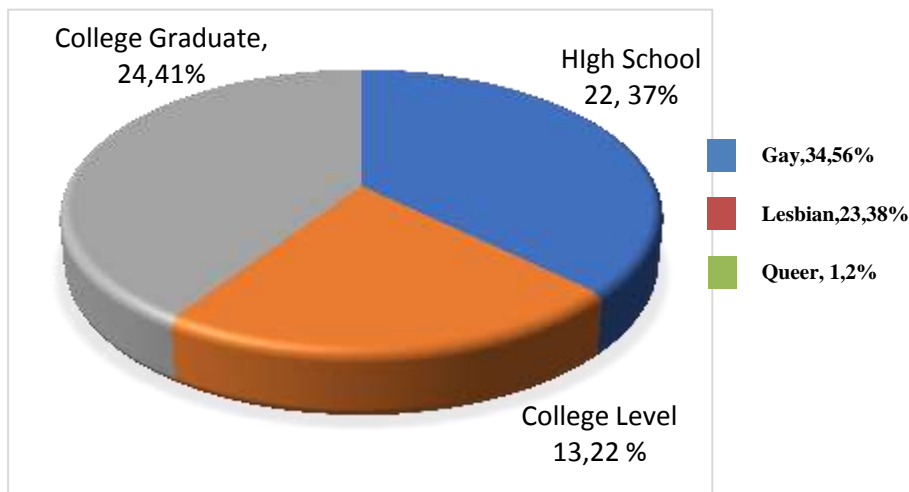


Figure 4. LGBTQ+ Members' Demographic Profile as to Educational Attainment

Figure 4 shows the distribution of the LGBTQ+ members as to educational attainment. Data revealed that among the 60 respondent, 41% (n=24) were college graduate, 37% (n=22) were high school graduates, and 22% (n=12) were college level. Data revealed that the majority of the LGBTQ+ members in Lucban, Quezon were college graduates, it is then inferred that since the majority of the LGBTQ+ were young adults it assumed that majority of them finished or went to college for a degree. The result of this study was supported by the result of the survey

conducted by Pew Research in 2013, that majority of LGBTQ+ members also finished or went to college, and some finished high school.

LGBTQ+ Members' Perceptions on their Physical Behavior

In this study, the behavior of the LGBTQ+ members was described in terms of emotional, physical, and social behavior

Table 5. LGBTQ+ Members' Perceptions on their Emotional Behavior

Indicators	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
When I want to feel more positive emotions (such as joy or amusement), I change my mindset.	3.60	1.108	Attained
When I want to feel less negative emotion (such as sadness or anger), I change my perspective to a positive one.	3.80	1.022	Attained
When I am feeling positive emotions, I am careful not to express them.	3.47	0.965	Attained
When I'm faced with a stressful situation, I make myself think about it in a way that helps me stay calm.	3.93	0.841	Attained
I control my emotions by changing the way I think about the situation I'm in.	4.02	0.892	Attained
Overall Mean		3.76	Attained

Legend: 1.00-1.79=not all attained, 1.80-2.59=rarely attained, 2.60-3.39=moderately attained, 3.40-4.19=attained, 4.20-5.00=highly attained

Table 5 presents the respondents' perceptions of their emotional behavior. The descriptive result based on the overall mean of 3.76

revealed that the respondents' emotional behavior was attained. As seen in Table 5, respondents attained the positive emotional behavior with the



highest mean item 5 “I control my emotions by changing the way I think about the situation I’m in” with a mean of 4.02 ($SD=0.892$). Followed by item 4 “When I’m faced with a stressful situation, I make myself think about it in a way that helps me stay calm” with a mean of 3.93 ($SD= 0.841$), and item 2 “When I want to feel less negative emotion (such as sadness or anger), I change my perspective to positive on” with a mean of 3.80 ($SD=1.022$), and item 1 “When I want to feel more positive emotion (such as joy or amusement), I change my mindset” with a mean of 3.60 ($SD=1.108$). The lowest mean is item 3 “When I am feeling positive emotions, I am careful not to express them” with a mean of 3.47

(0.965). Among all the five items, the respondents disclose that there were able to positive emotional behavior.

The result implies that the LGBTQ+ member in Lucban, Quezon were able to attain positive emotional behavior. It is inferred from the result that LGBTQ+ members feel good, happy, excited, joyful, and inspired. This positive behavior posited by LGBTQ+ leads them to have a happy and healthy life. According to Higa et.al (2015), the positive factors why LGBTQ+ members attained positive emotional behavior because they are associated with peer networks and involve in the community.

Table 6. LGBTQ+ Members’ Behavior in terms of Physical Behavior

Indicators	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
1. Can be involved in a vigorous-intensity activity.	3.47	1.112	Attained
2. Possess the skills to do regular physical activity if wanted to.	3.88	0.761	Attained
3. Have the physical ability to do anything than by others.	3.85	0.954	Attained
4. Made regular plans concerning what, when, where, how, and what kind of physical activity I would like to do.	3.95	0.891	Attained
5. Start doing other physical activity before I realize I am doing it.	3.70	0.979	Attained
Overall Mean	3.77		Attained

Legend: 1.00-1.79=not all attained, 1.80-2.59=rarely attained, 2.60-3.39=moderately attained, 3.40-4.19=attained, 4.20-5.00=highly attained

Table 6 presents the LGBTQ+ members' behavior in terms of Physical Behavior. The LGBTQ+ members disclosed that they were able to express their physical behavior in terms of planning for physical activities ($M=3.95$, $SD=0.891$) since they possess the skills to do regular physical activities ($M=3.88$, $SD=0.761$). They *attained* a certain level of expressing their physical behavior when it comes to doing physical activities with others ($M=3.85$, $SD=0.954$), initiating physical activities ($M=3.70$, $SD=0.979$), and can be highly involved with vigorous-intensity activities ($M=3.47$, $SD=1.112$).

The overall mean of 3.77 indicates that the LGBTQ+ members *attained* that level of planning and participating in physical activities. They find it

worthwhile to show their physical powers by participating in the LGU programs for physical fitness activities like the daily Zumba and outdoor activities. It is inferred that LGBTQ+ participate in some physical activities because they want to become fit and healthy. The LGBTQ+ want to be fit and healthy to protect themselves from violence and discrimination. In 2011, the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) stated that one of the discriminations faced by people because of sexual orientation or gender identity was criminalization and physical violence. Being physically active is a way for LGBTQ+ members in Lucban, Quezon to defend themselves from any physical harm that might be brought by discrimination.

Table 7. LGBTQ+ Members’ Perceptions on their Social Behavior

Indicators	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
1. Make an effort to express me clearly in a more positive way.	4.13	0.911	Attained
2. I try to project a more respectful reputation and image of myself.	4.07	0.989	Attained
3. Project an acceptable image of peers.	3.88	0.993	Attained
4. Hide my face because of my insecurity being with others and the physical appearance may not be decent or presentable.	2.85	1.096	Moderately attained
5. Behavioral manifestations of myself which may not be acceptable to society.	3.10	1.003	Attained
Overall Mean	3.61		Attained



Legend: 1.00-1.79=not all attained, 1.80-2.59=rarely attained, 2.60-3.39=moderately attained, 3.40-4.19=attained, 4.20-5.00=highly attained

Table 7 above presents the LGBTQ+ members' perception of their social behavior. As indicated in the table, the descriptive results based on the overall mean of 3.61 meaning the social behavior were attained by the LGBTQ+ members in Lucban, Quezon. Four out of five items attained positive social behavior and one moderately attained. The highest mean among the five items is under item 1 "Make an effort to express me clearly in a more positive way" with a mean of 4.31 ($SD=0.911$). Followed by item 2 "I try to project a more respectful reputation and image of myself" with a mean of 4.07 ($SD=0.989$), then item 3 "Project an acceptable image of peers" with a mean of 3.88 ($SD=0.993$), and item 5 "Behavioral manifestations of myself which may not be acceptable to society" with a mean of 3.10 ($SD=1.003$). However, the lowest mean is under item 4 "Hide my face because of my insecurity being with others and the physical appearance may not be decent or presentable" with a mean of 2.85 ($SD=1.096$) with a verbal interpretation of *moderately attained*.

This result indicates that respondents perceived social behavior was positively attained. The result inferred that LGBTQ+ members today are more accepted by society. Based on the study of Pew Research in 2013, there was greater social acceptance from the members of LGBTQ+ members, 92% of the respondents accept more of the LGBTQ+ today. Social acceptance from the LGBTQ+ leads to create positive social behavior among LGBTQ+.

Issues and Challenges Encountered by LGBTQ+ Members

Mean and standard deviation was used to determine the issues and challenges encountered by LGBTQ+ members and the results are presented according to the individual dimensions of issues and challenges. In this study, the issues and challenges encountered by the LGBTQ+ members pertain to violence, employment discrimination, housing discrimination, and religious freedom.

Table 8. Issues and Challenges Experienced by LGBTQ+ Members in terms of Violence

Indicators	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
1. I experienced violence when I notice that I belong to the LGBTQ+ community.	2.70	1.306	Moderately evident
2. Experienced any obscenity since I became an LGBTQ+ member.	2.72	1.263	Moderately evident
3. Experienced physical violence being a member of the LGBTQ+ community.	2.43	1.184	Moderately evident
4. Experienced being rejected to enter establishments being a member of LGBTQ+ community.	2.60	1.278	Moderately evident
5. Have experienced being criticized by other people.	3.18	1.384	Moderately evident

Overall Mean

2.73 Moderately Evident

Legend: 1.00-1.79=not all evident, 1.80-2.59=rarely evident 2.60-3.39=moderately evident, 3.40-4.19=evident, 4.20-5.00=highly evident

Table 8 presents the issues and challenges encountered by LGBTQ+ members in terms of violence. As indicated in the table, the descriptive results based on the overall mean of 2.73 show that the respondents experienced violence however it is *moderately evident*. Data revealed that all five items indicate that the violence experienced by LGBTQ+ is *moderately evident*. The highest mean under violence is item 5 "Have experienced to be criticized by other people" with a mean of 3.18 ($SD=1.384$), followed by item 2 "Experienced any obscenity since I became an LGBTQ+ member" with a mean of 2.72 ($SD=1.263$), then item 1 "Experienced any violence when I notice that I belong to LGBTQ+ community" has mean of 2.70 ($SD=1.306$), item number 4 "Experienced being rejected to enter establishments being a member of

LGBTQ+ community" with a mean of 2.60 ($SD=1.278$). The lowest mean is item 3 "Experienced physical violence being a member of LGBTQ+ community" with a mean of 2.43 ($SD=1.184$).

The result implies that although LGBTQ+ members somehow gain acceptance from society they still experience violence. Based on the DC Center report of 2013, some of the drivers of violence against the LGBTQ+ community include anti-gay legislation, homophobia, ignorance, anger against a perceived gain of rights. Moreover, LGBTQ+ experience greater levels of violence, sexual violence, victimization, electronic bullying, and harassment compared to their heterosexual and non-transgender peers (The DC Center, 2013). Furthermore, in the Philippines, significant progress has been made in the



recognition of the human rights of LGBTQ people, and these issues enjoy broad political support.

However, LGBTIQ+ people still face barriers to full equality and violence.

Table 9. Issues and Challenges Experienced by LGBTQ+ Members in terms of Employment Discrimination

Indicators	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
1. Experienced any form of discrimination in the workplace being the member.	3.00	1.353	Moderately evident
2. Experienced in the workplace being insulted because you are an LGBTQ+ member.	2.90	1.258	Moderately evident
3. Experienced in the workplace being ridiculed because you are an LGBTQ+ member.	2.75	1.202	Moderately evident
4. Experienced being compared to colleagues according to your abilities and talents.	3.15	1.176	Moderately evident
5. Experienced being fired by the employer which is influenced by being a member of LGBTQ+ community	2.73	1.436	Moderately evident

Overall Mean

2.91 Moderately Evident

Legend: 1.00-1.79=not all evident, 1.80-2.59=rarely evident 2.60-3.39=moderately evident, 3.40-4.19=evident, 4.20-5.00=highly evident

Table 9 presents the issues and challenges experienced by LGBTQ+ members in terms of employment discrimination. As indicated in the table, the descriptive results based on the overall mean is 2.91 show that the respondents experienced employment discrimination, however, it is *moderately evident*. Among five items, the highest mean is under item 4 “experienced being compared to colleagues according to on your abilities and talents” with a mean of 3.15 ($SD=1.176$). Followed by item number 1 “experience any form of discrimination in the workplace being the member” with a mean of 3.00 ($SD=1.353$), then followed by item number 2 “experience in the workplace being insulted because you are an LGBTQ+ member” with a mean of 2.90 ($SD=1.258$). The lowest means is under item 3 “experienced in the workplace being ridiculed because you are an LGBTQ+ member” with a mean of 2.75 ($SD=1.202$), and item 5 “experienced being fired by the employer which is influenced by

being a member of the LGBTQ+ community” with a mean of 2.73 ($SD=1.436$). All the items under employment discrimination have the verbal interpretation of *moderately evident*.

The data revealed that somehow the LGBTQ+ members still experience employment discrimination although not to the great extent, maybe because of the gaining acceptance of LGBTQ+ members from the community. It is then inferred from the result, that access to decent work is an essential part of LGBTQ+ members and is deeply intertwined with their socio-economic empowerment and ability to participate in the public sphere. Based on the USAID report of 2014, LGBTQ+ individuals face challenges in employment both on an individual level and as members of a community that is subject to discrimination and abuse. It was noted that employers sometimes take advantage of LGBTQ+ employees. Furthermore, sexual harassment of LGBTQ+ employees was reported.

Table 10. Issues and Challenges Experienced by LGBTQ+ Members in terms of Housing Discrimination

Indicators	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
1. Disowned by my parents being a member of LGBTQ+.	2.27	1.300	Rarely evident
2. Treated indifferently by parents.	2.42	1.331	Rarely evident
3. Unequal treatment of siblings.	2.37	1.207	Rarely evident
4. Experienced being embarrassed and humiliated in public by relatives.	2.33	1.284	Rarely evident
5. Experienced being abused by my relatives physically and mentally.	2.20	1.132	Rarely evident

Overall Mean

2.32 Rarely Evident

Legend: 1.00-1.79=not all evident, 1.80-2.59=rarely evident 2.60-3.39=moderately evident, 3.40-4.19=evident, 4.20-5.00=highly evident



Table 10 above presents the issues and challenges experienced by LGBTQ+ members in terms of housing discrimination. The descriptive result based on the overall mean of 2.32 revealed that LGBTQ+ members were rarely discriminated against at home. The highest mean under housing discrimination is under item number 2 “Treated indifferently by parents” with a mean of 2.42 (SD=1.331). Followed by item 3 “Unequal treatment of siblings” with a mean of 2.37 (SD=1.207), then item 4 “Experienced being embarrassed and humiliated in public by relatives” with a mean of 2.33 (SD=1.284). The two lowest mean is under item 1 “Disowned by parents being a member of LGBTQ+” with a mean of 2.27 (SD=1.300), and item 5 “Experienced being abused by my relatives physically and mentally” with a mean of 2.20 (SD=1.132).

It is inferred from the results that LGBTQ+ members were accepted by their family members. Although, few LGBTQ+ members were having

issues regarding their relationship with their parents or family members, still, the majority of LGBTQ+ members in Lucban, Quezon has a good relationship with their parents and family members. Furthermore, they received support from their family. According to Ryan et. al (2010), the family who is supporting the LGBTQ+ members have protection against depression, substance abuse, and suicidal thoughts. Moreover, the LGBTQ+ members with highly accepting families have a significantly higher level of self-esteem and social support.

Furthermore, this is further supported in the study conducted by Golgberg et. al (2012), who found that LGBTQ+ members who had higher family support and relationship quality were related to lower depression and anxiety symptoms. However, the study of Rostosky et. al (2004), found that LGBTQ+ most felt supported by some family members but not the majority.

Table 11. Issues and Challenges Experienced by LGBTQ+ Members in terms of Religious Freedom

Indicators	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
1. Reprimanded not to attend church services.	2.48	1.295	Rarely evident
2. Freedom to attend religious activities and services.	3.90	1.100	Evident
3. Experienced being reprimanded by the church leader when he noticed being a member of an LGBTQ+ member.	2.52	1.186	Rarely evident
4. Dedication and commitment in the performance with sincerity of intentions in the practice of good faith but are not appreciated.	3.13	1.241	Moderately evident
5. Discrimination in the practice of faith/ religion.	2.63	1.248	Moderately evident

Overall Mean

2.93 Moderately Evident

Legend: 1.00-1.79=not all evident, 1.80-2.59=rarely evident 2.60-3.39=moderately evident, 3.40-4.19=evident, 4.20-5.00=highly evident

Table 11 presents the issues and challenges experienced by LGBTQ+ members in terms of religious freedom. The descriptive results based on the overall mean of 2.93 disclosed that LGBTQ+ members were able to express freely their religious beliefs. As seen in Table 10, the highest mean is under item 2 “Freedom to attend religious activities and services” with a mean of 3.90 (SD=1.100) and it is verbally interpreted as evident. Followed by item 4 “Dedication and commitment in the performance with sincerity of intentions in the practice of good faith but are not appreciate” with a mean of 3.13 (SD=1.241), and item 5 “Discrimination in the practice of faith/ religion” with a mean of 2.63 (SD=1.248), both were interpreted as moderately evident. However, the lowest mean is under item 3 “Experienced being reprimanded by the church leader when he noticed being a member of an LGBTQ+ member” with a mean of 2.52 (SD=1.186), and item 1 “Reprimanded not to attend church services” with a mean of 2.48 (SD=1.295), both items were interpreted as rarely evident.

The result implies that LGBTQ+ members in Lucban, Quezon were able to freely express their religious beliefs. They were able to actively participate in any religious activities organized by a religious group. Although, the LGBTQ+ members live openly and they have the freedom to express their beliefs and they can freely associate in any religious groups, somehow, they were experienced discrimination inside their church. Furthermore, there were being discriminated against by the church because of religious teaching. Although, religious freedom is enshrined in the Philippine constitutions the LGBTQ+ members sometimes can’t avoid being discriminated against because of their gender preference. According to Rotosky et. al (200&), religion may sometimes be a source of support. However, religion may also be a source of distress if religious beliefs are irreconcilable with one’s sexual identity (Ream et. al, 2005). Moreover, there were LGBTQ+ reported being harassed at their places of worship (Higa et. al, 2015). In contrast, in the same study, LGBTQ+ shared a positive statement about



their religion statements about religion, faith, or spirituality which they experienced as a source of strength in their lives.

Sense of Empowerment Experienced by LGBTQ+ Members

Means and standard deviation were used to determine the sense of empowerment experienced by LGBTQ+ members and the results are presented in the table above.

Table 12. Sense of Empowerment Experienced by LGBTQ+ Members

Indicators	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
1. Can perform work based related skills	4.45	0.622	Highly empowered
2. Organized activities to share and showcase talents with the community.	4.42	0.619	Highly empowered
3. Given due respect and appreciation with LGBTQ+ related activities	4.57	0.621	Highly empowered
4. LGU's and NGOs providing programs, training, workshops, and services intended for the LGBTQ+ community.	4.35	0.732	Highly empowered
5. Volunteer to take active participation in community activities and projects.	4.45	0.534	Highly empowered

Overall Mean

4.45 Highly Empowered

Legend: 1.00-1.79=not all empowered, 1.80-2.59=rarely empowered, 2.60-3.39=moderately empowered, 3.40-4.19=empowered, 4.20-5.00=highly empowered

Table 12 presents the sense of empowerment experienced by LGBTQ+ members. The descriptive results are based on the overall mean of 4.45 with the verbal interpretation of *highly empowered*. As seen in table 11, the respondents were disclosed in all items that they were *highly empowered*. The highest mean is under item 3 “Given due respect and appreciation with LGBTQ+ related activities” with a mean of 4.57 (SD=0.621), followed by item 1 “Given due respect and appreciation with LGBTQ+ related activities” with a mean of 4.45 (SD=0.622) and item 5 “Volunteer to take active participation in community activities and projects” with a mean of 4.45 (SD=0.534). Then item 2 “Organized activities to share and showcase talents with the community” with a mean of 4.42 (SD=0.619), and item 4 “LGU’s and NGOs providing programs, training, workshops, and services intended for LGBTQ+ community” with a mean of 4.35 (0.732).

The result implies that LGBTQ+ members in Lucban, Quezon were highly empowered. They were highly empowered in terms of civic participation, economic, and personal empowerment. The LGBTQ+ members were highly engaged in

community activities. According to Speer (2000), indicated a high degree of empowerment participates in more community activities and more likely to have a critical awareness about how to exert power to create change in their community environment. The LGBTQ+ members received support from the LGUs, there were programs and activities intended only for them. According to Wagaman (2016), community engagement significant predictor of empowerment among LGBTQ+ members. Moreover, community-based services aimed at LGBTQ through supporting empowerment, which in turn may have positive effects on their well-being.

Relationship Between Issues and Challenges on the Sense of Empowerment Experienced by LGBTQ+ Members

This section presents the analysis of variance results the relationship between issues and challenges namely: violence, employment discrimination, housing discrimination, and religious freedom, and the sense of empowerment.

Table 13. Relationship between Issues and Challenges on the Sense of Empowerment Experienced by LGBTQ+ Members

Issues and Challenges	F-value	Critical Value	p-value	Analysis
Violence	142.241	3.921	0.000	<i>Significant</i>
Employment discrimination	98.369	3.921	0.000	<i>Significant</i>
Housing discrimination	205.297	3.921	0.000	<i>Significant</i>
Religious freedom	157.597	3.921	0.000	<i>Significant</i>



The LGBTQ+ members experienced a *moderate* level of violence in terms of rejection, criticism, or physical violence. But they feel *highly empowered* because of the respect and appreciation of their talents. Table 12 shows that there is a *significant* relationship between the violence that they experience on their sense of empowerment ($F=142.241, p=0.000$). This means that despite the violence that they moderately experience, still, they can still showcase their talents. They also believed that the programs provided to them by the LGUs and NGOs also boost their confidence-building. The support from the community and their family members makes them more empowered. The study of Wagaman (2016), indicates that there was a significant relationship between community engagement and empowerment among LGBTQ+.

Furthermore, The LGBTQ+ members experienced a *moderate* level of employment discrimination in terms of insult, ridicule, comparison between straight gender, and being terminated because of gender preference. But they feel *highly empowered* because they are being acknowledged for their contribution to the community. Their creativity and art were most appreciated in the workplace. Table 13 shows that there is a *significant* relationship between employment discrimination experienced by LGBTQ members on their sense of empowerment ($F=98.369, p=0.000$). This means that despite the employment discrimination that they moderately experience, still they can showcase their skills and ability to perform work efficiently and effectively. It is inferred that if employment discrimination would be addressed, they will be more empowered and the LGBTQ+ members will be able to showcase their talents without fear of being discriminated against.

Moreover, the LGBTQ+ members were able to attain a higher level of acceptance from their families. They never experienced being rejected, treated indifferently, embarrassed and humiliated, and abused by their family members. And because of that, they feel *highly empowered*, the support system coming from their family makes them stronger to face other issues and challenges of being an LGBTQ+. Table 12 shows that there is a *significant* relationship between housing discrimination they experienced and a sense of empowerment ($F=205.297, p=0.000$). It is inferred that greater support, understanding, and love from their family members make them more empowered.

In addition, the LGBTQ+ members experienced a *higher* level of religious freedom. They were able to freely express their religious beliefs, and attend religious activities and services. Although discrimination in the practice was moderately evident inside their church, it is still inferred that LGBTQ+ members have the freedom to express their religious beliefs. Table 12 shows that there is a *significant*

relationship between religious freedom and a sense of empowerment ($F=157.597, p=0.000$). The result implies that when LGBTQ+ members have the freedom to freely express their religious beliefs then they become more empowered. The support coming from church are factors to the LGBTQ members accepted by the society, acceptance from the church would have positive implication to them.

According to Wagaman (2016), empowerment holds potential as an approach that can impact the LGBTQ+ who face discrimination. It is then inferred, that to empower the LGBTQ+ issues and challenges regarding discrimination must be fully addressed.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded: Most of the respondents were 24 years old and the above, majority were gays and most of them were college graduates. Moreover the LGBTQ+ members in Lucban, Quezon were able to positively attained physical, emotional, and social behavior. Furthermore the respondents less experience violence, employment discrimination, and discrimination against religious freedom. And somehow never experience discrimination inside their home. Generally also showed that there was a significant relationship between issues and challenges and empowerment.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations were drawn:

1. The LGBTQ+ members might build strong connections to the community by constant communication, it is important to have support from to community to establish a safe environment. The support from the community might boost their morale that will create more positive behavior.
2. The Local Government Unit may formulate projects and collaboration with LGBTQ+ group in Lucban to further educate people in contributions to the community thru projects and programs which can change the norms, beliefs, and behavior of individual in the community that will lead to the eradication of violence against LGBTQ+ members.
3. The family members may develop deeper relationships and support to eliminate or lessen depression and become better family members.
4. The Local Government Unit (LGU) may come up with a resolution that will support to create a positive effect to boost their (LGBTQ+ members) morale thereby making them more empowered.



REFERENCES

Published Materials

1. (IGLHRC), I. G. (2012). *COALITION REPORT. Human Rights Violations on the Basis of Sexual Orientation*, 2.
2. *Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Idaho*. (2017, September). Retrieved September 2017, from UCLA: <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publication/s/discrim-sogi-id/>
3. Alyssa N. Rockenbach, R. E. (2016, January 8). *Faith and LGBTQ Inclusion: Navigating the Complexities of the Campus Spiritual Climate in Christian Higher Education*. Retrieved January 8, 2016, from Taylor Francis online : <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15363759.2015.1106355>
4. America, B. &. (2020, June 6). *How to be an Ally and Supporter to LGBTQ+ Youth in your life*. Retrieved June 6, 2020, from BCGA.ORG: <https://www.bgca.org/news-stories/2020/June/How-to-be-an-Ally-and-Supporter-to-LGBTQ-Youth-in-your-life>
5. Angeles, B. (2017, March 22). *Can we get better at forgetting?* Philippine Daily Inquirer. <https://www.pdtimes.com/2019/03/22/LGBTQ/memory-empowerment-psychology.html>
6. Harlan, C. (2013, April 2). *North Korea vows to restart shuttered nuclear reactor that can make*
7. Bateman, J. (2019, June 17). *Empower LGBTQ Youth Through Inclusive Practices*. Retrieved June 17, 2019, from bgca.org: <https://www.bgca.org/news-stories/2019/June/Empower-LGBTQ-Youth-Through-Inclusive-Practices>
8. Benjamin A. Everly, J. L. (2014, October 9). *Predictors of the Adoption of LGBT- Friendly HR Policies*. Retrieved October 9, 2014, from Wiley Online Library: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/hrm.21622>
9. Benjamin A. Everly, J. L. (2014, October 9). *Predictors of the Adoption of LGBT- Friendly HR Policies*. Retrieved October 9, 2014, from Wiley Online Library: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/hrm.21622>
10. Bromseth, A. S. (2019, March 26). *Journal Sage Pub* . Retrieved March 26, 2019, from Sage Journal : <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0091415019836923>
11. Cara Zajac, K. C. (2020, August 6). *Empowerment through Accessibility: Community Needs Assessment Data for LGBTQ Communities*. Retrieved August 6, 2020, from Taylor FrancisOnline : <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/19371918.2020.1798322?tab=permissions&scroll=top>
12. Coston, b. (2017, august 29). *Power and Inequality: Intimate Partner Violence Against Bisexual and Non-Monosexual Women in the United States*. Retrieved august 29, 2017, from [sagejournal](https://www.sagepub.com/sagejournal) : <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0886260607307307>
13. Diane K. Levy, D. W. (2017, June). *A Paired-Testing Pilot Study of Housing Discrimination against Same-Sex Couples and Transgender Individuals*. Retrieved June 2017, from Urban.org: http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/91486/hds_igt_final_report_3.pdf
14. Edgbaston. (2017, February 9). *The Importance of FoRB in International Law*. Retrieved February 9, 2017, from birmingham.ac.uk: <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/ptr/departments/theologyandreligion/research/ciforb/news/2017/forb-in-international-law.aspx>
15. Emily Kazyak, K. S. (2018, February 28). *Logics of Freedom: Debating Religious Freedom Laws and Gay and Lesbian Rights*. Retrieved February 28, 2018, from sage journals: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2378023118760413>
16. Eric D. Olson, H.). (2018, december 6). *The Impact of Religious Freedom Laws on Destination Image* . Retrieved december 6, 2018, from sagejournals : <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1938965518815659?journalCode=cqxb>
17. Everly, S. (2014, october 9). *Predictors of the Adoption of LGBT- Friendly HR Policies*. Retrieved october 9, 2014, from Wiley : <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/hrm>
18. Elianido, C.A., R.R. Aduradola and S.O. Amao (2012). *The effect of empowerment theory in LGBTQ+*. *Global Journal of Human Social Science Arts & Humanities* 12(14): 45-52
19. Gaithersburg, M. (n.d.). *Behavioral Health*. Retrieved from All day Medical clinic: <https://www.alldaymedicalcare.com/contents/general-service/about-behavioral-health>
20. Hasenbush, A. M. (2014, May). *Employment Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Idaho*. Retrieved from eScholarship: <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4sv5c8c0>
21. Huerta, C. I. (2015, March 9). *Taylor & Francis Online*. Retrieved July 16, 2015, from *A Journal of Feminist Geography*: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0966369X.2015.1058755>
22. Ipek Gocmen, V. ., (2016, November 8). *Exploring Perceived Discrimination Among LGBT Individuals in Turkey in Education, Employment, and Health Care: Results of an Online Survey*. Retrieved November 8, 2016, from Taylor francis online : <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00918369.2016.1236598>
23. Jackson, S., & Løber, L. (2020). *The big picture/Academic writing: The one-hour guide (3rd digital ed.)*. Hans Reitzel Forlag. <https://thebigpicture-academicwriting.digi.hansreitzel.dk/>



24. Jen Gilbert, J. F. (2018). *Intimate Possibilities: The Beyond Bullying Project and Stories of LGBTQ Sexuality and Gender in US Schools*. Retrieved 2018, from Meridian Allenpress: <https://meridian.allenpress.com/her/article-abstract/88/2/163/32224/Intimate-Possibilities-The-Beyond-Bullying-Project?redirectedFrom=fulltext>
25. Jenni Kerppola, N. H. (2014, June 24). *Parental empowerment—Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or queer parents' perceptions of maternity and child healthcare*. Retrieved June 24, 2014, from wiley online library : <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/jn.12755>
26. John Corvino, R. T. (2017, July). *Cambridge Core*. Retrieved July 2017, from Cambridge.org: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-law-and-religion/article/debating-religious-liberty-and-discrimination-by-john-corvino-ryan-t-anderson-and-sherif-girgis-new-york-oxford-university-press-2017-pp-352-2196-paper-isbn-9780190603076/026CB74F>
27. Joseph Daniels, H. S. (2019, January 31). *Rural school experiences of South African gay and transgender youth*. Retrieved March 05, 2019, from Taylor & Francis Online: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/19361653.2019.1578323>
28. Julie M. Woulfe, L. A. (2018, March 11). *Identity Abuse as a Tactic of Violence in LGBTQ Communities: Initial Validation of the Identity Abuse Measure*. Retrieved March 11, 2018, from Sage Journal: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0886260518760018>
29. Karen I Fredriksen Goldsen, S. J. (2019). *PubMed.gov*. Retrieved 2019, from National Library Of Medicine: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30826811/>
30. Kum, S. (2017, June 8). *Gay, gray, black, and blue: An examination of some of the challenges faced by older LGBTQ people of color*. Retrieved June 8, 2017, from Taylor Francis Online : <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/19359705.2017.1320742>
31. Langenderfer-Magruder, L. M. (n.d.). *Sexual Victimization and Subsequent Police Reporting by Gender Identity Among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Adults*. Retrieved from connect springer : <https://connect.springerpub.com/content/sgrvv/31/>
32. Legal, P. (2021, March 20). *LGBT Workplace Discrimination: Updated 2021*. Retrieved March 20, 2021, from Pride Legal: <https://pridelegal.com/lgbt-workplace-discrimination/>
33. Lindsey Wilkinson, J. P. (2018). *Educational attainment of transgender adults: Does the timing of transgender identity milestones matter?* Retrieved 2018, from Science Direct: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0049089X16308468>
34. Mero, L. M. (2019). *The LGBTQ behaviour of prejudice: From attitudes to social action* (2nd ed.). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000168-000>
35. McKay, T., Misra, S., & Lindquist, C. (2017). *Violence and LGBTQ+ Communities What Do We Know, and What Do We Need to Know?* Retrieved 2017, from center for victim research repository: https://www.rti.org/sites/default/files/rti_violence_and_lgbtq_communities.pdf
36. Mollie V. Blackburn, C. T. (2015, February 17). *Examining Queer Elements and Ideologies in LGBT-Themed Literature: What Queer Literature Can Offer Young Adult Readers*. Retrieved February 17, 2015, from Sage Journal: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1086296X15568930>
37. Petra E., B. (2017, October 4). *We're never far from where we were*. Retrieved October 4, 2017, from brewminate: <https://brewminate.com/religious-exemptions-and-discrimination-against-lgbtq-people/>
38. *Sexual Assault and the LGBTQ Community*. (n.d.). Retrieved from Human Rights Campaign: <https://www.hrc.org/resources/sexual-assault-and-the-lgbt-community>
39. *Sexual Orientation Discrimination*. (n.d.). Retrieved from Workplace fairness: <https://www.workplacefairness.org/sexual-orientation-discrimination>
40. Shervin Assari, M. (2019, August 14). *Educational Attainment and Subjective Health and Well-Being; Diminished Returns of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Individuals*. Retrieved August 22, 2019, from MDPI: <https://www.mdpi.com/2076-328X/9/9/90>
41. Student, J. K. (2019, June 24). *arental empowerment—Lesbian, parental empowerment , gay, bisexual, trans or queer parents' perceptions of maternity and child healthcare*. Retrieved June 24, 2019, from /onlinelibrary.wiley: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/i/j>
42. Tasseli McKay, S. M. (2017, March). *Violence and LGBTQ+ Communities*. Retrieved March 2017, from Rti: https://www.rti.org/sites/default/files/rti_violence_and_lgbtq_communities.pdf
43. UNICEF .(2016) *International Journal for LGBTQ's behavior, international peer reviewed journal, ISSN 20409-693*.
44. Wagaman, M. A. (2016, January 21). *Promoting Empowerment Among LGBTQ Youth: A Social Justice Youth Development Approach*. Retrieved January 21, 2016, from Springer Link: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10560-016-0435-7>

WEBSITES

1. *Child Adolescent Soc Work J* (2016). 33:395–405 DOI 10.1007/s10560-016-0435-7



2. *Pew Research Center (2013). A Survey of LGBT Americans. <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2013/06/13/a-survey-of-lgbt-americans/>*
3. *UNICEF (2017). International Journal for LGBTQ+ behaviour. blogs.www.unicef.org/evidence-for-action/what-is-gender-socialization-and-why-does-it-matter/*
4. *Center for Social Work Gender (2018). Version 2 Implications of Empowerment Theory. www.cram.com/website/Implications-Of-The-Empowerment-Theory-For-Social/*