Journeying With Pride: A Quantitative Study on the Challenges Faced by LGBTQ College Students of Notre Dame of Midsayap College

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ABSTRACT

This research centers on exploring the challenges faced by LGBTQ college students, employing a causal-comparative research design. The study aims to describe these challenges and investigate potential significant differences based on factors such as sex, sexual identity, and sexual orientation. The primary objectives include identifying and understanding challenges encountered by LGBTQ college students, examining variations in challenges concerning sex, sexual identity, and sexual orientation, and providing insights into the experiences of this demographic. The research is guided by a causal-comparative framework, aiming to unveil causal relationships between variables and shed light on differences in challenges faced by LGBTQ students. Utilizing a causal-comparative approach, this study systematically examines and compares challenges experienced by LGBTQ college students, aiming to derive meaningful insights into their diverse experiences. The study focuses on 30 LGBTQ students enrolled at Notre Dame of Midsayap College during the second semester of the A.Y. 2022-2023. The site selection is deliberate, aiming to capture a specific demographic within a defined educational context. In the context of stigmatization and unique challenges faced by LGBTQ individuals, snowball sampling can be more appropriate, allowing for more organic and connected approach in reaching respondence. The sample size of 30 was deemed sufficient to provide meaningful insights into the challenges faced by this demographic. The collected data was analyzed to discern patterns and variations in challenges experienced by LGBTQ students, with a focus on sex, sexual identity, and sexual orientation as potential differentiators. Majority of respondents were 20 years old or younger, predominantly male, with females having a significant presence in terms of sexual identity. Challenges included mental health, prejudice, victimization, discrimination, harassment, and self-identity. Males experienced higher levels of challenges, and transgender individuals, as well as bisexuals, faced heightened difficulties based on sexual identity and orientation. The research concludes by summarizing key findings, emphasizing the distinctive challenges faced by LGBTQ college students, and highlighting areas for further investigation and support. This study contributes valuable insights into the nuanced challenges confronted by LGBTQ college students, offering a foundation for future research and advocating for targeted support initiatives within educational institutions.

Keywords: Sexual-identity, sexual orientation, self-identity, mental health, harassment, discrimination, prejudice and victimization.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

LGBTQ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or sometimes questioning). The first four letters of the acronym have been used since the 1990s. However, in recent years there has been an increased awareness of the need to be inclusive of other sexual identities to offer better representation. The acronym represents a diverse range of sexualities and gender identities, referring to anyone transgender and same/similar gender attracted. Other acronym variations include LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (Cherry, 2022).

The lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community is a thriving and diverse group offering unique perspectives and experiences. The LGBTQ community has significantly contributed to society, from fighting for equal rights and acceptance to celebrating their identities and expressing their talents. Their ability to persevere in the face of difficulty is an example to us all, and their steadfast dedication to leading real lives proves the value of self-expression. As humans, working together is vital to build a society where everyone can feel safe and accepted for who they are. The LGBTQ community has been making significant contributions to the development of society (Tuan, 2020).

Discrimination has become too prevalent in schools and has severely affected students' mental health and behavior. Schools can be challenging environments for students, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, but they are often especially unwelcoming for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (Tuan, 2020).

Research conducted in California schools examines the relationship between students' sexual orientation, gender identity, experiences of bullying and harassment, emotional well-being, and school climate. The study supports to this finding, it has been found that the lack of solid school support and increased exposure to violence and harassment contributes to disparities in mental health, school engagement, and academic performance when compared to non-LGBTQ peers (Hanson et al., 2019). Similarly, in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, there is limited research on the community's and students' awareness, attitudes, and behaviors toward the LGBTQ community. Universities and social organizations must strengthen communication activities and foster a culture of gender equality in schools to improve student attitudes toward the LGBTQ community (Pham, 2020). This study provides a comparative context for understanding disparities in mental health, school engagement, and academic performance among LGBTQ individuals. It highlights the impact of inadequate school support and increased exposure to violence. If your study focuses on the challenges faced by the LGBTQ community in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, and aims to assess awareness, attitudes, and behaviors, this existing research suggests the importance of addressing these issues through strengthened communication activities and a culture of gender equality in educational institutions.

A survey of available literature indicates a gap in studies investigating the phenomenon in the stud area, particularly at Notre dame of Midsayap College, regarding discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation and gender identity. They are, moreover, employing causal-comparative research design The six variables: Self- identity, mental health, harassment, discrimination, prejudice, and victimization.

Research Question

The research objectives are:

1. What is the individual respondents' profile in terms of age, sex, sexual identity, and sexual orientation?

2. What are the challenges faced by the respondents with respect to self-identity, mental health, harassment, discrimination, pre judice, and victimization?

3. Is there a significant difference in the challenges faced by the respondents when they are grouped according to sex, sexual identity and sexual orientation?

health care.

Hypothesis

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the challenges faced by the respondents when grouped according to sex.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the challenges faced by the respondents when grouped according to their sexual identities.

Ho3: There is no significant difference in the challenges faced by the respondents when grouped according to their sexual orientations.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was formed by Microaggression Theory in 1970 by Harvard psychiatrist Chester Pierce as cited by Barger et al., (2020.) Microaggression Theory (Sue, 2010) is a model of framing contemporary discrimination. Microaggression was first introduced in the 1970s and defined as "subtle, stunning, often automatic, and non-verbal exchanges which are 'put downs" (Pierce et al., 1978). Microaggression theory also has similar tenets as concepts specific to LGBTQ communities, including sexual prejudice (Herek, 2000), antigay harassment (Burn et al., 2005), and sexual stigma (Herek, 2007).

Three forms of microaggressions are perpetuated based on an individual's LGBTQ status: a) Micro assaults (i.e., overt verbal or nonverbal insults targeting one's sexual and gender identity; e.g., using heterosexist slurs or telling homonegative jokes); (b)Microinsults (i.e., verbal or behavioral expressions which serve to demean a person's LGBTQ identity; e.g., a heterosexual individual who displays discomfort or disapproval with LGB public displays of affection); and (c) Microinvalidations (i.e., negations of the personal experiences of sexual and gender minority persons without an explicit intention to harm; e.g., minimizing LGB persons' perceptions of discrimination; Nadal et al., 2011). Accordingly, a comprehensive review of microaggression studies focusing on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability status, religion, and other identities could contribute significantly to microaggression theory.

Microaggression against LGBTQ people can come in various forms, such as social stigma, hate crimes, and legal discrimination. Understanding the difficulties faced by members of LGBTQ communities and other oppressed groups can be done using the idea of microaggression. Everyone may fight to create a more just and equitable society for all by acknowledging and challenging structural forms of prejudice and discrimination.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nature of LGBTQ

According to Kevin Le (2022), the LGBTQ acronym describes a person's sexual orientation or gender identity. Sexual orientation refers to a person's physical, emotional, and romantic attraction to another person, such as straight, gay, lesbian, or bisexual. Gender identity describes a person's internal sense of being female, male, or someone outside of that gender binary. It is important to note that gender identity is

not determined by Sex assigned at birth and that Sex and gender are not the same. As the world becomes more inclusive of people's sexual orientation and gender identity, the letters within the LGBTQ acronym have similarly evolved.

Sexual Identity

The biological Sex with which a person identifies or is identified: see also gender identity. 2. (Sexual Orientation) an individual's sexual preference or orientation as heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual as part of their sense of identity. Oxford University Press (2023)

Transgender (Male-Female)

According to Florian Kurth et al., (2022), transgender people report discomfort with their birth sex and a strong identification with the opposite Sex. Transgender women are assigned male at birth but identify as female; transgender men are assigned female at birth but identify as male.

Transgender (Female-Male)

American Psychological Association (APA). 2023 stated that people who were assigned female but identify and live as male and alter or wish to alter their bodies through medical intervention to more closely resemble their gender identity are known as transsexual men or transmen (female-to-male or FTM).

Transgender Who do not identify with either Sex

According to Pew Research Center (2022). Stated that the way nonbinary people conceptualize their gender varies. Some said they feel like both a man and a woman – and how much they feel like they are one or the other may change depending on the day or the circumstance. Others said they do not feel like they are either a man or a woman or that they do not have a gender at all. Some, but not all, also identified with the term transgender.

Gender fluid(s)

According to (Klein, 2022) argued that the term' gender fluidity' has come to best describe the way some people feel they fit outside the gender binary. The term acknowledges that gender does not have to be fixed and de-emphasizes the need to align oneself with a specific gender – a concept more and more people are moving away from as conversations about alternate ways to express and experience gender proliferate.

Sexual Orientation

According to (Cook, 2020), Sexual Orientation refers to the predominant focus of sexual attraction. Sexual orientation is usually construed as an attraction to the same or opposite sex, or either/both, and thus as homosexual, heterosexual, or bisexual. An alternative approach is to construe sexual orientation in terms of attraction to male or female, thus as androphilic or gynephilic, respectively, without reference to the sex/gender of the person experiencing the attraction. In some ways, as will become apparent, this is a scientifically preferable approach.

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have similarly evolved.

Lesbian

(The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2023) describes a woman who is emotionally and physically attracted to other women. A woman does not need a specific sexual experience – or any sexual experience – to identify as lesbian.

Gay

It is emotionally or sexually attracted to people of the opposite sex or gender (The term is most often used for a man who is emotionally or sexually attracted to men). (MyHealth.Alberta.ca 2023)

Bisexual

Describes a person who is attracted to both men and women. A person does not need to have had specific sexual experiences- any sexual experience – to identify as bisexual. (The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2023)

Transgender

An identity label describes a person whose gender identity does not align with the socially expected one according to their Sex assigned at birth.

Queer

People whose sexual orientation is exclusively heterosexual or straight. (Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center, Inc 2023)

Asexual

(The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2023) describes a person who is not sexually attracted to others and has no desire to engage in sexual behavior.

Heterosexual or Straight

According to Gabriela Pichardo, MD (2023), heterosexual people are sexually or romantically attracted to people of the opposite sex. Heterosexual men are sexually or romantically attracted to women, and heterosexual women are sexually or romantically attracted to men.

Challenges Faced by LGBTQ

Self-Identity or Self-focused Challenges

According to Tang X and Poudel (2018), participants stated that Filipinos have been strongly influenced by religion and culture. The parents' generation or also known as older generation seems to find it hard to accept LGBTQ and sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression (SOGIE) knowledge. Some LGBTQ students were even kicked out by their families and had to live in shelters. As for friends, some people will judge. LGBTQ students and isolate them if they reveal their gender identity. That makes LGBTQ people feel more scared to come out to the public, and it is also the leading cause of mental illness. LGBTQ youth from highly rejecting families are over eight times as likely to have attempted suicide as LGBTQ peers who reported no or low levels of family rejection ADAA (2023).

Pediatricians may emphasize the importance and support for LGBTQ children, as family dynamics

significantly influence their overall health. Pediatricians can help their patients by educating parents and caregivers with LGBTQ children about the critical role of family support –both those who see themselves as accepting and those who believe that being gay or transgender is wrong and are struggling with parenting a child who identifies as LGBTQ or who is gender diverse. In general, LGBTQ adolescents and young adults have higher levels of depression, suicide attempts, and substance use than their heterosexual peers. However, a critical protective factor is family acceptance and support (Shauna, 2021).

Mental Health

Gomez-Dumpit (2018), the Focal Commissioner for Women and LGBTQ, stated that the LGBTQ community suffers from various forms of discrimination in Philippine society, ranging from stereotyping and unfair treatment to harassment and sexual assault that sometimes leads to the loss of lives. While the Philippines is generally considered tolerant of members of the LGBTQ community, they continue to fight for acceptance of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression (SOGIE) by the vast majority. One major stumbling block to their full acceptance is the lack of understanding of their choice of SOGIE. Transgender people are among those who experience significant challenges in the area of acceptance. Although hiding one's identity may reduce direct targeting by bullies, it may in turn create stress through identity non-affirmation and exposure to mental distress such as depression, known indeed to be associated with transgender identity Heino, K et al., (2018). It appears that transgender youth are victims of bullying more commonly than their cisgender peers, but research has not taken into account confounding by perpetrating bullying or mental health factors Day et al., (2018); Gower et al., (2018); Eisenberg et al., (2019; Johns et al., (2019; McKay et al., (2019; Bishop et al., (2020); Lowry et al., (2020).

LGBTQ youth are particularly at risk for mental health disorders because they face many adversities, including bullying, difficulty coming out to friends and family members, hate crimes, lack of support, and fear of stigma and discrimination. LGBTQ teens are six times more likely to experience symptoms of depression than their heterosexual counterparts. LGBTQ youth are also four times more likely to attempt suicide, have suicidal ideations, or self-harm than straight youth ADAA (2023).

Harassment

In the study of (Whitfield, Kattari S, Langenderfer, Walls, & Ramos 2019), Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer (LGBQ) cisgender individuals are more likely to experience harassment based on their sexual orientation. Whereas some forms of harassment may be universally viewed as harassment (e.g., the pejorative use of the words "fag" or "dyke"), there may be differences across educational status and other variables, such as age, in how harassment is defined. Someone who has experienced some college, for example, may take a broader view of harassment, given their opportunities to learn more about the issue in classroom settings, than someone who did not have the opportunity to engage in a nuanced discussion of harassment with educators and peers. Further research is needed to explore the relationship that educational status has with experiences of harassment among LGBQ individuals.

LGBTQ experience more severe peer harassment and maltreatment than their straight counterparts Kolbe, (2020); LGBTQ people may suffer stress or lack self-confidence due to their sexuality Minturn et al., (2021). Since sexuality can be concealed from others and the marginalization of LGBTQ people may not be immediately apparent throughout most human relationships Kachanoff et al., (2020), These experiences lead to agony, distress, and anxiety and could have a detrimental effect on LGBTQ students' physical, psychological and educational well-being Mateo and Williams, (2020); Mallory et al., (2021).

Schools are often unsafe for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) students; they frequently experience negative or hostile school climates, including bullying and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Hostile school climates and discriminatory experiences can

threaten LGBTQ students' well-being Russell, J (2021). Bullying, harassment, and exclusion of LGBT people in educational institutions is a worldwide problem faced by a significant proportion of LGBTQ students. It is often driven by stigma and prejudice, rooted in deep cultural beliefs about gender roles, masculinity, and femininity. LGBTQ students face teasing, name calling and public ridicule, rumors, intimidation, pushing and hitting, stealing or damaging belongings, obscene notes and graffiti, social isolation, cyberbullying, physical and sexual assault, and even death threats. This occurs in classes, playgrounds, toilets, and changing rooms, on the way to and from school, as well as online (Borloz et al., 2019).

Bullying Based on Sexual Identity.

An abundance of research suggests that sexual minority youth report being bullied 1.5–2 times more commonly than mainstream youth Friedman et al., (2011); Abreu and Kenny (2018); Kurki-Kangas et al., (2019); McKay et al., (2019). Recent research has also begun to unveil disparities in bullying involvement between gender minority and cisgender youth, particularly regarding disparities in being bullied. US-based research indicates that transgender youth, in school samples, are bullied more often than their cisgender peers Day et al., (2018); Eisenberg et al., (2019; Johns et al., (2019) and Bishop et al.,(2020). Transgender youth have been reported to more commonly experience bullying related to gender or sexual orientation Day et al., (2018) and bullying related to weight and size (Bishop et al., 2020).

Beusekom et al., (2020) likewise found that gender nonconformity was associated with general victimization and homophobic name-calling and that the associations were stronger among males. Further, among transgender youth, those who perceived themselves as gender non-conforming were bullied more frequently than those transgender youth who perceived themselves as gender-conforming, and also, within a transgender sample, the association between gender nonconformity and experiences of being bullied was particularly strong among birth-assigned boys Gower et al. (2018).

Bullying based on Sexual Orientation.

The Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (SDA) makes it unlawful to treat people less favorably than others in a similar situation because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or intersex status. Sexual orientation, gender identity, and intersex status discrimination. In Bostock v. Clayton County, Georgia (S. Ct. June 15, 2020), the Supreme Court held that firing individuals because of their sexual orientation or transgender status violates Title VII's prohibition on discrimination because of Sex. The Court reached its holding by focusing on the plain text of Title VII. The law forbids sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination when it comes to any aspect of employment, including hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoff, training, fringe benefits, and any other term or condition of employment. Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGIE).

Discrimination

According to Custodio (2019), Schools are supposed to be safe havens for children to learn and grow to become empowered people. However, many children responded that they felt unsafe or unsure of their safety in their schools due to experiences of bullying and because of discriminatory policies and practices of school administrators and personnel. LGBTQ children face different forms of bullying, the most prevalent of which are name-calling and verbal harassment. The children would get taunted with words like "bayot," "bakla," "badap," "tomboy" and other names. LGBTQ children also experience harassment from schoolmates. "150! 150!" is a common refrain thrown at gay and trans (girl) children, alluding to sexual services in exchange for payment of 150 PHP. Mon*, an 18-year-old gay student from Region VIII, shared how fellow students would tell him, "Badap, let us fuck [for just] 150!" Mon added, "It pains us to hear these words. Whoever hears them will judge us. One time, a teacher overheard someone telling me, 'Come

on, 150, let us do it!', and all I could do was hang my head in shame." (Custodio, 2019).

Kosciw et al., (2018) found that 91.4% of LGB middle-school and high-school students sometimes or frequently heard homophobic remarks in school, such as "faggot," "dyke," and "queer." Similar data were reported in the USA in GLSEN's National School Climate Survey; 98.5% of LGBTQ students reported having heard "gay" used in a pejorative way, and 70.1% of students were verbally harassed on their sexual orientation, and 59.1% based on gender in the past year.

Bathrooms, Schools, & other Public Accommodations (Prejudice)

The bathroom is part of the exclusion operation of cities and, as Preciado (2018) points out, it is necessary to think of the historicity of the public bathroom as a bourgeois institution responsible for the management of bodily waste, especially from the nineteenth century onwards, which emerges under conjugal and domestic codes crossed by the spatial division of gender, the normalization of heterosexuality and the pantheonization of homosexuality. "If by chance, inside a woman's bathroom that my sister or my mother is using, a man who feels like a woman or who may have taken off or put whatever he wants on enters, I do not care: I am going to beat him out of their first and then call the police" (Huffpost Brasil, 2019). As a result, São Paulo state deputy Erica Malunguinho, a trans woman, filed a lawsuit for breaking parliamentary decorum, resulting in a verbal warning against Deputy Douglas Garcia by the Legislative Assembly's Ethics Council (HuffPost Brasil, 2019).

One of the points that the AGU demands explanations for refers precisely to "the control of access to certain places open to the public (such as bathrooms, locker rooms, penitentiary establishments, and public transportation wagons)" and understands that "the control of access to certain places open to the public based on psychobiological aspects should not be characterized as an act of racism when the restriction of entry has been established in favor of protecting the privacy of vulnerable groups," assuming, therefore, that "the access to public spaces can be organized based on the psychological criterion of gender, and not on the social identity of the user" (Advocacia-Geral da União, 2020), however, also vetoes local governments to approve anti-discrimination measures for the use of bathrooms until December 1, 2020 (Barnett et al., 2018)

This is particularly alarming, given that research shows that young transgender people are exposed to much higher rates of violence in US schools' restrooms (middle and high school) than young cisgenders (Murchison et al., 2019). Among bathroom attack cases, only a small number involved transgender people, people who 21 falsely claimed to be transgender, or perpetrators who tried to disguise themselves as a member of the opposite sex to gain access to the bathroom (Barnett et al., 2018).

Victimization

According to (Mann & Bailey, 2018) Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) students are at increased risk for school victimization due to their sexual orientation and gender identity. This victimization can manifest in many ways, including bullying, harassment, and physical violence. Although research has identified the adverse outcomes associated with such victimization, less is known about the day-to-day experiences of LGBTQ students in school and the impact of these experiences on their perceptions of school safety. One form of victimization that has received relatively little attention in the literature is awkward gestures. Awkward gestures are subtle behaviors that can be difficult to define but are generally nonverbal and may include eye rolling, ignoring, or exclusion. Although these behaviors may seem innocuous, they can significantly impact the well-being of LGBTQ students. Thus, we sought to explore the experiences of LGBTQ students with awkward gestures and the impact of these experiences on their perceptions of school safety.

Cohn and Leake (2019) investigated the experiences of transgender and gender non-conforming students in

high school physical education classes. The authors found that these students often felt embarrassed and uncomfortable due to their bodies not conforming to traditional gender norms and experiencing ridicule and discriminatory treatment from their peers. Rosario et al., (2018) examined the experiences of LGBTQ adolescents and young adults in social situations. The authors found that many participants reported feeling embarrassed and self-conscious in social situations due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. This was particularly true for those who had experienced discrimination or stigma. Toomey et al., (2018) explored the impact of school climate on the mental health of LGBTQ students, including the experience of being the subject of rumors. LGBTQ students who were exposed to more rumors about themselves experienced higher levels of psychological distress, including symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Nobles et al., (2020) investigated the experiences of LGBTQ individuals on social media platforms such as Twitter and Instagram. The authors found that these individuals were often the targets of derogatory language, hate speech, and online harassment. This led to adverse mental health outcomes, such as increased anxiety and depression and feelings of social isolation. Furthermore, a study by Seelman et al., (2020) explored the relationship between social support, LGBTQ victimization, and mental health outcomes. The authors found that social support played a significant role in mitigating the adverse effects of victimization on mental health outcomes, such as depression and anxiety.

Conceptual Framework

This study assumed that the respondents experience varied forms and levels of challenges. This study likewise postulates that the variations on their challenges are caused by the differences in their sex, sexual identity and sexual orientation. These variations and differences are visualized in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Schematic Diagram of Conceptual Framework
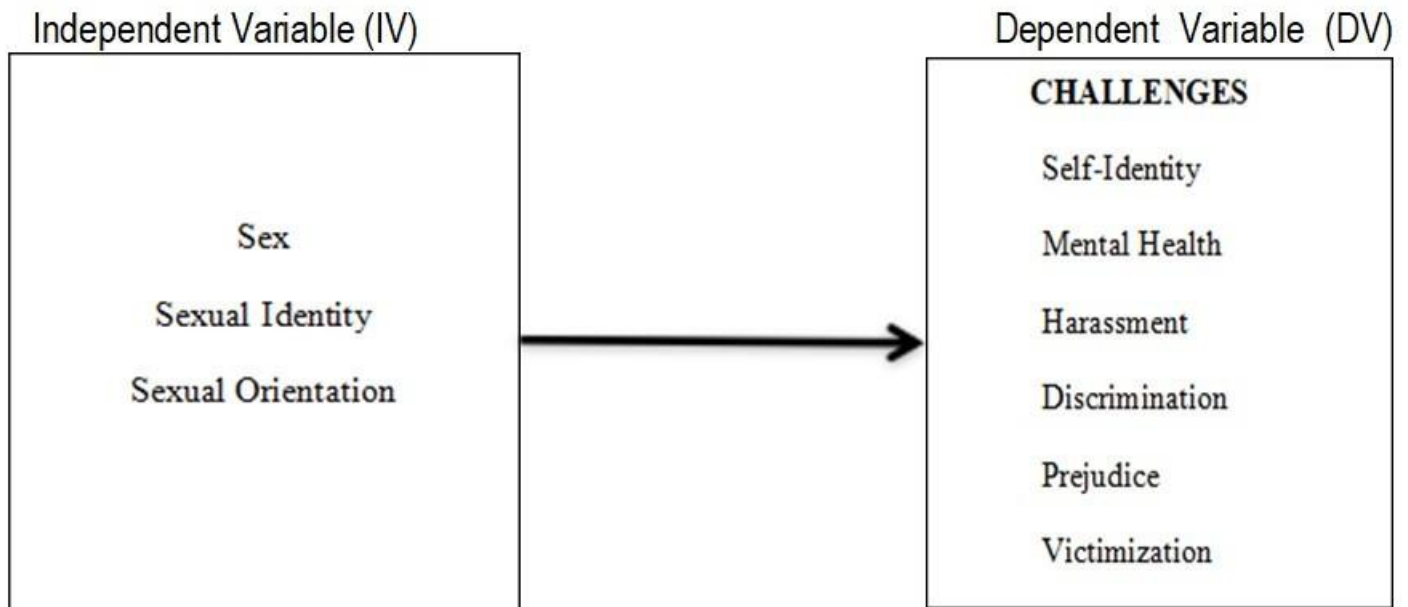
As shown in the figure 1, there are two main variables being considered; the independent variable (IV) and dependent variable (DV). The first box contains the independent variables of sex, sexual identity, and sexual orientation. The second box contains the dependent variables of self-identity, mental health, harassment, discrimination, prejudice and victimization. The arrow that points from the first box to the second box indicates that the differences on the sex, sexual identity, and sexual orientations of the respondents cause

variation on their challenges.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used the causal-comparative research design to describe the challenges faced by the LGBTQ members of Notre Dame of Midsayap College and to determine whether there is a significant difference in the difficulties experienced by the respondents when they are arranged in groups based on sex, sexual identity, and sexual orientations.

Locale and respondents of the study

The study was conducted at Notre Dame of Midsayap College, located at Poblacion 5, Quezon Avenue, Midsayap, Cotabato. This study was conducted during the second semester of 2022-2023 from January to May. The researchers chose all college students with 30 LGBTQ members as respondents for 2022–2023.

Sampling design

Snowball sampling design techniques were used to ascertain the number of respondents to the study. According to Nikolopoulou (2022), Snowball sampling is a non-probability sampling method where other units recruit new units to form part of the sample. The target population is LGBTQ students enrolled in colleges in the local area. A researcher might initially identify one LGBTQ student through various means (such as personal connections or organizations). This student then helps the researcher identify and connect with other members of the LGBTQ community, creating a snowball effect are the network expands through referrals. This method can be useful for studying marginalized or hidden population. Given the sensitive nature of the study topic, using a snowball sampling design will allow us to reach participants who may not feel comfortable openly identifying as LGBTQ. The researchers select participants who identified as the LGBTQ member from different departments out of 3394 college students at Notre Dame of Midsayap. The target sample size for this research is 30 LGBTQ college students, with 13 attendees in the pilot test and 17 participants in the final survey. In LGBTQ context, snowball sampling may be used because LGBTQ individuals may be a hidden or stigmatized population, making it challenging to identify and recruit participants through other means. Additionally, this study will examine the experiences of LGBTQ students in college, precisely their sense of belonging and the amount of judgment they experience from others. It will allow for a diverse and representative sample of LGBTQ students to be included in the study, enhancing the validity of the results.

Instrumentation

This study used of a researcher-made questionnaire. This questionnaire is composed of two major parts. Part I requested the personal profile of respondents about their program and year level, age, sex assigned at birth, sexual identity, and sexual orientation. Otherwise, Part II listed the different challenges faced by LGBTQ students, with six items for self-identity, six items for mental health, 6 for harassment, 7 for discrimination, six items for prejudice, and 5 for victimization.

The questionnaire thus constructed consisted of a basic set of structured questions to be answered by the respondents. The responses of the respondents of Part were six items for self-identity, six items for mental health, 6 for harassment, 7 for discrimination, six items for prejudice, and 5 for victimization. And expressed in terms of the 5-point Likert scale and description as follows: 1 means "Never, "2 means "Seldom, "three means "Sometimes, "four means "often, "and five means "Always. "

Statistical Tools and Treatment of Data

The data collected in this research were treated as numerical data. They were presented, analyzed, and interpreted by applying the following statistical tools: frequency and percentage distribution for problem number one; mean and standard deviation for problem number two.

Furthermore, the dataset related to issue number two underwent transformation into meaningful results through the utilization of the subsequent descriptions and interpretations:

	Range	Descriptions
1	1.00 to <1.80	Never
2	1.80 to <2.60	Seldom
3	2.60 to <3.40	Sometimes
4	3.40 to <4.20	Oftentimes
5	4.20 to 5.00	Always

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 presents the frequency (f) and percentage (%) distribution of the respondents according to sex and age.

Table 1

Profile of the respondents

Characteristics		f	%
Age	20 years old and below	16	53.3
	21-22 years-old	12	40
	23-24 years old	2	6.7
	Total	30	100
Sex	Male	19	63.3
	Female	11	36.7
	Total	30	100
Sexual Identity	Male	6	20
	Female	12	40
	Transgender (male-to-female)	1	3.3
	Transgender (female-to-male)	1	3.3
	Transgender (do not identify exclusively male or female)	1	3.3
	Gender fluid(s)	9	30.3
	Total	30	100
Sexual Orientation	Lesbian	3	10
	Gay	14	46.7
	Bisexual	12	13.3

	Transgender	0	0
	Queer	1	3.3
	Total	30	10

Age Respondent

Table 1 shows that the most significant number (*f*=16 or 53.3) of the respondents are 20 years old: and a small number (*f*=2 or 6.7%) of them are 23 to 24 years old.

Sex of Respondents

Table 1 shows most (*f*=19 or 63.3%) of the respondents are male while a small number (*f*=11 or 36.67%) of them are female.

Sexual Identity

Table 1 shows most (*f*=12 or 40.0%) of the respondents are female. A small number (*f*=1 or 3.3%) of them are "Transgender (from male to female)" Transgender (from female to male)" and "Transgender (do not identify as exclusively male or female)".

Sexual Orientation

Table 1 show that the greatest number (*f*=14 or 46.7%) the respondent is "I am a man attracted to a man (gay)" while a small number (*f*=1 or 3.3%) of them are "I am a man attracted to a man at one time or woman at another time (Queer).

Challenges faced by LGBTQ

Tables 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 present the Challenges faced by LGBTQ by the respondents with respect to Self-Identity, Mental Health, Harassment, Discrimination, Prejudice and Victimization.

Table 2

Self-Identity or Self-Focused Challenges

Statement	Mean	Sd	Description
1. I keep my gender identity a secret from my father.	4.07	1.285	Oftentimes.
2. I keep my gender identity a secret from my mother.	2.93	1.66	Sometimes
3. I keep my gender identity a secret from my sister	2.23	1.654	Seldom
4. I keep my gender identity a secret from my sister	3.23	1.755	Sometimes
5. I keep my gender identity a secret from my friends.	2.6	1.567	Sometimes
6. I keep my gender identity a secret from my relatives.	3.7	1.368	Oftentimes
Overall Mean	3.12	1.54	Sometimes

Scale	Range	Descriptions
1	1.00 to <1.80	Never
2	1.80 to <2.60	Seldom

3	2.60 to <3.40	Sometimes
4	3.40 to <4.20	Oftentimes
5	4.20 to 5.00	Always

Table 2 shows that the Sometimes (OM=3.12) refers to the challenges faced by the LGBTQ in terms of Self-Identity. Moreover, they signified their highest rating on the items " I keep my gender identity a secret from my father" (M=4.07); while they signified their lower ratings on the item "I keep my gender identity a secret from sister" (M= 2.23)

Table 3

Mental Health

Statement	Mean	Sd	Description
1. I feel isolated in the classroom.	3.57	0.858	Oftentimes
2. I am struggling for acceptance from others	3.67	0.844	Oftentimes
3. I do not find joy in doing things those others enjoy.	3.43	0.774	Oftentimes.
4. I am likely to indulge into drinking alcoholic drinks.	3.4	0.814	Oftentimes
5. I am afraid and/or worried about my life in the future.	3.73	0.98	Oftentimes
6. I could not express my feeling to the person whom I am attracted with.	3.73	0.944	Oftentimes
Overall Mean	3.58	0.86	Oftentimes

Scale	Range	Descriptions
1	1.00 to <1.80	Never
2	1.80 to <2.60	Seldom
3	2.60 to <3.40	Sometimes
4	3.40 to <4.20	Oftentimes
5	4.20 to 5.00	Always

Table 3 shows that the respondent Oftentimes (OM=3.12) refers to the challenges faced by the LGBTQ in terms of their Mental health. Moreover, they signified a new highest rating on the items *"I am afraid and or worried about my life in the future"*. (M =3.73) *"I could not express my feelings to the person whom I am attracted with*." (M =3.73); while they signified their lower ratings on the item *"I am likely to indulge into drinking alcoholic drinks"* (M=3.40).

Table 4

Harassment

Statement	Mean	Sd	Description
1. I receive insulting remarks from others.	3.47	106	sOftentimes
2. I am physically attacked by somebody.	2.9	1.03	Sometimes
3. I receive sexual assault from somebody.	3.13	0.86	Sometimes
4. I receive threatening remarks from others.	3.23	0.898	Sometimes
5. I receive offensive comments from others.	3.53	1.04	Oftentimes

6. I am requested by somebody give him or her sexual favor.	3.27	0.98	Sometimes
Overall Mean		3.255	0.98	Sometimes

Scale	Range	Descriptions
1	1.00 to <1.80	Never
2	1.80 to <2.60	Seldom
3	2.60 to <3.40	Sometimes
4	3.40 to <4.20	Oftentimes
5	4.20 to 5.00	Always

Table 4 shows that the respondent <u>Sometimes</u> (OM=3.26) refers to the challenges faced by the LGBTQ in terms of harassment. Moreover, they signified their highest ratings on the items "*I receive offensive comments from others*" (M=3.53); while they signified their lower ratings on the item. '' *I am physically attacked by somebody*" (M=2.90).

Table 5

Discrimination

Statement	Mean	Sd	Description
1. I receive unfair treatment from others.	3.67	1.06	Oftentimes
2. I am avoided by another person or persons.	3.43	0.935	Oftentimes
3. I am denied of the services available to other students.	3.33	0.711	Sometimes
4. I am excluded from joining an organization/association.	3.3	1.09	Sometimes
5. I am withheld of the privileges available to other students.	3.37	0.615	Sometimes
6. I am imposed additional academic requirements without valid reason	3.17	0.699	Sometimes
Overall Mean	3.37	0.95	Sometimes

Scale	Range	Descriptions
1	1.00 to <1.80	Never
2	1.80 to <2.60	Seldom
3	2.60 to <3.40	Sometimes
4	3.40 to <4.20	Oftentimes
5	4.20 to 5.00	Always

Table 5 shows that the despondent <u>Sometimes</u> (OM=3.37) refers to the challenges faced by the LGBTQ in terms of discrimination. Moreover, they signified their highest ratings on the items. '' *I receive unfair treatment from others*" (M=3.67); while they signified their lower ratings on the item '' *I am imposed*

additional academic requirements without valid reason." (M=3.17).

Table 6

Prejudice

Statement	Mean	Sd	Description
25. I am assessed of my skills based on my gender identity.	3.83	0.95	Oftentimes
26. I am judged of my attitude based on my gender identity.	3.6	0.894	Oftentimes
27. I am judged of my personality based on my gender identity.	3.33	0.922	Oftentimes
28. I am judged of my mental capacity based on my gender identity	3.47	0.973	Oftentimes
29. I am evaluated of my physical ability based on my my gender identity.	3.57	0.104	Oftentimes
30. I am evaluated of my worth /significance based on my gender identity.	3.63	0.718	Oftentimes
Overall Mean	3.57	0.91	Oftentimes

Scale	Range	Descriptions
1	1.00 to <1.80	Never
2	1.80 to <2.60	Seldom
3	2.60 to <3.40	Sometimes
4	3.40 to <4.20	Oftentimes
5	4.20 to 5.00	Always

Table 6 shows that the respondent Oftentimes (OM=3.57) refers to the challenges faced by the LGBTQ in terms of prejudice. Moreover, they signified their highest rating on the items *"I am assessed of my skill*s (M=3.83); while they signified their lower ratings on the item *"I am judged of my personality based on my gender identity"* (M=3.33).

Table 7

Victimization

Statement	Mean	Sd	Description
31. I am displayed awkward gesture by somebody.	3.67	0.959	Oftentimes
32. I am being or others in public.	3.37	0.103	Sometimes
33. I am made a laughingstock or image in the social media.	3.27	0.907	Sometimes
34. I am embarrassed by a person in the presence of others.	3.6	1.04	Oftentimes
35. I am made the subject of rumors around the school campus.	3.3	1.09	Sometimes
Overall Mean	3.44	1.0048	Oftentimes

Scale	Range	Descriptions
1	1.00 to <1.80	Never
2	1.80 to <2.60	Seldom
3	2.60 to <3.40	Sometimes
4	3.40 to <4.20	Oftentimes
5	4.20 to 5.00	Always

Table 7 shows that the respondent <u>Oftentimes</u> (MO=3.44) refers to the challenges faced by the LGBTQ in terms of victimization. Moreover, they signified their highest rating on the items. *"I am displayed awkward gesture by somebody* (M=3.67); while they signified their lower ratings on the item ˮ *I am made to a laughingstock or image in the social media" (*M=3.27).

Difference on the Challenges of Respondents

The differences in the challenges of the respondents when they are grouped according to sex, sexual identity and sexual orientation are depicted on Tables 8,9, and 10.

Table 8

Difference on the Challenges of Respondents when Grouped According to Sex

Groups	Mean	Mean Difference	p-value	Indication	Decision
Male	3.46	0.182	0.336	Difference not significant	Sustain Ho1
Female	3.28				

Significance level (alpha) ≤ 0.05.

Table 8 shows that, with respect to the criterion variable "challenges," the mean for male is 3.46 while the mean for female is 3.28, with a mean difference 0.182 showing that the male respondents have higher level of challenges than females. However, the computed p-value for the difference inthe mean is 0.336 which is greater than the significance level (alpha) of 0.05. This table indicates that the difference in mean is not significant and occurs merely by chance, thus, cannot be true to the population of interest – the LGBTQ community. The null first null hypothesis, therefore, is sustained. That is to say – there is no significant difference in the challenges encountered by the respondents when they are grouped according to sex.

Table 9

Difference on the Challenges of Respondents When Grouped According to Sexual Identity

Groups	Group Mean	p-value	Indication	Decision
Male	3.35	0.91	Difference is not significant.	Sustain Ho2
Female	3.45			
Transgender (M-F)	3.67			
Transgender (F-M)	2.88			
Transgender (do not identify)	3.38			
Gender Fluids	3.36			

Significance level (alpha) ≤ 0.05.

Table 9 shows that, with respect to the criterion variable "challenges", the mean for male is 3.35, the mean for female is 3.45, the mean for transgender (M-F) is 3.67, the mean for transgender (F-M) is 2.88, the mean for transgender (do not identify), and the mean for gender fluids is 3.36. However, the computed p-value for the difference in mean is 0910 which is greater than the level of significance (alpha) of 0.05. This indicates that the difference in mean is not significant and occurs merely by chance, thus, cannot be true to the population of interest – the LGBT community. The second null hypothesis, therefore, is sustained. That is to say – there is no significant difference on the challenges experienced by the respondents when they are grouped according to gender identity.

Table 10

Difference on the Challenges of Respondents When Grouped According to Sexual Orientation.

Groups	Group Mean	p-value	Indication	Decision
Lesbian	3.34		Difference is not significant	
Gay	3.43			
Bisexual (I am a man)	3.53	0.901	significant	Sustain Ho3
Bisexual (I am a woman)	3.25			
Queer	3.5			

Significance level (alpha) ≤ 0.05.

Table 10 shows that, with respect to the criterion variable "challenges", the mean for lesbian is 3.34, the mean for gay is 3.43, the mean for bisexual (I am a man attracted to man and woman) is 3. 53, the mean for bisexual (I am a woman attracted to man and woman) is 3. 25, and the mean for queer is 3.50. However, the computed p-value for the difference in mean is 0.901 which is greater than the significance level (alpha) of 0.05. This table indicates that the difference in mean is not significant and occurs merely by chance, thus, cannot be true to the population of interest – the LGBT community. The third null hypothesis, therefore, is sustained. That is to say – there is no significant difference on the challenges of the respondents when they are grouped according to sexual orientation.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it is clear that the living environment for LGBTQ members is slowly progressing, but it is far from perfect. Despite the advances in human rights and growing social acceptance, LGBTQ members still face discrimination, harassment, and prejudice in various aspects of their lives. One major challenge that LGBTQ members face is self-identity. Society often expects individuals to conform to traditional gender roles and heteronormative expectations, making it difficult for LGBTQ members to embrace their true selves. This can lead to internalized homophobia or transphobia and negatively impact mental health. Students who identify as LGBTQ commonly endure hostile school environments, including bullying and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. LGBTQ students face discrimination and bullying from the community, schools, and families (Tuan, 2020).

Speaking of mental health, the study found that LGBTQ members experience higher rates of mental health issues compared to their heterosexual counterparts. This is likely due to the additional stressors of being part of a marginalized group. In addition, victimization and harassment can cause lasting trauma and impact one's overall well-being. While some progress has been made regarding legal protections and social acceptance, there is still a long way to go. LGBTQ members continue to face discrimination in employment, healthcare, and housing areas. They also continue to be targeted by hate crimes and violence.

The findings suggest differences in the challenges respondents face when grouped according to their sex, sexual orientation, and sexual identity. Specifically, the results indicate that male respondents have higher challenges than female respondents regarding their overall experiences. This could be due to various factors, including societal expectations and norms, that may place more pressure on men to conform to specific standards or roles.

In contrast, the differences in challenges, when grouped according to sexual orientation, are insignificant and appear to occur merely by chance. This suggests that individuals who identify as heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual face similar challenges, regardless of their sexual orientation. However, it is worth noting that this finding may be specific to the sample population and may not necessarily apply to other populations.

The study also found that male respondents reported higher challenges than those who identified as having other gender identities. This finding is important because it highlights the unique challenges that men face, particularly when compared to those who identify as non-binary or transgender.

In conclusion, the findings suggest that LGBTQ members still face significant challenges in achieving full societal acceptance and equality. Individuals, organizations, and policymakers need to continue advocating for the rights and well-being of LGBTQ individuals and work towards creating a more inclusive and accepting world for all.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and the conclusions of the study, the following are the recommendations:

For Possible Course of Action

1. Training for LGBTQ students: LGBTQ students can be provided with training on advocating for themselves and navigating the challenges they may face in school. This training can help them build resilience and develop coping strategies.
2. LGBTQ parents should have an open and honest conversation with their children about their experiences in school. Listen to their concerns and validate their feelings. Ask them what support they need.
3. We recommend that schools organize SOGIE-related training for the community and families with LGBTQ children with the help of LGBTQ organizations.
4. We would also recommend training school or college teachers and staff to respond to bullying and harassment; and integrate comprehensive SOGIE knowledge with other courses.
5. We would like to recommend that schools and universities establish supportive policies, which include the freedom for LGBT students to organize, establish LGBT organizations, hold LGBT advocacy, wear uniforms and access facilities consistent with students' self-expressed gender identity, and provide quick response system to mental health issues of the students
6. We would like to recommend that school should adopt and implement clear, consistent, and comprehensive non-discrimination policies that protect and affirm students' sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, among other characteristics (e.g., race, religion, etc.), and prohibit discrimination against students, families, and educators on those bases.

For Future Research Direction

1. The researcher suggests that the future researcher employ Mixed-Method research regarding this topic.
2. A similar study about challenges faced by LGBTQ students will be conducted in a more prominent

locale with different types of respondents.

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