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### THE LEVEL OF ACCEPTANCE TO BE FRIEND WITH LGBT

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#### ABSTRACT

*The acronym LGBT stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender describes individuals in smaller communities whose violate of nature. This study is done in order to find the acceptance of LGBT among Malaysians. This study also will highlight the reaction of Malaysians towards LGBT. This study uses LGBT as a topic because it is a hot issues to be discuss around the world. The study involved 302 respondents, a selected through a purpose sampling technique involving society in Malaysia. A cross sectional survey and structured questionnaire were used for data collection. All variables were measured through scales previously used by other researchers. The sampling was based on results Raosoft software. Results of the indicated shows that the acceptance of LGBT among Malaysians is high  $M=(3.02)$ .*

*Keywords: Acceptance, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, society*

#### INTRODUCTION

The term “lesbian” comes from the Greek island of Lesbos, associated with the poet Sappho, whose writing lyrically describes erotic love and attraction between women. Basically, lesbian means a woman who is sexually attracted to other women. (Jeffrey J. Lovanane, 2018). Though

today “gay” typically refers to men who are attracted to to members of the same sex, it was historically used as a broad term that encompassed the entirety of the modern LGBT initialism. Bisexual is the tendency of an individual to have sex with men and women. They have extreme sexual excitement as they are willing to enjoy sex with both sexes . Bisexual is also defined as a person who has psychological, emotional and sexual interest in men and women. A person with bisexuals will establish relationships with the same sex within a certain period of time while at other times, they will have relationships with different sexes.

The term “transgender” was popularized by activists such as Kate Bornstein, Holly Boswell, and Riki Wilchins, “Transgender” refers to a person who identifies mentally and emotionally as a gender does not match their biological gender. A term describing people who alter themselves physically through surgery and hormone therapy to align their physical with their gender identity.

As we all know and aware that this kind of relationship has existed since the time of Prophet Lut so much that God decreed a great punishment for the Lut. (Muhd Izwan et, al. 2015). Then, it continues to be a part of young people especially in the west who practice liberalism. Among the countries that approve of same-sex marriages are the United States, France, Netherlands, Canada and 25 other countries. Most surprisingly, there are 2 countries from Asia who have recently recognized the LGBT of the Taiwan and Australia.

LGBT community in Malaysia is seem to be worrying even though they are not promoting LGBT actively in social media or in public. However, the social problems that are widespread in society today are like promiscuity, clubbing, watching pornography freely seen capable of pushing towards this kind of relationship. What is sad is when many of these people are Muslims. Through our naked eyes, we can see that most Malaysians did not accept this group well because the LGBT is not only damaging the nation but also against the existing community norms.

## **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The freedom of religion, as well as non-discrimination, is a significant rights issue, and it is important that governments do not unnecessarily burden the exercise of religious conscience. This is especially important to minority religious groups, whose practices are all too easily trampled on by laws and policies enacted by majorities. But when exemptions to laws to accommodate religious

beliefs or practices impinge on the rights of others or core societal values like non-discrimination, lawmakers should proceed with caution. Proponents of these laws argue that they properly balance religious freedom with the rights of LGBT individuals. In fact, with few exceptions, the laws as drafted create blanket exemptions for religious believers to discriminate with no consideration of or even mechanism for consideration of the harms and burdens on others. Because of their narrow focus on the objector, the laws provide little protection for the rights, well-being, or dignity of those who are turned away.

Despite gains in LGBT equality in recent years, discrimination against LGBT people remains commonplace in the United States. A survey conducted by the Center for American Progress in January 2017 found that one in four LGBT respondents had experienced discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in 2016. (Sejal Singh & Laura E. Durso, 2017).

A growing number of US states have sought to address these problems by prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in various fields. Evidence suggests that these protections make a difference by deterring discrimination and enabling LGBT people to seek redress when they are discriminated against. Studies suggest that awareness of laws affecting lesbian and gay people is higher and discrimination against lesbian and gay people is lower in municipalities that have inclusive protections in place. (Laura G. Barron & Michelle Hebl, 2013).

## **RESEARCH QUESTION**

What is the level acceptance of Malaysians towards LGBT community?

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

To identify the level of acceptance LGBT community among Malaysians?

## **Conflict and Rejection**

Most lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals (LGB) waited until they were adults to talk about their LGB identity with others. Fear of rejection and serious negative reactions kept many LGB adults from openly sharing their lives. More recently, the Internet, school diversity clubs, and LGBT youth groups have helped gay and transgender youth find accurate information, guidance, and support. With greater access to resources, more LGBT youth are coming out during adolescence. Until recently, little was known about how families react when an LGBT young person comes out during adolescence. And even less was known about how family reactions affect an LGBT adolescent's health and mental health. Families and caregivers have a major impact on their LGBT children's risk and well-being. Many LGBT youth are placed in foster care, or end up in juvenile detention or on the streets, because of family conflict related to their LGBT identity. These factors increase their risk for abuse and for serious health and mental health problems. Research shows that family rejection has a serious impact on LGBT young people's health and mental health. LGBT young people who were rejected by their families because of their identity have much lower self-esteem and have fewer people they can turn to for help. Many hide so that they won't hurt their parents and other family members who believe that being gay is wrong or sinful.

## **Problems of Homophobia**

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are more likely to experience intolerance, discrimination, harassment, and the threat of violence due to their sexual orientation, than those that identify themselves as heterosexual. This is due to homophobia. Some of the factors that may reinforce homophobia on a larger scale are moral, religious, and political beliefs of a dominant group. Living in a homophobic environment forces many LGBT people to conceal their sexuality, for fear of the negative reactions and consequences of coming out. Homophobia is generally defined as hostility towards or fear of gay people, but can also refer to stigma arising from social ideologies about homosexuality. Negative feelings or attitudes towards non-heterosexual behavior, identity, relationships and community, can lead to homophobic behavior and this is the root of the discrimination experienced by many lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people.

## **Harassment of LGBT Students in Schools**

Being a teenager is tough enough without fearing harassment in a place where you're supposed to feel safe. All over the country lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students get harassed every day in school. Students who may be even just perceived as being LGBT also get harassed. According to Sara Kost, Studies done by the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) report that nearly 9 out of 10 LGBT students face harassment. The 2007 National School Climate Survey found not only that LGBT students were harassed, but that 31.7% of LGBT students missed a class and 32.7% missed a day of school in the past month because of feeling unsafe. Too many LGBT students find it hard to speak up about harassment because it is so embedded in our culture. LGBT harassment is one of the last forms of harassment that is still allowed in popular culture.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study employed the quantitative study by approach (explanatory study) to identify the public acceptance towards LGBT in society. For sampling, by referring to Raosoft software simple size calculator table, 3.2 million populations in Malaysia can be equal to 271 of respondents with 90% confidence, (Abdul Rauf Ridzuan et al. 2015). The studying involves 302 respondents selected through a purposive sampling which is public acceptance towards LGBT. A cross sectional survey and structured questionnaire. The data was collected through a survey questionnaire. The method used to distribute the questionnaire is through online and self-administered questionnaires. A likert scale was used for the students to answer questions relating to the public acceptance towards LGBT. Data was key in and analyzed using SPSS version 20 (Ridzuan, Ridzuan and Ridzuan, 2018).

## FINDINGS

### a) Profile of the Public Acceptance Towards LGBT

The profile of the sample is discussed in terms of seven characteristic sex, age, ethnicity, level of education, hometown, occupation and gender identities.

**Table 1: Public acceptance towards LGBT by profile (n=302)**

Profile	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Sex:</b>		
Male	109	36.3
Female	191	63.7
<b>Age:</b>		
16-25 years old	283	93.7
26-35 years old	12	4
36-45 years old	3	1
46 years old and above	4	1.3
<b>Ethnicity:</b>		
Malay	275	91.1
Chinese	9	3
Indian	10	3.3
Others	8	2.6
<b>Level of education:</b>		
SPM	19	6.3
STPM/Matriculation/Foundation	38	12.6
Diploma	52	17.2
Degree	190	62.9
Others	3	1
<b>Hometown:</b>		
Rural	81	26.8
Urban	156	51.7
Suburban	65	21.5
<b>Occupation:</b>		
Working at government sector	12	4
Working at private sector	29	9.6
Student	251	83.1
Unemployed	10	3.3
<b>Gender Identities:</b>		
Straight (normal)	284	94
Lesbian	2	0.7
Gay	6	2
Bisexual	8	2.6

Transgender

2

0.7

Table 1 above shows the profile of respondents from acceptance towards LGBT in Malaysia. Based from the findings, most of the respondents who answered the questionnaires are female (63.7%) which is aged between 16 – 25 (93.7%), Malay ethnic (91.1%), who is student (83.1%) and degree holders (62.9%), stayed at urban (51.7%). Most of the respondent's identities are straight (94%).

b) Level of public acceptance towards LGBT

**Table 2: The level of acceptance to be friend with LGBT**

Public acceptance	Mean
I will advise him/her if I closed with them	3.41
I will talk to them nicely if I be their friend	3.46
I do not care to eat with them if we are friend	2.93
I will guide them back to their religion if they were one of my family member	3.56
I will accept them to be part of my circle of friends	2.97
I do not feel ashamed to be friend with them	2.82
I am okay to work with LGBT friend at my workplace	2.75
I am okay to study with LGBT friend at my collage/university	2.75
I am okay to eat with LGBT people	2.79
I am okay to hangout with LGBT friend	2.61
Overall	3.01

The data from table 2 shows that public acceptance in Malaysia believe that LGBT community give an impact to them ( $M = 3.01$ ). LGBT individuals are as diverse as any other subgroup of the general population, and they are part of every race, culture, ethnic group, religious group, socioeconomic affiliation, and family (Mallon, 2006). The public acceptance of LGBT and be friend with them is high because people nowadays slowly accept the LGBT community. They believe they will guide the LGBT community back to their religion if they were one of the family member ( $M = 3.56$ ). The result has proven that LGBT is become acceptance towards public community. In addition, LGBT is very popular among society in Malaysia (p.302). Overall, the average mean for respondents level acceptance by community is  $M = 3.01$ .

## CONCLUSION

Table showed the mean score achieved for all respondents on this dimension is only 3.01. It shows that public acceptance towards LBGT is at high level. The highest mean by acceptance towards LBGT for guide them back to their religion (M = 3.56) and followed by public will talk to them nicely if they were friend (M = 3.46). A few studies have examined how LBGT acceptance they attribute the changes to a variety of factors, from people knowing and interacting with someone who is LBGT, to advocacy on their behalf by high-profile public figures, to LBGT adults raising families (Pew, 2013). These study found that LBGT is become acceptance among community. However, the result from this research proven that LBGT are not accepted by the respondents.

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