



THE ATTITUDE OF THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY TOWARDS SOCIETAL OBJECTIONS IN SELECTED COUNTRIES OF ASIA

Dr Sandesh K S*

Head, Department of PG Studies in Social Work, Nehru Memorial College, Sullia*Corresponding Author

Dr Mangala S.M

Director, Centre for women's Studies, University of Mysore

Dr Annapoorna M

Retired Professor of Anthropology, University of Mysore

ABSTRACT

The LGBTQ community has been in existence within our community for a while now. However, this group is termed as a minority and majorly faces discrimination and molestation from the non-members. In most cases, this minority group is overlooked and seen as deviating from normal societal function. In addition, religion is also viewed as a major contribution to the LGBTQ community. Many people view that Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus are majorly against the LGBTQ practices. Using a sample size of 500 with 100 sample sizes from each of the five countries, this paper aims to determine the attitudes of the LGBTQ community towards society and how people view them. The five involved Asian countries were Japan, Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka, and China. The research was conducted from January 2015 to December 2021 with data collection from social media apps and community AAPS.

KEYWORDS : LGBTQ community, LGBTQ rights, conscious objection, discrimination.

Introduction

Gender expression and gender identity differ from the biologically constructed sex. Gender identity is the personal gender sense while gender expression is how a person presents himself and wants the world to view him. However, there exist other forms of identification besides the man-woman dichotomy. According to Kaur (1), some people may identify themselves as transgender while others term themselves as multiple genders. LGBTQ is an acronym that represents Lesbian, Gay, bisexual, Transgender, and Queer. Lesbian is a term for women who are sexually attracted to fellow women. Gay is the term for men who are attracted sexually to men. Bisexual on the other hand is a term used for individuals who are sexually attracted to both men and women. Transgender represents individuals born with certain biological sex but ditch it to assign themselves a new one. Lastly, queer represents individuals who fit in all the above-mentioned categories (Moor par 5-9).

Societal attitudes towards LGBTQ have had numerous variations over the years. According to Kaur (2), a survey carried out in India on people aged 18 to 60 years indicated that over 71% of the respondents accepted that religion plays an essential part in impacting the opinions of people towards the LGBTQ community. On the contrary, a little jump into the history of the Indian subcontinent finds that religion and culture support and accept gender identities. Some people view the LGBTQ as a bad influence on society while others argue that it is exercising one's rights and freedom of choice. The LGBTQ community does not experience discrimination in the Asian nations but also across the globe (Brummett and Lisa 322). This paper aims to look at the attitude of the LGBTQA community towards societal objections. We focus on Asian countries such as Japan, India, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia. We look at how people in this nation view the LGBTQ community based on society's acceptance measures.

Objectives

The objectives of this research paper would be:

- i. To assess the types of discrimination that the LGBTQ community experience in society.
- ii. To assess why the LGBTQ community faces discrimination, especially in Asian countries.
- iii. To assess the rights available to the LGBTQ community and how they should be exercised.
- iv. To assess how the minority group LGBTQ community can be assimilated into the society without discrimination.

- To check what the international law says about LGBTQ.

Review of Literature

Persons of sexual and gender minorities are among the vulnerable and minority groups in the world. In many cases, these people including the LGBTQ community experience discrimination and failure to access certain services in society. According to Skuban et al. the LGBTQ community experience discrimination not only in the Asian region but throughout the world. For example, Skuban et al. conducted a systematic search of the database for the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) and found out that 9.59% of cases discriminated against the LGBTQ community by limiting them to certain health services such as surgical and hormonal therapy. This author argues that the LGBTQ community is prone to experience violence and discrimination within the community.

In addition, Kaur conducted a study on the attitudes towards the LGBTQ community in India. In this study, Kaur found that the LGBTQ community is scarce in India compared to the other Asian nations. For ages, being gay, lesbian, or transgender was considered an act against societal norms. However, such perceptions are changing with people having more freedom of speech and the right to choose what they need or do not need (Jocelyn-Blackman 4; Bullock 3). However, despite the increased number of LGBTQ members in the community, they still experience rejection, negative comments, and attitudes within the society (Higa et al.663; Burton et al 101). This author explains that the LGBTQ is viewed as a disruption to nature. In many instances, religion is at the center of explaining issues concerning the LGBTQ community. Asians, most specifically those in India are Hindus a religion that does not support LGBTQ practices. Therefore those engaged in such practices may be considered outcasts in the society and may also face certain types of discrimination (Drake 5). They are discriminated against because the community may see them as lost when they go against the religious teachings.

Furthermore, a study by Westwood confirms the negative religious attitudes toward the LGBTQ people in the community. Westwood conducted a scoping review with 70 selected studies from 25 different nations. The findings of the review indicated a positive correlation between religious-based affiliations and negative attitudes towards the LGBTQ community within the specified nations. In addition, the study also confirmed religious drawbacks and limitations aimed at the LGBTQ community. Westwood confirms that LGBTQ

people face discrimination from religious practitioners such as Muslims and Christians who pose faith-based objections towards the LGBTQ people. Furthermore, other researchers have also confirmed negative attitudes and discrimination against the LGBTQ people based on religious back grounds. Authors such as Ayhan et al., Bradbury-Jones et al., Brown et al., Chonody et al., Stewart and O'Reilly, and Lim and Hsu all argue that negativity is directed toward the LGBTQ people is informed by religious beliefs. Therefore, there is a need to alter the religious beliefs and teachings to effectively accommodate the LGBTQ people in the community and alleviate the discrimination such people face from society. Another study by Austin and Lauren worked towards a transgender affirmative social work education by expanding the literature on the topic through mixed methods. The study confirmed that social work has professional and academic standards that align with affirmative transgender practices and education. These authors argue that individuals who are uneducated or uninformed about transgender issues are mostly prone to discriminate against others. Therefore, Austin and Lauren argue that effective education for individuals on transgender issues and social work education can help alleviate the discrimination problem LGBTQ people face. In addition, social education is also essential to alleviate the negative perceptions directed toward the LGBTQ individuals in the community (Banwari et al.)

Materials and Methods of Data Collection

To ensure successful research work, one has to use the appropriate materials and data collection methods for enhanced accuracy and study results. This study was conducted from January 2015 to December 2021. The main objective of the research was to identify the attitudes of the LGBTQ community towards societal objection with specialization in five countries in the Asia region. The Asian countries involved in the research were India, Indonesia, Japan, China, and Sri Lanka. The research used a sample size of 500 where 100 samples were collected from each country. Furthermore, the simple random sampling technique was used to obtain the samples used for the study. According to Bryan, simple random sampling techniques give equal chances to the entire population to be selected for research thus reducing the chances of being biased (12). Data was obtained through social media discussions, social APPS, and community AAPS. Some of the apps used to obtain data include Jack'd, Scruff, Grindr and Surge. The limitations of the study included familiar doubt which may occur due to the researcher's interaction with the LGBTQ community. In addition, the period for the research was long in that the researcher may have developed a connection with the LGBTQ community hence issuing biased conclusions and results. Furthermore, there was a risk factor of the researcher developing connection with LGBTQ community since the researcher was interacting with them on frequent basis.

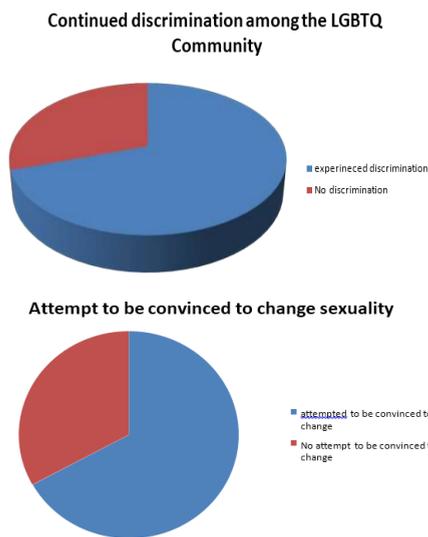
The following table indicates results of the LGBTQ community in the identified countries.

Country	Lesbian	Gay	Transgender	Others	Total
Sri Lanka	25	28	21	26	100
India	32	24	21	23	100
Japan	26	28	22	24	100
Indonesia	28	25	25	22	100
China	31	25	21	19	100

Out of those interviewed Sri Lanka had 25 lesbians, 28 gay, 21 transgender and 26 for others. In India, 32 were lesbians, 24 were gay 21 transgender, 23 others. In Japan 26 were lesbians, 28 were gay 22 transgender, 24 were others. In Indonesia 28 were lesbian, 25 were gay and 25 were transgender while 22 belonged to the others class. Lastly, the sample size in China resulted in 31 lesbians, 25 gay 21 transgender and 19 others.

Discussion

After the successful completion of the study, data analysis proved that the LGBTQ community face numerous rejection and discrimination from society. For example, some of the members highlighted how they have been denied access to medical services and therapy in a hospital because they are members of the LGBTQ community (Bennett, Elaine, et al.; Shields, Linda, et al.) However, the LGBTQ people are peaceful and attempt to change the view in the society which many reject and see as a disruption in nature or lack of morals. Many people in the five involved nations in the research are Hindus, Buddhists, and Muslims. Therefore religious beliefs in such religions are strongly against LGBTQ and therefore, such individuals develop automatic hatred and discrimination toward those with transgender issues in the community. Out of the sample size of 500 individuals used in the five countries, 71% which represents 355 LGBTQ individuals reported to have experienced discrimination from community members. On the other hand, 67% (335 individuals) have faced an attempt to change their sexuality of gender identity.



According to Westwood et al., religious background play a significant role in the discrimination against LGBTQ individuals. This theory was confirmed in this research as religious elders and leaders strongly condemned the members of the LGBTQ community and had negative attitudes towards such individuals. 375 individuals out of the total 500 from the LGBTQ community in the five countries confirmed discrimination based on religious backgrounds. The study found a positive correlation between negative attitudes toward LGBTQ individuals and the religious beliefs of the Hindus, Buddhists, and Muslims found in the Asian region.

Table showing discrimination levels

Country	Those who reported to have experienced religious-based discrimination	Percentage
India	52	52%
Japan	42	42%
China	35	35%
Indonesia	24	24%
Sri Lanka	46	46%

Conclusion

Despite the international law prohibiting discrimination, many minority groups such as the LGBTQ community find themselves disadvantaged in society. Research conducted in five Asian countries including China, Japan, India, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka revealed that many LGBTQ individuals face

discrimination and are barred from receiving essential services such as healthcare in their areas. According to the research, religious beliefs lead the way among the key causes of discrimination against LGBTQ individuals. This is because religion is against LGBTQ practices and terms them as unholy and therefore should not be practiced. Such notions results in rejection and discrimination against those practicing the acts. However, this aspect is slowly changing with the adoption of new international laws that enhance the protection of human rights around the globe.

REFERENCES

1. Atteberry-Ash, Brittanie, et al. "Does it get better? LGBTQ social work students and experiences with harmful discourse." *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services* 31.2 (2019): 223-241.
2. Austin, Ashley, Shelley L. Craig, and Lauren B. McInroy. "Toward transgender affirmative socialwork education." *Journal of Social Work Education* 52.3 (2016): 297-310.
3. Ayhan, Cemile Hurrem Balik, et al. "A systematic review of the discrimination against sexual and gender minority in health care settings." *International Journal of Health Services* 50.1 (2020): 44-61.
4. Banwari, G., et al. "Medical students and interns' knowledge about and attitude towards homosexuality." *Journal of postgraduate medicine* 61.2 (2015): 95.
5. Bennett, Elaine, et al. "Attitudes to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender parents seeking health care for their children in two early parenting services in Australia." *Journal of clinical nursing* 26.7-8 (2017): 1021-1030.
6. Brown, Suzanne, Jo Kucharska, and Magdalena Marczak. "Mental health practitioners' attitudes towards transgender people: A systematic review of the literature." *International Journal of Transgenderism* 19.1 (2018): 4-24.
7. Brummett, Abram, and Lisa Campo-Engelstein. "Conscientious objection and LGBTQ discrimination in the United States." *Journal of public health policy* vol. 42,2 (2021): 322-330. doi:10.1057/s41271-021-00281-2
8. Bryan Rhyley. What are the advantages of using simple random sampling? 28th March 2020, What a are the advantages of using simple random sampling? - handlebar-online.com.
9. Bullock, Keith. *Enhancing School Connectedness for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual (LGBTQIA) Students*. Diss. Northcentral University, 2018.
10. Burton, Candace W., Kevin Nolasco, and Dave Holmes. "Queering nursing curricula: Understanding and increasing attention to LGBTQIA+ health needs." *Journal of Professional Nursing* 37.1 (2021): 101-107.
11. Caroline Bradbury-Jones, Eleanor Molloy, Maria Clark & Nicki Ward (2020) Gender, sexual diversity, and professional practice learning: findings from a systematic search and review, *Studies in Higher Education*, 45:8, 1618-1636, DOI: 10.1080/03075079.2018.1564264
12. Chonody, Jill M., et al. "Attitudes toward gay men and lesbian among heterosexual social work faculty." *Journal of Social Work Education* 50.1 (2014): 136-152.
13. Dorsen, Caroline. "Discourse/Discours-An Integrative Review of Nurse Attitudes Towards Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Patients." *Canadian Journal of Nursing Research Archive* (2012): 18-43.
14. Drake, Blake. How LGBT adults see society and how the public sees them, [pewresearch.org](https://www.pewresearch.org), 25th June 2013, How LGBT adults see society and how the public sees them | Pew Research Center
15. Higa, Darrel, et al. "Negative and positive factors associated with the well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth." *Youth & society* 46.5 (2014): 663-687.
16. Jocelyn-Blackman, Gaell. How Are LGBT Youths Affected by Discrimination and What Can Schools Do to Help? [Igbtinstitute.org](https://www.igbtinstitute.org), 23rd January 2017, Retrieved from <https://www.york.cuny.edu/>.
17. Kaur, Gaganjot. "Attitude towards the LGBTQ community through the ages: Indian society and literature," the Bharwanipur education society college, university of Calcutta. October 10th, 2021. Doi: 100.36106/paripex.
18. Lim, Fidelindo A., and Richard Hsu. "Nursing students' attitudes toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons: An integrative review." *Nursing Education Perspectives* 37.3 (2016): 144-152.
19. Moor, Ashley. What each of the letters in LGBTQIA+ means, [bestlifeonline.com](https://www.bestlifeonline.com), 18th April 2019, What Each of the Letters in LGBTQIA+ Means — Best Life ([bestlifeonline.com](https://www.bestlifeonline.com)).
20. Shields, Linda, et al. "Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender parents seeking health care for their children: a systematic review of the literature." *Worldviews on Evidence-Based Nursing* 9.4 (2012): 200-209.
21. Skuban, Tobias et al. "Restriction of Access to Healthcare and Discrimination of Individuals of Sexual and Gender Minority: An Analysis of Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights from an Ethical Perspective." *International journal of environmental research and public health* vol. 19,5 2650. 24 Feb. 2022, doi:10.3390/ijerph19052650
22. Stewart, Kate, and Pauline O'Reilly. "Exploring the attitudes, knowledge, and beliefs of nurses and midwives of the healthcare needs of the LGBTQ population: An integrative review." *Nurse Education Today* 53 (2017): 67-77.
23. Westwood, Sue. "Religious-based negative attitudes towards LGBTQ people among healthcare, social care and social work students and professionals: A review of the international literature." *Health & Social Care in the Community* (2022).