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INVOLVEMENT OF LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, AND QUEER (LGBTQ) IN SOCIO-CULTURAL AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES: IT'S IMPLICATIONS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS, PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative research design using in-depth Interview aimed to find out the LGBTQ involvement in sociocultural and academic activities and its implication to the Department of Education (DepEd) programs, projects and activities. Ten (10) teaching and non-teaching DepEd personnel who are members of LGBTQ family were the respondents of the study and were subjected to in-depth Interview. The study revealed that LGBTQ community are more inclined in Sports, Beauty Pageants, Literary and Musical Contest, School Related Activities, Field Trips and Festivals. However, they are less involved in academic activity as they are only involved in Quiz Bee contest. The results of this study also revealed that LGBTQ teachers are inclined to perform in different programs, projects and activities of DepEd. However, other LBTQ members are hesitant to show their fullest talent and real personality because they feel that they are not yet welcomed in the DepEd family.

Keywords: *LGBTQ, SocioCultural and Academic Activities, Department of Education Programs, Projects and Activities*

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Introduction

Background of the Study

In the past, members of the Lesbian, Gays, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) struggled as they face criticisms from other members of the community. Sexuality is among the biggest, issues that divide even the Catholic Church. Traditionally, the religion of Christianity promotes heterosexuality and does not advocate for acceptance of homosexuality or bisexuality (Nkosi & Masson, 2017).

The debate whether homosexuality is a sinful act in the eyes of the Lord has been continuing on for centuries a debate that does not appear to be drawing to any definitive conclusion in the near future. The pairing of these two aspects has often led to conflict for homosexuals who practice Christianity (Rodriguez and Ouellette 2000, 333).

Broader changes in society have driven some of the greater recognition of LGBTQ rights, such as more equitable relations between genders, the rights revolution generally and the greater respect for individual autonomy (Roth, 2015).

As the LGBTQ community is historically misrepresented and discriminated against, it is vitally important for teachers to understand LGBTQ students' rights and is able to identify biased or judgmental behavior. Because LGBTQ individuals still do not fully enjoy the same rights and privileges of their straight counterparts, it's equally important to understand prejudices within the law and provide advocacy for the advancement of their rights (Page, 2017).

There were even instances when LGBTQ people were made to sign contracts to ensure that they did not express their sexual orientation or gender identity, an imposition on one's sense of self not required by those whose SOGI conforms to society's expectations.

Despite these challenges in the education sector, there is progress. In May 2012, the Department of Education (DepEd) issued DepEd Order No. 40 (The DepEd Child Protection

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Policy), which seeks to guarantee the protection of children in schools from any form of violence, abuse or exploitation regardless of SOGI.

There are existing programs in select educational institutions and establishments that touch on gender equality, such as the gender audits done by schools using the Magna Carta for Women, as well as the teaching of gender studies as a subject by some schools.

In many ways the younger generation is much more accepting than their elders (Roth, 2015). The younger generation accepts variations in sexual orientation.

Because of the global support for LGBTQ, the LGBT population gradually coming out, so people suddenly discovered that they had a gay brother or son or neighbor or close colleague, which started shaping public perception and reinforced the social changes.

Members of the LGBTQ became more active in the society. Active participation of the group to different activities, like sports and arts, is evident and many of them excelled in their chosen field.

Despite the success of the LGBTQ rights activism, some continued to judge them. There is still a need to educate people about the group's rights and their contributions to the society.

This study investigated the involvement of DepEd employees who are members of the LBTQ family in sociocultural and academic activities. The researcher is personally aware that there are some members of the LGBTQ who do not want to be exposed even they excel in both sociocultural and academic activities in school. Others are only good in sociocultural activities and set aside their academic obligations as teachers, while others are good in academics and spare little time in sociocultural activities.

Many DepEd officials and employees are members of the LGBTQ but they are hiding these personalities because probably they are hesitant to expose it with the feeling that they might not be accepted in the DepEd system.

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With this study, the researcher looks forward positively that these LGBTQ who are connected with the DepEd will accept the reality and do their best without reservation to excel in different sociocultural and academic activities.

The researcher believes that these LGBTQ have the innate talents, abilities, values, sense of responsibility, and the desire to help when given the chance to excel. The chance to excel will only get in when the person feels the acceptance of the society and the appreciation of one's best is highly recognized.

Research Methodology

This chapter presents the qualitative and research design as ethnographic design using in depth-interview with direct observation, participants of the study, data- gathering procedures, research instrument, and data analysis procedure to be used in this study. The purpose of this study is to find out the involvement of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) in Socio Cultural and Academic Activities in the Schools Division of Iloilo and Schools Division of Passi City during the school year 2020-2021.

Research Method

The research method utilized in this study was ethnographic approach under qualitative studies.

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2007), ethnographic research focuses on the study of culture and practices.

Research Design

This study used qualitative research design using in- depth interview. The interviewer during the interview was allowed to sit and to think about the series of questions about a certain issue. The aim was to get the main or the necessary views of the participants in a certain issue in a social context through the responses of the participants to the questions.

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During the in-depth interview, the researcher observed that the LGBTQ interviewee had a common denominator in terms of involvement in sociocultural activities. They loved to be indulged in sports likewise they love working and participating in lavish beauty pageants activities. The researcher further observed that LGBTQ participants are very passionate in literary and musical contest, school related programs, field trips and very extravagant in different festivals. On the other hand, in terms of academic activity, LGBTQ teachers are not much active because they are pre-occupied with different programs, projects and activities inside and outside the campus.

Participants of the Study

The participants of the study were the 10 identified teaching, non-teaching, DepEd personnel who are members of the LGBTQ family, who are working with the DepEd and willing, to participate in the study. These participants are employed within the Schools Division of Iloilo and Schools Division of Passi City.

Two (2) were lesbians, one (1) public elementary school teacher and one (1) teacher in a private school.

Two (2) were gays, one (1) teacher in a private school and one (1) faculty of a Comprehensive National High School.

Two (2) were bisexuals, one (1) Master teacher in a public high school and one (1) division planning officer.

Two (2) were transsexuals, one (1) teacher in a public elementary school and one (1) teacher in a public high school.

Two (2) were queers, one (1) college instructor and one (1) special teacher.

Research Instrument

The research instrument utilized in this study was a researcher-made interview guide.

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The interview guide has 3 questions focusing on the purpose of this study.

Voice and video recorder were used for data gathering and documentation depending upon the permission of the participants.

Validity of the Research Instrument

Prior to the determination of the validity of the Interview schedule made by the researcher, each item was submitted for review and modification by a panel of jurors who were considered experts in the field of research, testing and assessment, and English. Validity refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness, correctness and osefulness of inferences that a researcher makes. In a content-related evidence of validity, the content and format must be consistent with the definition of variables and sample of subject to be measured and is also helpful in validating the items in the questionnaire (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2007).

Comments, corrections and suggestions of the panel of validators regarding the items in the interview schedule were considered and incorporated to come up with the final Interview schedule.

Data Gathering Procedures

Permits from the individual participants were obtained to allow the researcher to conduct the study. The researcher personally went to the schools/community/place convenient on the part of the participants to conduct the interview following the minimum health protocols of the Department of Health and the Inter Agency Task Force.

The researcher together with an interviewer conducted an interview to the participants. Prior to this, the researcher required the participants to sign a waiver or permission relative to the conduct of the study.

The following are the agreement stated in the waiver;

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The interview is recorded and a transcript is produced.

Transcription in sent and the interviewee is given an opportunity to correct any factual errors.

The transcript of the interview in analyzed by the researcher as research investigator.

Access to the interview transcript is only limited to the researcher and academic colleagues and researchers with whom he might collaborate as part of the research process.

Any summary interview content, or direct quotations from the interview, that are made available through academic publication or other academic outlets, are anonymized so that intervence cannot be identified, and care other information in the interview are handled with confidentiality.

The actual recording is kept.

Any variation of the conditions above case occur with your further explicit approval.

By signing this form the interviewee agrees that;

I am voluntarily taking part in this project. I understand that I don't have to take part, and I can stop the interview at any time;

The transcribed interview or extracts from it may be used as described above;

I have read the information sheet;

I don't expect to receive any benefit or payment for participation;

I can request a copy of the transcript of my interview and may make edits, I feel necessary to see the effectiveness of any agreement made about confidentiality;

I have been able to ask questions I might have, and understand that I am free to contact the researcher with any questions I may have in the future.

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Using in-depth interview, a voice and video recorder were provided to completely capture the interviewee's words and responses. The participants comfortably seated together with the researcher to get the responses to the questions. The object was to get the respondents' view about the study. The researcher consolidated all of the collected data after series of interviews.

Data Analyses

The information gathered was analyzed using thematic approach.

The researcher observed that respondents who belong to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) are considered as the antecedent variable. Their involvement in sociocultural activities is highlighted in sports, beauty pageants, literary and musical contest, school related activities, field trips and festivals, while their involvement in academic activity focuses only in quiz bee. The involvement shows the independent variable. And the dependent variable is the implications to the DepEd programs, projects, and activities.

Thematic analysis is the process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data. According to Maguire & Delahunt (2017), the aim of a thematic analysis is to identify themes, such as patterns in the data that are important or interesting, and use these themes to address the research or say something about an issue. This is summarizing, analyzing and interpreting the data gathered and making sense of it.

Data Presentation, Interpretation, and Analyses

This chapter presents the descriptive-qualitative analyses of the involvement of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer in sociocultural and academic activities and its implications in the Department of Education programs, projects and activities in the Schools Division of Iloilo and Schools Division of Passi City during the school year 2020-2021.

Specifically it sought answers to the following questions:

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1. How do members of LGBTQ get involved in different sociocultural and academic activities?

2. What are the contributions of the LGBTQ to the sociocultural and academic activities of the school?

3. What are the implications of this involvement to the DepEd?

Involvement of LGBTQ in SocioCultural and Academic Activities

Involvement of LGBTQ community is one of the main important concerns of the Department of Education. It helps the LGBTQ to be recognized and respected in their contributions to different sociocultural and academic activities.

Based on the information gathered during the In-Depth Interview, the involvement of the LGBTQ for sociocultural activities was in sports, beauty pageants, literary and musical contests, school related activities, field trips, and festivals. For academic activity, they involved their selves in quiz bee contest.

Sports

DepEd Order No. 79, s. 2011, Creating the Schools Sports Events and Activities Unit (SSEAU) and Dissolving the Task Force On School Sports (TFSS).

In order to enhance the school sports program of the Department of Education (DepEd) and to improve the coordination of various school sports events and activities at the local, national and international levels, a new unit shall be created and named as School Sports Events and Activities Unit (SSEAU), in lieu of the Task Force on School Sports (TFSS).

In connection to this, participants of my study are much alive in sports activities. Participant 1 is a teacher teaching English in the Elementary grade level. She is a doctor of

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education and her gender preference is lesbian. She is very active in terms of participation in various activities in school. She organized sports activities in which she dedicated much of her time. She was a coach in different sports like volleyball, badminton, and basketball at the same time engrossed in other athletic activities like track and field, long jump and won in the higher meet. She was very proactive in terms of involvement and 100 percent really love to be lesbian. According to her, she does not consider herself different from the others members of LGBTQ community or from straight men and women. She is proud being a lesbian. Leading for her is the strength that makes her learner excels in sports activities.

The result of the interview revealed that the respondent is a doctor of education who is teaching English subject but then the inclination is more on sports rather than on academics. This is probably because the participant believes that sports play important role in the development of the students. According to Malaquit (2018), school-based sports and physical education play an important role in the development of youth.

According to participant 2, "Being lesbian, my passion and drive for sports activities becomes my hobby especially playing basketball and volleyball". I was a coach to basketball women are most of the players are also lesbian". Participant 3 added, "Sports activities which I believe the Involvement of LGBTQ is very important".

According to participant 5, I also involved myself in the different activities of the school especially in the sports and cultural activities". Respondent 9 commented, "So speaking of involvement, I an teacher in elementary and dealing with pupils for me is not easy. Children are very naughty, therefore, they should be exposed to many learning strategies or learning environment. So my Involvement when It comes to sociocultural, children should be exposed to sports activities".

Beauty Pageants

On March 10, 2008, the Department of Education's Committee on the Promotion of the English Language through Beauty Pageants and Other Funny Activities issued a

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memorandum urging all schools to hold more beauty contests to arrest the decline of English proficiency in the country.

The memorandum was issued two days after last. Saturday's Binibining Pilipinas pageant at the Araneta Coliseum. It said the country's education officials were so elated at how the contestants breezed through the Question and Answer (Q&A) portion that they want other students to emulate the example.

The memo includes guidelines on how questions should be formulated to encourage brilliant answers. The samples include "If you were a frog, which country would you prefer and why?" and "If your house were à rainbow, which color is your mother's room and why?"

In this study, participants cherish beauty pageants. Participant 4 adores much beauty pageants because he is gay and he is currently working as a faculty member in a high school. According to him, "There's nothing going on in Department of Education in terms of mindset of LGBTQ. respect is there in terms of the treatment. I believe that raising awareness among the GAD program was given emphasis. At the same time organizing pageant was one of my strength and that most gays love too". This implies that members of the LGBTQ community really like beauty pageants. They are proud to be part of any beauty pageants. According to Manaquit (2018), the sense of national pride is echoed among men who work behind-the scenes to bring beauty pageants to life. They don't receive much in the way of public recognition for their efforts, but within the industry, these men many of whom are gay are credited for elevating the standards for pageant contestants.

On the other hand, Participant 8 was a transsexual and a teacher in a public national high school. Respondent 8 said, "Well, as a secondary teacher, I hold different events just like in King and Queen of Hearts on February 2018. And the students enjoyed and learned from it and I believe that they are "than" also applying what they learned from the event. As one of the facilitators, I was the one who taught them the training and everything". This Implies that holding beauty pageants in school creates positive impact to the students. This result is

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in contrary with the result of the study posted in CareerRide.com (2015) that organizing beauty pageants yields so benefit to students. The girls at a very young age tend to become fashion conscious. Any sort of failure dents their self- confidence. Even girls can develop bulimia or anorexia at a young age. The contest leads to serious mental and health Issues. Beauty pageants at schools and colleges can lead to Increased materialism and sexualization, and it is not healthy for our culture.

Literary and Musical Contests

Literary Musical Contest has been a most anticipated event of every school. It was added in the school calendar as part of the school's educational activities for the students to practice what they have gained from their academic subjects and enhance or harness further their hidden talents and potentials.

In the study conducted, participants believe in the power and spirit of talents of every individual.

Participant I has an impressive stamina needed for the rigorous practices and trainings for literary and musical contests: while, respondent 2 said, "sir to be honest I joined one of the cultural activities entitled "To find girl and tomboy". So, in that contest I was able to showcase my true feelings because I was assigned to portray lesbian". She added, "It is just a normal day acting as a normal person. They know that I'm lesbian but I treat my students with respect so that they will treat me the same way".

Participant 4 believes that "In terms of school activities like having literary and musical contest, I am the one who trains the contestant especially in declamation contest. In creative writing, I teach my students to express their opinions, ideas and feelings on the issues about gender inequalities. In that way, gender biases would be eliminated. This implies that teachers who are members of the LGBTQ community are also good in drama/theater competitions if given full support and opportunity. This result confirms the result of the study conducted by Conway (2011) that LGBTQ teachers are also good trainers or coaches in any drama/theater

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competitions. But sometimes they are hesitant to show what they have because they feel that they are not protected.

While Participant 5 explained that I also involved myself in the different activities of the school especially in cultural activities". He added, "I help my student to master their talent. They also participate in programs, and I share my skills and knowledge in order for my students to prosper. In order for our students to learn, 1 always conduct dance lessons to enhance their skills from simple movements to more complex ones. I choreograph and give them some techniques on how to deliver scene in a particular choreography". This implies that members of the LGBTQ community are good dancers. And since they are good dancers, they are also good trainers in dance competitions, This finding is supported by the study of Risner (2002) that to be a good trainer in any dance competition, you must also be a good dancer. The researcher added that in recent research in the United States indicates that gay and bisexual men comprise half the male population in dance.

Participant 9 said that "So speaking of involvement. teaching in elementary and dealing with pupils for me is not easy. Most often, aside from the competitive ones, children are hesitant or do not have the confidence to be exposed to many different learning strategies or they shy away from new learning environment. So, children should be exposed to cultural activities". This implies that members of the LGBTQ community are also good in cultural activities. All these cultural activities require music. According to Stewart (2014), while qay people are just as likely to be talented musicians, builders, sportsmen tradesmen or Lumberjacks, they are more likely to be openly gay in the music industry than those other professions, which gives the impressions that there are a disproportionately large number of gay musicians.

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School Related Activities

Off-Campus activity is an authorized activity relevant to learning that takes place outside the school premises, participated by learners and supervised by teachers and/or staff and other concerned stakeholders.

In support of the K to 12 Curriculum implementation, the Department of Education (DepEd) hereby establishes the enclosed guidelines on the conduct of co-curricular and extra-curricular off-campus activities for public and private schools.

Being light-hearted, the participant 3 was a gay. He is a private school teacher and according to him, working at home is the best alternative to deliver learning to his students. According to him, he is a straight gay bearing the flag of LGBTQ. He said, "As a teacher in our school and as part of LGBTQ, my involvement in my school is very Important. Right? Because we all know that LGBTQ are more creative and we are aware of what is happening in our country. More so, they are able to adapt to what is going around and are very talented when it comes to working on something that is very convenient. For example, they were able to create a program that is very impressive. Like graduation and acquaintances, which I believe the involvement of LGBTQ is very important".

On the other hand, Participant 6 was a bisexual who works as a Planning Officer. According to him, "For me, as a bisexual, I'm just supporting the program and projects of the DepEd, then focus on the good side, then, S*upport, sa ano lang ang dapat nga mag ok lang bala haw* (Support everything to run smoothly) and through *paras abi sa mga* (like for instance) bullying. *Dang sa mga gender gender, kung ano ya gender mo, so dapat indi ka pag i-judge* (For gender identity, whatever your gender is, you should not be judged negatively). Treat equally kung ano man ang imo nga (whatever you have) gender preferences".

To describe, participant 7 is a public elementary school teacher 1 and his gender preference is transsexual. According to this respondent, "Well, usually I help my students to master their talent; they also participate in programs and also I shared my knowledge and my

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skills as a member of the LGBT community to help my student's ability to prosper. Well, my method is giving simple activities Like plays and dance. When it comes to the skills, I teach them dancing and also some other skills like fashion.

According to Participant 9. "As a private school teacher. I was assigned as academic head so it is always pressure for me to think what would be the great activities for the students since I'm the head of the academic. So every month, we conduct activities example every January. January is the resume of class from a vacation. We conducted acquaintance party. It's one way of exposing children or pupils to get along with each other so that they know what is bullying though they know inequality. And that they should be equal".

These results imply that LGBTQ teachers are very much willing to train their learners in all school programs for the purpose of improving one's life. Organizing groups. serving as advisers and offering support to learners are manifestations of support from LGBTQ teachers. These findings confirm the study of Lowenthal (2020) that students clubs can provide an invaluable support system whether they serve the whole LGBTQ community or a specific population within it. Teachers can empower their students by serving as mentors, advisors or sponsors for different organizations. Lowenthal (2020) added that teachers must be willing to open their classrooms, serve as faculty advisers and offer support to their initiatives. Teacher-advisers may also mentor and empower members behind the scenes.

Field Trips

The Department of Education (DepEd) has lifted its moratorium on field trips in all public, elementary, and secondary schools, which it ordered on February 22, 2017, after a fatal bus accident that claimed the lives of 14 students of Bestlink College of the Philippines, their teacher, and the bus driver during a field trip in Tanay. Rizal last year.

DepEd Secretary Leonor Briones signed and issued DepEd Order Number 66, series of 2017, which was uploaded on the DepEd's website on December 27, 2017. It lists down three main guidelines that schools should follow in holding off- campus activities, these are:

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Ensure relevance and alignment with the educational competencies of the Kindergarten to 12 curriculum and the leadership development of learners:

Uphold child protection principles and that no learner shall be disadvantaged in any form:

Observe the safety and security protocols for all participants before, during, and after the activity.

In this connection, participant a has been very active in terms of organizing field trips and has been a private school teacher and at the same times a part-time instructor of a College. According to this respondent, "I am a member of the LGBTQ and I categorize myself as a Queer. So speaking of involvement, I am a teacher in elementary and dealing with pupils for me is not easy. Children are very naughty and they should be exposed to many learning strategies or learning environment. So, children should be exposed to community immersion such as field trip, exposing them to other communities".

Participant 9 added, "Yes, I really appreciate the beauty of cultural activities and socio activities. This is very important and relevant to their performance in academic activities".

This implies that LGBTQ teachers are also good in organizing field trips for the purpose of exposing learners to different situations, occasions, and environment. This will lead to a learning experience on the part of the learners if properly planned, well-coordinated with parents, and there is teacher-student teamwork. According to Ladau (2014), teacher-student teamwork, and some creative thinking, you will be able to provide your whole class with a positive field trip and memories that can last a lifetime.

Festivals

The Department of Interior and Local Government (DIG) issued a Memorandum Circular 2017-133 which revises Memorandum Circular No. 2002-81 on the Creation of Local Culture and Arts Councils.

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With the thrust of the Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022 and the implementation of the National Council Heritage Act of 2009 (R.A. 10066), the NCCA Initiated the revision of MC 2002-81 in order to incorporate the need for an expanded composition and functions of the Local Culture and Arts Council.

This shows that Local Government Unit (LGU) adheres to festival to continue to preserve the culture of every municipality. And the respondent's statement about festival is true. According to participant 4. "At municipality, I really involve myself in different programs like what I'm doing at school but because of pandemic, activities were cancelled".

According to him, he jokingly shared that he is focusing in personal development like aspiring to be a beauty queen. He also said that it is very necessary that school should be part in program activities. To mention is the involvement in "*Kalamay* Festival. "As a program committee chair, we are the ones who organized this event especially the Search for Ms. Kalamay Festival. I am the mentor of the aspiring beauty queens especially their communication skills because most of the contestants are also a students from different secondary high schools. I coach them how to speak spontaneously", he shared.

While, participant 9 added, "Every February, we have a King and Queen of Hearts. And I encourage the pupils that every time the place conducts a fiesta we should also involve our school. We should also participate in different activities conducted by the LGU or the Local Government Unit. There will be a Pintados de Pasi, or should I say. Pintados in the month of March. There will be a street dancing or handuraw. And the City of Passi invited us to join them without hesitation; we don't hesitate to join so we participate. Our participation is not only for the name of the school. The main purpose of joining that kind of activity is to expose children because it is a part of their learning. As academic head, I always talk to our school directress that every month we should conduct an activity".

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He elaborately added that, "Actually being a teacher, you should be talented. That's what they always said, but I prefer. I'm good in acting *hahahaha.. Hahaha good. "Uhmm Oh my God",*

The results of the interview revealed that IGBTO teachers are more inclined in festivals. That includes the organization, participation, direct involvement in the planning process, and mostly in the overall management. This further implies that they are the most trusted group for this kind of occasion. They can easily gather crowd and people to watch their output. This finding confirms the study of Chauvin (2018) that for the half-century, annual Gay Pride events have gathered local communities to march and rally.

Quiz Bee Contest

A school-wide quiz or bee can be a great way to teach students about certain subjects and test their knowledge. Schools may conduct a quiz bee that focuses on one subject, such as spelling or a quiz bee that tests students on several subjects, such as math, science, and social studies.

Relative to this, one of the memoranda issued by the DepEd is about Division Memorandum No. 153 8.2019: DRRM Quiz Bee Contest

Definitely, as participant 2 openly expressed in this study that she academically excelled during her student Life especially in math. Now a teacher in a private school teaching math subject and claas adviser of Grade 7 establishes the fact that being a lesplan did not hinder her to train her students as the said "I trained my students in Math even they know that my gender preferences is lesbian".

Driven by his knowledge, participant 5 was a bisexual. a teacher of a national comprehensive high school, lle is currently a Master Teacher 1 and has been a Sports and MAPEH Coordinator since 2017. He shared, "Well, as a coordinator in MAPEH department in our school, I contribute a lot in academic performance of our students. I see to it that the test

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given by my teachers is validated". According to him, it is necessary because in physical education, we always believe that person should be physically fit in order for him or her to perform better in their academic.

The results of this interview imply that LGBTQ teachers are also involved in Quiz Bee contest for the purpose of improving the academic performance of their learners. According to Petermen (2020), a school-wide quiz or bee can be a great way to teach students about certain subjects and test their knowledge.

Contributions of the LGBTQ to the Sociocultural and Academic Activities of the School

Members of the LGBTQ have a lot of significant contributions in the school system and even in the society. According to the Philippine News Agency (2018), many members of the LGBTQ community made great contributions to the Philippine society. Most of these contributions are related to socio-cultural and academic activities.

Spirited by her will power, participant 1, believes that, "One of the key elements to both excels in academics and sports activities are to train the pupils to be disciplined. Those pupils who are good in sports are also good in class discussion and participation".

Lesbian by heart but teacher in vocation, participant 2 added, "For me, as a math teacher, my contribution towards the school is that I coach my students in problem solving especially those are competing in quiz bee.

Participant 3, a gay, said "I have the talent to share like I am very good in acting, dancing and singing. At the same time I am the adviser in school paper publication. I trained my students in scriptwriting".

On the other hand, participant 4 commented, "Since, I am gay acting is one of the talents that helps me express who I am. I portray as a model afterwards I tried them to perform and act in front of me, I give much a little pressure to observe their performance and

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capabilities. I believe that training is the best key to have an excellent performance. In terms of stage play. 1 teach my students some of the tips like raising and stepping your right foot going up the stage, then act and face your audience. That's some of the tips sir".

With conviction, participant 5 said, "In terms of the contributions of the LGBTQ to the sociocultural and academic activities, I think they admired bisexual people. I can hear different affirmations that bisexual are accomplished people. With regard to the younger generations, their mind set now is they look up us with respect and have potentials in all aspects of life".

With the answer of participant 6 said, "So in my current situation, *uhmm* because *uhmm*, we are in the school governance operation division, usually mga policy *kinahanglan namon i-review* (we need to review the policy) *then i-share sa mga schools nga kun ano dapat himuon nga makapamayad sa mga amu da eh* (share it to schools of what is proper and to be done for the betterment of the third sex), third sex. We are encouraged to have a virtual this pandemic. We are encouraged to have the virtual orientation about gender equality".

According to participant 7, "We have to keep our students happy in every activity they are excelling. 00 1 can say they are inspired", "LGBT members are very talented and as transsexual, I consider my akills in different types of talent, I teach my students very well, give them advice and happy seeing my students excel and win in some competitions in cultural and even in outside the schools competition, I can say that I have taught them or teach them the skills or the skills they need to win in that certain competition", "There's certain activity in my subject like, modeling. I teach my student to walk with confidence because I believe that activity gives morale or the personality of a kid will be developed and they could face someday the world with confidence". Usually if there's a class, I have my short hair so that I can be presentable to my students even so I am a transsexual. But after school hours, I transform and channel myself to become the person I want to be"

Respondent 8 cordially told us, "Well I am like this by now. But someday I will consider the possibility that I have in the future to be transgender and my first dream to become a

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fashion designer". But then, apparently my mother can't afford that kind of course, so I become an educator. I'm doing my best to become a teacher but someday I want to be a professional fashion designer and follow my dream and become a real transgender someday".

Respondent 9 believed that young LGBTQ generations wanted to become like him, and the praises coming from them and already an affirmation that LGBT are normal human beings. People in the community don't mind if you belong to are LGBTQ or not, what matters to them are your contributions to the school, community and society. They don't look at you anymore as members of the LGBTQ. They see you as a helpful and great provider. They are more on the things that you accomplished and the avenue that you have. When the respondent was asked if they felt discriminated, the respondent said, "Yes, so far because "stigma is stigma". But once you are doing little or great things and you accomplished those things you create a difference".

Participant 10 was a secondary school teacher and said, "I involve myself in many activities and events in our school like the King and Queen of Hearts. I take responsibility of the students who attend the training of their princess and I guide them during the trainings. I take charge in teaching and training them how to sing beautifully. I am not afraid to try to or hesitant to explore new ideas. I do not care whether I am right or wrong. I live my life according to how I feel no matter how I keep what my inner self is. Time is ripe for me to do things independently, without relying on the views of another."

There is no typical set of life experiences that characterizes all LGBTQ teachers. Based on the answers that the respondents shared, LGBTQ participants have different diverse experiences although some are good but some have still had an identity dilemma.

Patiag (2019) wrote in the Guardian that while diversity sometimes relies on labels to facilitate communication, those labels are also historically loaded.

Implications of the Involvement of LGBTQ to DepEd Programs, Projects, and Activities

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The Department of Education issued a gender-responsive basic education policy on June 29, 2017 that calls for an end to discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation and gender identity in schools. The policy is an important step toward providing equal rights for all students but history shows it is unlikely to make a real difference for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth unless the DepEd transforms its promise into meaningful protection.

Calling for gender-responsive education is a valuable step but it is only the beginning of a strategy to eradicate discrimination against LGBTQ youth in schools. In the months and a year to come, the DepEd should cement its position as a champion of the rights of all students by making those rights meaningful.

Thus, participant 1 said that she does not feel Inequality but rather she feels that the same treatment happens like also with the men and women. She added. "AS long as I respect myself and I show respect to others, then I cannot feel discrimination. Keep your faith and continue what is good to the LGBTQ community".

Steadily, participant 2 said, "Respect is the values that everybody should always live for the rest of his or her life that is why I don't feel gender inequalities rather I feel that I am secure with my gender preferences". "Be responsible with your action, there's nothing wrong being lesbian, gay, bisexual or whatever as long as you are happy just enjoy what life offered you".

Adding to the statement above, participant 3 also said, "Alright, as part of LGBTQ, I am aware that patience is one of the factors that will create good relationship with my colleagues in school. Based on my experience, our head assigned to me most of the activities because she believes that I can handle without any lapses. I am trustworthy enough that I can handle everything without any complain because my directress believes that gays are very talented. This respondent added, "Well, as part of LGBTQ je's not about showing your personal side or yourself but it is about showing your talent because for me LGBTQ are already an Inborn talent. You have to be holistic. You have co show your social, emotional, physical and

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cultural aspect of intelligence to your students. So, I think that will be the greatest implication that an LGBTQ teacher can give to the Department of Education". The respondent further added that whether what gender you are or any gender you are, gender preferences, or sexual orientation, you have to express yourself of what of who you are to achieve you goals. "I believe that if you're not proud of your gender preferences and you're not honest of what you are, therefore you are capable for nothing".

Participant 4 stated, "Eliminating the stigma that gays are nobody but raising the awareness that gays are productive nowadays that they have a great role in molding society a better place". "For me, being a member of IGBTQ community doesn't discount the chances of being successful. It's really difficult to be and usually when you're young. not aware of your personality and not aware of your sexual orientation you become confused. I was made aware when I am already in the academe and when I was already in college. My knowledge during my days in elementary, high school and college is limited but only this time that LGBTQ are being given chances to participate in society".

With respect to the answer of participant 5. "Well as bisexual, there is a woman inside me, which I am very committed and passionate about teaching my learners and of course I have these values in me that enable my students to pursue what they love", "As a member of LGBTQ community, I do believe that I contributed much in sociocultural activities in the development of our children and students. At the same time, I help them to become more active by actively participating in the different activities of the school". "Joining the competition and winning different contest is one of the proofs that we are doing well, that I am teaching well my students in terms of their capabilities such as singing, dancing and acting, meaning it refers to the literary arts. I wanted to maintain what I am now because this is who I am even though I have the feelings of that of the woman but I wanted people to see me as a real man. Let's take it in a general manner that the Department of Education is more fun, jolly, exciting and great to work with. I don't feel any discrimination because people will see me as real man even though I always say that I am a bisexual that I have a feelings for the same sex so I

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don't feel any discrimination at all because I do believe that respect begets respect so if you know how to respect people. I always believe that they will respect you in return and how we work inside the class matters", "For my fellow LGBT community, never be afraid to show who really you are because you are created as unique Individual. You are created creatively and people who understand love you and who accepts you so don't be afraid. Be who you are. Be yourself".

Participant 6 added "You have to act like a normal person in a normal way so that everybody will treat you with respect". This response implies that the members of the LGBTQ community wanted to be respected. But because of being a member of LGBTQ sometimes respect cannot be perfected which supports from others are also affected. According to Will (2020), teachers who identify as LGBTQ have to navigate the reality that not all people will be supportive of them. And that impacts the classroom environment, and ultimately, a teacher's ability to be a successful classroom educator.

Not to argue with participant 7, said, "Well, it makes the group more fun, jolly and exciting, but there are, let's admit that there are some people who still don't accept us and they are still thinking that there are people who don't accept gay, transsexual, especially me as a transsexual, so I just keep quint", "Well I could still fool 408 of the discrimination, to the LGBTQ Community don't let anybody drag you down. Remember you have that talent of the personality to be different from the others, use those skills to earn respect and respect also others and just be happy of what you are doing and just live your life to the fullest",

Participant & said that, "Well as a transsexual, the most important thing that I'll imply to my students is respect. You must be respectful to anyone and I believe that if you respect him or her, they will give you and they will give you a respect also", "Well they respect me for who I am and I never heard someone telling me that don't put that just like that. I'm happy being single: I can do what I want. I can go to places".

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His counterpart, participant 9 shared, "As a member of LGBT community, at the same time as a teacher, which is under the DepEd, we should always think and we should always show the children, our students, that we should be embodied by the code and ethics of professional teacher no matter what we are in doing. My implication is to the DepEd or since we are teachers, we only obey having skillful, creative and knowledgeable, skills, talent and creativity are important. I believe that four factors, because as a teacher, if you have those four factors, you have great implications, you have great contributions to the success of the children, and at the same time, in the school, with respect of what you have. Of course because being LGBT member, yes, Judgment, criticism, environment and the society, is also a part of being a member of LGBT community, but if you accept of who you are and what you are, then you are happy what you're doing, then you are with your heart doing service to your society, to your community, whatever feeling you have, that's it. What's wrong with that?"

Lastly, the participant 10 was a SPED Teacher or Special Education Teacher. The gender preference was queer. According to this respondent, "As member of the queer, one thing is you have to accept what is the situation that really happens in the society and at the same time, instead of being silent, be proud of and involve yourself in all activities. Nothing to, nothing, whatever sex preferences you have as long as it is *pwede nga pwede ikaw makajoin* (allowed and allowed to joint, you have to join with self- confidence". "Being a queer, or in some other activities that we have, specifically, the school is one, is like for example, in a classroom. There are a lot of activities you have given to your pupils.

As a teacher, how you're going to manage it is you have to treat your pupils equally. Whatever gender they have, or preferences that they have. So you have to treat them, specifically in some activities. If the activities are for both boys and girls so a boy can join the activity for the girls, as long as they are suitable for both genders. Do not neglect them, even though that they are not really straight they have to be treated whatever preferences they have, so they have to be treated equally.

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Join them, involve them in all activities that you have as long as they are willing, and even though those persons, those personality of pupils, we - what we called roses, or *mahiyain*. So instead of neglecting them, motivate them". "As a person, you have to do your task normally. Never mind whatever preferences you are as long as you respect yourself, respect the persons around you, and do the right thing and the same time, think as a normal. "As LGBTQ or shall we say, as queer, or gender preferences is only is what you are if you are professional be professional. Be normal. And then, never mind the negative or the positive as long as you know, know your rights. Be professional at all times, and at the same time, show as a role model to everyone even though that your queer you are worth to be respected".

The result of the in depth interview reveals that teachers LGBTO are talented in oreas of sociocultural activities. These talents should be put into maximum use in the school by allowing these LGBTQ teachers to participate in the planning process of any program, project, or activity of the school including its implementation and feedback making. For instance, in the Brigada Eskwela program and other programs of the DepEd, these LGBTQ teachers can be utilized as receptionist or committee in charge of the visitors and they can also be utilized to entertain visitors to get more support from the stakeholders during the implementation of this program.

Additionally, the interview reveals that LGBTQ teachers are more inclined in sociocultural activities so the assignment and additional designation of these teachers should also be related to sociocultural activities especially DepEd programs that require these talents of the LGBTQ teachers.

Furthermore, the results of the interview reveal that some of the LGBTQ teachers were hesitant to show their fullest talent and real personality because they felt that they were not yet welcome in the DepEd family as far as gender issue is concerned. It results to limitation on their involvement in different DepEd programs, projects, and activities.

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Therefore, it could be inferred from the statements of the participants that they expect that LGBTQ teachers must be treated equally with and among other teachers in the DepEd. Bullying and discrimination should be avoided by providing mechanisms and support system. According to Estella (2016), one way that schools can address bullying and discrimination and ameliorate their effects is by providing educational resources to students, teachers, and staff to familiarize them with LGBTQ people and issues.

Wright (2020), said working with policies, curricula, and hiring, school principals can have a huge impact on LGBTQ student experience by promoting a safe, welcoming, and fair environment for LGBTQ educators in their schools, enabling these LGBTQ educators to be the critical and positive representatives LGBTQ students need.

Summary, Insights, and Recommendations

This chapter presents the summary of the study, the Insights drawn from the findings, and the recommendations arrived at by the researcher.

Summary

The main goal of this qualitative study was to determine the involvement of the LGBTQ to sociocultural and academic activities and its implications to the DepEd programs, projects, and activities in the Province of Iloilo and Passi City Divisions during the school year 2020-2021.

In this study, in-depth interview under the qualitative research design was utilized except for those members of the LGBTQ who requested the researcher to allow them to be in a pair.

The interviewer during the interview was allowed to sit and to think about series of questions pertaining to certain issues. The aim was to get the main idea or the necessary

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views of the participants in a certain issue in a social context through the responses of the participants to the questions (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2007).

This study used ethnographic approach under the qualitative research. This approach was appropriate because the researcher wanted to study a group of people to gain a larger understanding of their lives or specific aspects of their lives focusing on the study of practices.

The participants of the study were the 10 identified members of the LGBTQ community who are working with the DepEd and willing to participate in the study. These participants are employed within the Province of Iloilo and Passi City. The sociocultural involvement of these members of the LGBTQ were limited to sports, beauty pageant, literary and musical contest, school related activities, field trips, and festivals. Their involvement in academic activity was only limited to quiz bee contest.

The research instrument utilized in this study was a researcher-made interview guide, digital voice and video recorder. A panel of experts validated the interview guide. All comments and suggestions relative to the validation of the tool were considered.

Thematic approach was used to analyze the data gathered.

The following are the findings of the study:

The involvement of LGBTQ community is one of the main important concerns of the Department of Education. It helps the LGBTQ to be recognized and respected in their contributions to different sociocultural and academic activities.

Based on the information gathered during the In-Depth Interview, the involvement of the LGBTQ for socio-cultural activities were in sports, beauty pageants, literary and musical contests, school related activities, field trips, and festivals. For academic activity, they involved themselves in quiz bee contest.

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The result of the interview reveals that the respondent is a doctor of education and is teaching English subject but then the inclination is more on sports rather than on academics. This is probably because the participant believed that sports play an important role in the development of the students.

The members of the LGBTQ community really like beauty pageans. They are proud to be part of any beauty pageants. Holding beauty pageants in school creates positive impact to the students.

Teachers who are members of the LGBTQ community are also good in drama/ theater competitions if given full support and protection. These members of the LGBTQ community are good dancers, they are also good trainers in dance competitions.

Members of the LGBTQ have a lot of significant contributions in the school system and even in the society.

Insights

Based on the findings, the following insights were drawn:

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer are the marginalized sector in the society. In the Department of Education, LGBTQ teachers who are teaching in public and private schools are both active in sociocultural activities and academics activities. They have a unique talent and leadership style. LGBTQ are very essential in the Department of Education, and no one would question their capabilities in terms of the execution and implementation and activities in their respective schools. The LGBTQ teachers are considered role models of the young generation today since they contribute much in making learners become the best version of themselves. The values, knowledge and talents they gained from these groups of teachers are important for them to develop their skills and potentials.

The LGBTQ teachers go beyond more than what their school heads expect from their output. Undisputedly, they have enhanced and improved method in implementing approaches,

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styles, techniques, and other ways of improving their learners' skills, developing their talents, and honing their knowledge.

This LGBTQ teachers' efforts are highly appreciated because at the end of the day, everything is possible and feasible because of the strong commitment, dedication, and unselfish work coupled with love, compassion and big heart in the implementation of different programs, projects and activities.

LGBTQ teachers are very talented, resourceful, idealistic and committed to different sociocultural activities of their school and community. Hence, they become advisers, coaches, and mentors of their learners in different local and national cultural and sports activities.

On the other hand, these LGBTQ teachers are also very particular in academics of their learners. They are competent in the conduct of their lessons in accordance to the capabilities of their learners.

For the successful result of the implementation of different programs, projects and activities in school materials and resources are needed. Most of the materials used during school activities, programs and projects are through the initiative of these LGBTQ teachers. The school heads are very supportive especially if the activity is spearheaded by these talented LGBTQ teachers. The trust and confidence given to them is undeniably remarkable.

The enthusiasm and willingness of these LGBTQ teachers to initiate different activities, programs and projects in school become more evident once they are recognized and given importance. The provision of awards and recognition is considered toward the achievement of a better implementation of the program, projects and activities.

The involvement of the LGBTQ in the implementation of socio-cultural and academics activities is of high Importance. The implication to the Department of Education programs, projects and activities becomes the founding basis of this institution. It could be safely opined

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that there is a probability that the Department of Education agency would be open in accepting the LGBTQ because of their talent and abilities shared to the department.

One more reason is that these LGBTQ members become productive, essential and determined to lead their community to the best possible way so that they may be able to change the society's perception about them.

The LGBTQ community also want to open the eyes of their respective communities that they are not monsters but human beings who have feelings, emotions and adversities in life; therefore, they must be treated equally.

Planning, organizing, staffing of the committee, feed backing are some of the many management styles that are necessary in the execution of the sociocultural and academics activities. Hence, the Impact to the Department of Education programs, projects and activities becomes essential, productive and necessary. The implementation becomes successful because of the chances given to the LGBTQ to explore, extend their hands and develop the learners' mindset and their individual capabilities.

Stakeholders' support is important for the effective implementation of the program especially support from the internal and external stakeholders.

Local Government Units have the important function to augment their services to the programs, projects and activities of the school. They are considered the big agency to help the existing and non-existing projects, programs and activities of the school.

If all stakeholders are working together for the success of different programs, projects and activities, budget constraint or other financial matters concerned may be solved.

Recommendations

Given the result of the study, the Department of Education (DepEd) may improve the curriculum to cater to programs that maximize the involvement of the LGBTQ community.

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Through the results, the curriculum planners may create activities and policies that are geared towards embracing the contributions of the LGBTQ communities.

With the result of the study the LGBTQ teachers may be inspired to engage themselves in activities that maximize their full potentials.

Using the results, the school head may be given the concrete ideas on how to initiate activities and implement programs that involve the LGBTQ teachers.

With the results, the parents may work together with LGBTQ teachers to hone the skills and potentials of students in various activities.

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