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## Knowledge and acceptance of youth of Manipur towards LGBTQ

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#### Abstract

LGBTQ people faced many challenges liked discrimination, bullying, harassment etc. These challenges is triggered by people perception and prejudice about the LGBTQ people which lead them to think that LGBTQ people are unnatural or it is against nature. Knowledge will influence how we express ourselves and how we behave towards an object, subject or person. If a person have a positive belief or perception about a thing, then the person is likely to have positive viewpoint towards it. The present study was conducted in the Lamphelpat block, Manipur to assess the youth knowledge about LGBTQ and to explore youth acceptance towards LGBTQ. Four educational institutes were selected for the study with higher number of enrollment. Samples were selected randomly through probability proportional to size (PPS) method. The study was conducted on 225 numbers of youth in the age group 19-22 years. A self-constructed questionnaire and a standardized tool were used to collect the required information from all the respondents. The collected data were coded and analyzed using Microsoft Excel. The findings of the study revealed that majority (68.44%) of youths had an average level of knowledge about the LGBTQ. It was also found that youth still have some biasness towards this community and they are not able to Accept the LGBTQ community readily as one accept man or woman.

**Keywords:** Knowledge, acceptance, youth, LGBTQ

#### Introduction

Knowledge means familiarity, awareness or understanding of someone or something such as facts, skills or objects. Youth's knowledge on homosexuality may be significantly impacted by their understanding of sexuality, and awareness about the LGBTQ community, which can be gained from books, the internet, movies and videos, etc. Acceptance is a broad concept that encompasses social attitudes toward LGBTQ people as well as the general consensus on laws and policies that are important for preventing violence and discrimination against LGBTQ people and promoting their full inclusion and wellbeing. Understanding violence, discrimination, and the numerous negative consequences of exclusion and unfair treatment are essential for comprehending the acceptance or rejection of LGBTQ people (Flores, 2021) [5]. Homosexuality has existed since the dawn of time. However, its frequency and awareness have increased dramatically in recent years. It is the behaviour or a phenomenon in which people of the same sex are attracted to or have sexual interactions with each other. It has always been a taboo subject in India. An individual is inadvertently taught throughout childhood that homosexuality is an unnatural phenomenon, which leads to homonegativity (Lottes and Grollman, 2010) [6] the intellectual condemnation of homosexuals. The LGBTQ community are stigmatized and face many challenges in day to day life, like discrimination, physical abuse, struggling to earn a livelihood and not being accepted by family members and society, etc. Furthermore, they are vulnerable to scholastic and academic challenges, which are exacerbated by homophobia, harassment, victimisation, and bullying they endure. They feel isolated and unwelcome at home, school, and in their neighbourhood. They are also predisposed to low self-esteem and internalised homophobia (Craig *et al.*, 2014) [3].

#### Materials and Methods

The study was carried out in the Lamphelpat block of Manipur. A multistage sampling design was used to carry out the study, where a sample of 225 numbers of youth from four educational institutes of Lamphelpat block of Imphal west district were drawn randomly from 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year graduation students, who belong to the age group of 19-22 years.

**Tools used:** A self-constructed questionnaire was used to assess the youth knowledge about LGBTQ and a standardized tool developed by Levin *et al.* (2014) [7] was used to explore the acceptances of youth towards LGBTQ community.

**Scoring:** Mean and Standard deviation values were used to measure the knowledge of youth about LGBTQ. Median was used to measure the youth acceptance towards LGBTQ. Mean, Standard Deviation and Median was calculated by using Microsoft excel.

## Results and Discussion

### Distribution of information on youth knowledge about LGBTQ

**Table 1:** Distribution of respondents according to their knowledge about LGBTQ community

Level of knowledge	Mean	S.D	Number of respondent n=225	
			Frequency	Percentage
High			32	14.22
Average	10.18	2.91	154	68.44
Low			39	17.33

The results from table (1) indicates that majority (68.44 %) of the youth had an average level of knowledge about LGBTQ community. This may be because nowadays many individuals are open about their sexuality and they come up as gay, lesbian, bisexual, asexual etc. Due to their increased visibility youth comes in contact with the LGBTQ in real life and it changes their viewpoint and perception to some extent. Youth are exposed to different media about sexuality, issues faced by LGBTQ, sex change journey, etc. from which they became aware about LGBTQ. Movies are also portraying about gay, lesbian, bisexual, pan sexual as a way to educate the youth and public as a whole. This result can be supported by the study conducted by Aniyani and Sehar (2020) [1]. In their study it was found that majority of the respondent's demonstrated average knowledge regarding LGBTQ community.

### Distribution of information on youth acceptance towards LGBTQ

**Table 2:** Distribution of respondents according to their acceptance toward LGBTQ

Acceptance	Number of respondents (n=225)		
	Frequency	Percentage	Median
Flexible	109	48.44	80
Inflexible	116	51.55	

The finding shows that majority (51.55%) of the youth were psychologically less flexible towards LGBTQ. It may be because youth are homophobic and they have inflexible thoughts about homosexuality. Even if the youth are aware about LGBTQ they still have some biasness towards this community and they are not able to accept the LGBTQ community readily as one accepts man or woman. Youth accepts LGBTQ only to some extent they don't want to be closely involved with LGBTQ people.

This study can be supported by Cruz and Mallori (2008) [4] who found homosexual acceptance among the young Filipino population is reported to be as high as 50.9 percent. However, the finding shows that when acceptance is qualified with the behaviours that characterise homosexual practices (i.e., men dating men, women dating women, and sexual attraction to the same sex) the result shows that only 13.5% of the youth approve of both the homosexual person and the practise of homosexuality. Another study also found that males and female don't want any close relationship with transgender people (Batool *et al.*, 2019) [2].

## Conclusion

The study revealed that majority of the youth had an average level of knowledge about LGBTQ community due to more visibility and having more open views about LGBTQ community. But when it comes to acceptance majority of the youth were psychologically less flexible and the youth have some biasness towards the LGBTQ community and they are not readily accepting the LGBTQ youth as we readily accept the heterosexuals. There is still some gap that need to be addressed in order to gain more positive attitude and social acceptance of the LGBTQ community.

## Recommendation for future research

1. To minimize gender and sexuality related discrimination seminar, conference and campaign should be organized from the institution.

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