



LGBTQIA+ Equality in Thailand

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Abstract

Despite Thailand's relatively high tolerance for LGBTQIA+ people, LGBTQIA+ people still live on legal inequality and equal rights. The purpose of this research was to study the perspectives of Thai society and people towards LGBT people and their needs for LGBTQIA+ rights in Thailand. This research was conducted in quantitative method by surveying online questionnaires from a group of Thai people aged 9-75 years old from 136 respondents who identified as different genders. The results showed that the LGBTQIA+ individuals want the freedom to express their identify without having to worry about judgment and being not accepted by society. They required to have equal rights to marriage legally like heterosexual couples, Majority of respondents seek for their family members, friends to be more open-minded, accepting and understanding. On the other hands, they seek legal rights to adopt child. This research helps expand a better understand the perspectives of people in society towards LGBTQIA+ people and better understand the needs of LGBTQIA+ people and how they can cope with them without bias.

Keywords: LGBTQIA+, gender equality, leadership, same-sex marriage

1. Introduction

Nowadays, in Thailand, there have begun to show more LGBTQIA+ groups by becoming more open and accepting of the presence of LGBTQIA+ groups in society and breaking down the old customary prejudice that men should only be paired with women. Especially in the new generation but even though today's society is open more broadly, but some still resist and are not entitled to access to legal equality such as same-sex marriage legalization and legitimization of children.

LGBTQIA+ is a group of people whose gender does not correspond to their birth gender. This is a diverse gender group of people. LGBTQIA+ is an abbreviation for a group that identifies a group's gender identity, an abbreviation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual. Lesbian refers to women who are interested in women, Gay refers to men who are interested in men but in western women also can call themselves gay too, Bisexual refers to a group that can be interested in same-sex or different-sex, Transgender refers to people who have a gender expression that is different from their birth gender by passing medical transition process, Queer refers to people who don't like love and still questioning their sexuality, Intersex refers a people who have both males and females chromosomes and sex organs, and Asexual refers to people who do not attract to sex or may need some factors to motivate and have 2 more "A" which are a romantic and a gender (Chanin, 2019).

Although, Thai society, they are more accepting of this group of people they still have to face social norms or even family acceptance and suppliant for equal rights for themselves in order to live and have a perfect family like normal men and women, which can legally marry and adopt a child. But at present, there is no law to certify the right in this regard because the government considers Thai society needs to take time to adjust and be able to fully accept LGBTQIA+ people as individuals equal to men and women. Therefore, there may be an opportunity to obtain those rights in the future.

This research is therefore an opportunity to expand and understand the perspectives of people from a different generation in society towards LGBTQIA+ people and understand the reason from a different mindset from the age gap in order to be part of being able to suppliant equality and needs among LGBTQIA+. Therefore, the study of the perspective of people in society and the gender equality of same-sex marriage legalization and legitimization of children in Thai society and to benefit the LGBTQIA+ people who are not entitled to benefits of marriage legalization in Thailand.

2. Objective

To compare different generations' perspective, from baby-boomer to generation alpha, toward LGBTQ+ rights such as law same-sex marriage and legitimation of children.

3. Hypothesis

Nowadays, Thai society is becoming more diverse. There is emergence of LGBTQIA+ campaigns and media are being created. These mediums make Gen Z absorb and accept that gender differences are not uncommon. Compared to Baby Boomer generation, they face challenge to access content related LGBTQIA+ and people are often afraid to call out that they're LGBTQIA+ because of society, attitudes, and values. This includes the expectations of the family for the children of that generation. Expectant families want their children to marry and have families. This expectation has affected their mental state and courage to reveal themselves as LGBTQIA+ for fear of disappointing their families. In another case, if they reveal their identity as LGBTQIA+ and have resistance or their society and people around do not support will cause an impact on daily life, study, and the workplace. However, as the era changes, media are reachable, then values, attitudes, and society all changed. This has led to greater acceptance of differences and diversity, making Gen Z feel that LGBTQIA+ is normal. Be accepting and willing to support this community, whether in practice against LGBTQIA+ or legally for the benefits that LGBTQIA+ should receive equally in a society like normal people. But in another way, as society becomes more accepting of diversity around LGBTQIA+, legally it is not. In terms of law and rights, there are also restrictions, for example, Abbreviations (Mr., Mrs., and Ms.), Same-sex marriage legalization law, Children legitimation law, and child adoption. The limitations of laws and rights are also an important factor in the limitations of the LGBTQIA+ community and their inability to reveal their full anonymity.

4. Literature Review

The purpose of this research is to want people in Thai society to accept and treat LGBTQIA+ equally, including equality rights, same-sex married, leadership, understanding, and support for LGBTQIA+. LGBTQIA+ is a gender group whose preferences or sexual orientation differ from the general public. Nowadays, despite the increasing campaigns in Thai society to accept LGBTQIA+, However, LGBTQIA+ is still living on the line of inequality in terms of access, Laws, and equal rights in Thai society (Amnesty International Thailand,2021).

On issues of same-sex marriage and child adoption Nowadays in Thailand, people call out that they are more gender diverse this made the state unable to respond to the needs of LGBTQIA+ people immediately. Especially the certification of marriage rights and child custody, claiming that "life partner" is not equal to "spouse". Although there is no clear display of hatred towards LGBTQIA+ people. But it can be said that Thai society is tolerant of LGBTQIA+ people. Furthermore, found that the tendency to accept LGBTQIA+ people is getting better and better. If the issue of same-sex marriage and children can be done, Scholars commented that it will have a positive impact on Thai society in terms of the economy (Kyoto,2022). Legislation to support the rights of marriage and child recognition for LGBTQIA+ people affects the development of the lives of LGBTQIA+ people with a culture centered on trade and investment in LGBTQIA+-related industries, Thailand will become a tourist destination for LGBTQIA+ international tourists. The Tourism Authority of Thailand also supports and promotes this issue. Due to economic and social changes causing more diversity in society, for example, LGBTQIA+ began to play more roles in society by creating a variety of targets in the market because the LGBTQIA+ people have statistics, are single, have no children, and have no burden. Therefore, throwing all the expenses to themselves. Market analysis reveals that fashion and entertainment products have greater demand for LGBTQIA+ target groups. Occupation in Thailand It remains evident that LGBTQIA+ individuals are still subject to unequal discrimination in education, training applying for a job as well as work. It has been subjected to harassment, discrimination, and violence in discussions about school and work. Some companies continue to affect the minds of these people, such as gossiping, mocking, intimidating, or being viewed as an LGBTQIA+ problem that prevents advancement in life and if LGBTQIA+ people are working in government jobs such as teachers, LGBTQIA+ people will be pressured and watched especially because the teaching profession is a profession that should be a good role model for children which in society considers, if teachers are LGBTQIA+ people may be a bad example for children and children are likely to have high levels of sexual orientation. This kind of

thinking arises because powerful people in Thai society are still outdated, and not open to opinions or different opinions. Which makes people think that being LGBTQIA+ is wrong and in teachers or other government occupations, there is a condition that makes LGBTQIA+ people uncomfortable: wearing uniforms. In Thailand, people working in the government or occupations with uniforms will be assigned to wear a uniform according to their gender. For work in the bureaucracy of LGBTQIA+ people, therefore, a very high percentage choose to hide their identities as LGBTQIA+ people because revealing themselves as a group of LGBTQIA+ people will have a direct impact on work and life at work because if they meet someone who doesn't support or accept differences will cause violence in either physical or verbal form. Which of these may lead to trauma to the mind and unhappy at work or another factor is being LGBTQIA+ in bureaucracy it can be looked down upon in terms of competence and this affects salaries, job placement, and performance assessments.

The last and most important point is acceptance and understanding from those around them, especially family and close friends. Immediate acceptance of family and peers can be difficult because reaching this group can be difficult for some people. Family acceptance is an issue that greatly affects the daily lives of LGBTQIA+ people because family is the most important basis if family members can't accept or keep talking to LGBTQ people feeling guilty about being different from others (Adisorn et al., 2020). This can cause LGBTQIA+ people to lose their confidence and reluctance to socialize. Because they think they are worthless and weird. Or some families may accept LGBTQIA+ people by saying they can be themselves but to be good and successful in their life (Chanthama, 2022). These words do not really make LGBTQIA+ people feel accepted. But on the other hand, they were also pressured by saying that they had to succeed, which in fact that accepted in Thai society, including the laws and rights that LGBTQIA+ people should have the same as normal people, not that much support from the government. However, everyone should respect their rights, opinions, and differences.

Even at present launching as LGBTQIA+ would be normal. But not everyone feels safe to call out, as some are still concerned about how society will treat them moreover if family members do not support this may be the reason. This can cause people in this group to feel insecure and lose their self-esteem.

5. Synthesis Matrix

The study of LGBTQIA+ Equality in Thailand is a research that the researcher wants to study the thoughts and attitudes towards LGBTQIA people in Thai society, which lead to the demand for equality among people of diversity. Sexually. The researcher has conducted a study based on the concepts, theories, research papers, documents, and related inquiries in presenting the objectives of this research to understand the perspective of people in Thai society toward LGBTQIA+, and how people in different generations. in Thai society thoughts of the LGBTQIA+ group.

6. Research Method

This research data collection is based on general public opinions on gender equality in Thailand to understand the perspective of Thai citizens towards LGBTQIA+ in Thai society to know how the majority of Thai citizens are open to the diversity of gender. By using research tools, namely a questionnaire to collect a sample of 136 people. Statistics used in data analysis were percentage, mean and standard deviation. The population used in this research was people who had Thai citizenship, aged between 9-75 years. In this research, we specifically collected data from a group of 136 Thai citizens. From a questionnaire of a sample of 136 people, the data were collected completely and sufficiently, therefore stop collecting information. The reason for using the informant's group with specific is that selecting the informants in this way allows researchers to obtain in-depth answers to the issues they are looking for from the main informants with details that can be exchanged with researchers intensively.

The researcher determined the criteria for selecting each group of informants as follows: 1) People who had sexual orientation according to the specified group because this group of people is self-understood and able to provide information. 2) Aged 9 years or more as they are within the specified age and able to provide information. 3) People who have Thai citizenship because the researcher needs specific information and 4) Be willing to provide information to the researcher.

Table 1 Research references for LGBTQIA+ equality in Thai society

No	Source	Objective	Research Method	Data	Variables	Conclusions
1	Hasanakrim D., Sroisuda T., Phaopploy S., Panida C., Sutima K., Busarin M., and Thepyuda F. (2021)	To study the needs and rights of LGBTQIA+ students	Qualitative Research	Data from group of LGBTQIA+ students study at Prince Songkhla University	Sexual orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wishing to gain personal independence and be yourself to live in society without being stigmatized or judged by gender Wishing people in society more open and give more respect for each other Want to be safe from all forms of harassment, physically, visually, and verbally Receiving medical treatment equally and sex education
2	Amnesty International Thailand (2021)	To advocate for gender equality rights for LGBTQIA+ people	Qualitative Research	Data from group of activists campaigning for LGBTQIA+		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In a land full of diversity but if look deeper into the LGBTQIA+ community, they don't even have a fundamental right to express their gender identity Want to gain the equality, they want people to look at LGBTQIA+ as a fellow human beings is not strange want to gain equality
3	Chanin C. (2019)	To explore the leadership of organizations regarding sexually-diverse groups in Thailand Compare the leadership regarding sexually-diverse groups	Qualitative Research	Data from interview, tape recorder, and collected analyzed data	Organization sizes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The large organization was the transformation leadership, the medium organization was consideration leadership, and the small organization was democratic leadership No matter what gender they are, they can be leaders.
4	Terdkiatphon S. and Rattanaphong S. (2019)	The study of the problem and challenges of same-sex marriage and child legalization in Thailand	Qualitative Research	Data from scholar and social activists		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same-sex marriage in Thailand cannot register marriage due to violation of the law code 1448 and 1458 Scholars and social activists was found that Thai society is open and has attitude to accepting the existence of LGBTQIA+ which increase an opportunity to push forward same-sex marriage legalization law
5	Nattamon T. (2016)	To study of LGBTQIA+ employee toward work attitude and its effect on organization committee	Qualitative Research	Data from in-depth interview		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The working attitude of the group gender diversity and its impact on organizational engagement

No	Source	Objective	Research Method	Data	Variables	Conclusions
6	Eukeikee E. (2020)	To analyze business opportunities of LGBTQIA+	Quantitative Research	Data from research		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LGBTQIA+ could change the world of marketing
7	Chanthama C. (2022)	To build acceptance in your family when your child turns out to be LGBTQIA+	Qualitative Research	Data from interview		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No matter what happen, children still be their children
8	Karoonp C. (2018)	To study how Thai society accepts LGBTQIA+ with conditions and gender diversity from the point of view of the teacher profession	Qualitative Research	Data from interview		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LGBTQIA+ have to believe that what they are sexually discriminated against and gender bias can be corrected and be able to use human rights mechanism
9	Worawit M. (2022)	To study leadership characteristic and growth in the work of LGBTQIA+ personnel in government agencies, state enterprises and private	Quantitative Research	Data from documentary and survey research	Gender Age Education Salary Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership characteristic has an effect to growth in the work of LGBTQIA+
10	Piyawan V, Chanakida T, Chutimon K, and Kornphaka P. (2020)	To understand and support the LGBTQIA+	Quantitative Research	Data from collected research		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A generation is a time when faced with physical changes and also need people to find their own identity in order to develop

The reason for selecting this group of informants is because they can provide clearer and more comprehensive information. This allows the researcher to use the information obtained to analyze issues concerning the rights of LGBTQIA+ people clearly and directly to the point. The tools used in the research study were questionnaires created by the researcher according to the objectives of the research, consisting of 4 parts:

Part 1: The general information of the respondents is a questionnaire about the general status of the respondents as an open-ended questionnaire.

Part 2: The lifestyle behaviors of the respondents as open-ended questions.

Part 3: The satisfaction of respondents with the values of sexual deviance living in Thailand is an open-ended question.

Part 4: The needs of respondents living in Thailand are open-ended questions.

Determination of tool performance

To determine the quality of the tools in this research, the content validity method was used by the researchers themselves and examined by an advisor to make a decision, 1 person, and then bring the results of the data to find out if the question is measured according to the objective or the content and collecting further information.

7. Research Result

The result of this research came from the survey of collecting data from informant groups, it was found that the informant group covers LGBTQIA+ people. The key informants are all Thai people from Baby Boomers to Gen Z. The results of the research can be summarized in three areas: the need for freedom and gender equality, the need for the right to live as a family, perspectives when leaders are LGBTQIA+ people as well as the perspective of the older generation it can be summarized as follows:

7.1 Gender and Generation of informant groups

The result of the chart shows that our survey has a diversity of gender and varieties of age ranges who submitted the form, which could see many perspectives from different generations and the most of informants are female, male, bisexual, lesbian, gay, etc. these can help our research getting more data from people who faced problem being LGBTQ+ in Thai society directly.

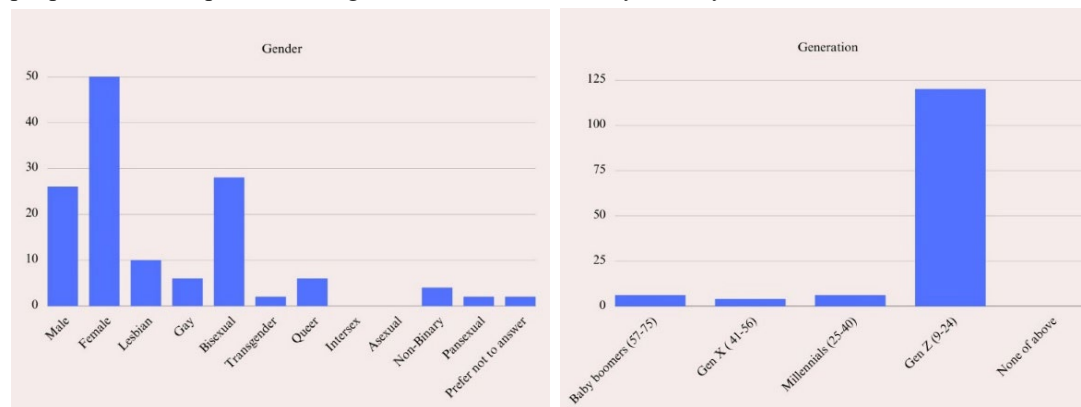
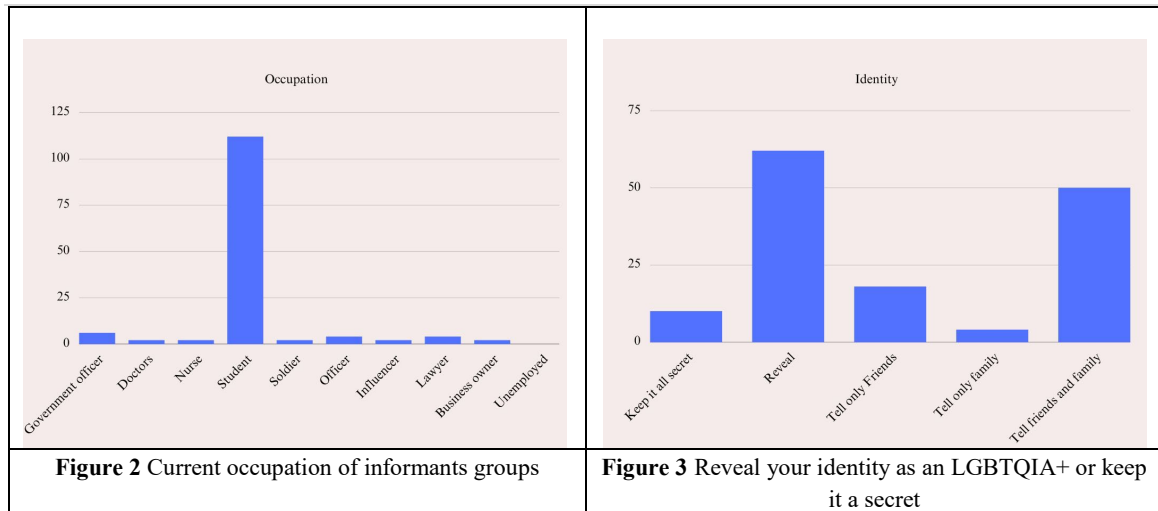


Figure 1 Gender of informant groups and Generation of informant groups

7.2 Current occupation of informant groups

The result of this graph showing the results of 136 people answering questions with people giving answers about various occupations, with most people representing for 82.4% of the total people are students, 4.4% representing Government officers, 2.9% representing officers, 2.9% representing; Lawyers, 1.5% representing Doctors, 1.5% representing Nurses, 1.5% representing Soldiers, 1.5% representing Influencers, 1.5% representing Business owners, and the unemployed had no response. Which could show “does being LGBTQIA+ affect work efficiency in the organization or not?” See Figure 2.

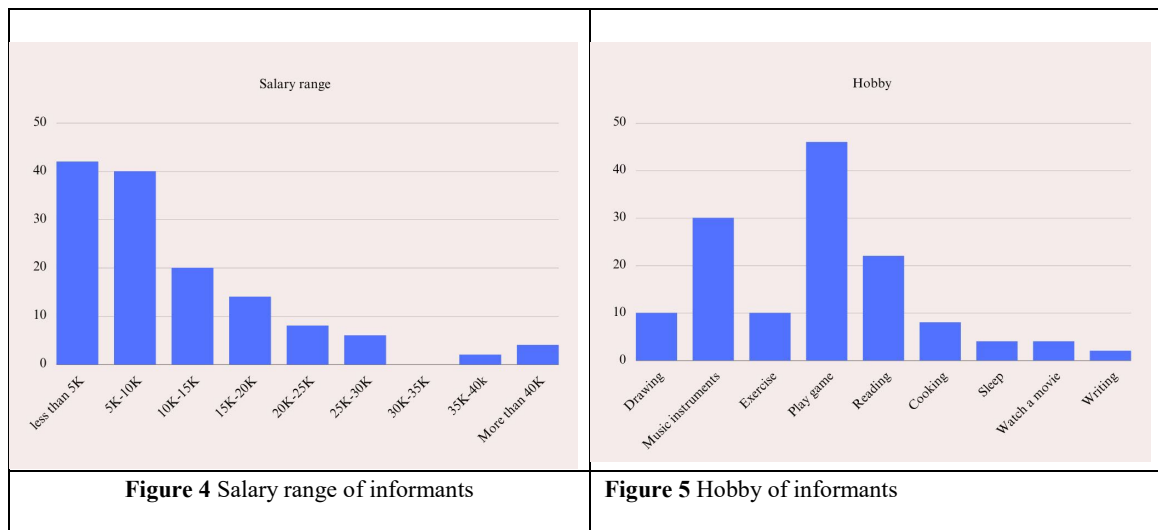


7.3 Reveal your identity as an LGBTQIA+ or keep it a secret

From the question, if you were LGBTQIA+ will you keep it a secret or reveal it? A total of 136 people answered the question with different people giving different answers, the highest answer is revealing, tell friends and family, keep it secret, tell only friends and tell the only family. It's good that most people chose to reveal themselves but still have a group of people who chose to keep it a secret we should find out what makes these people could not reveal themselves. See Figure 3.

7.4 Salary range

Most informants earn less than 5000฿ follow by 5000฿-10,000฿ and the least one counting as 1.5% earns the highest salary which is 35,000฿-40,000฿. See Figure 4.



7.5 Hobby

From the question what's your hobby? A total of 136 people answered the question with different people giving different answers, divided as follows: There are people interested in drawing 7.4% and exercise 7.4%, 22.1% interested in musical instruments, 33.8% interested in playing games, 16.2% interested reading books. And the remaining 13.3% are people interested in cooking, sleeping, writing and watching movies.

7.6 The perspective of the word “LGBTQIA+”

The question, what are you think about the words “LGBTQIA+” was answered by 136 people with people defining the word LGBTQIA+. Most of the people which are 84 people answered diversity and rainbow which are 61.8 percent of 100 percent followed by 30 people which are 22.1 percent answered independent, heterosexual representing 7.4 percent of 136 people, gays representing 5.9 percent of 136 people, and 4 people answered weird and love. There still have people who think that LGBTQIA+ people are weird and that they are not female, or male does not mean they are weird. See Figure 6.

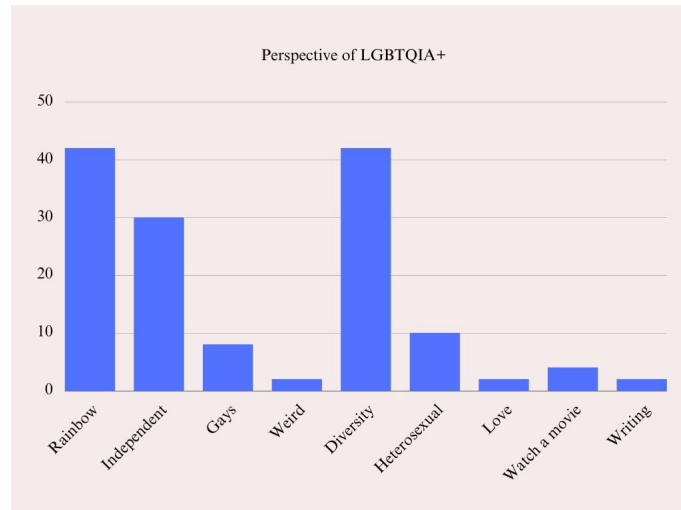


Figure 6 Perspective of Thai society towards LGBTQIA+

7.7 Friends or family members are LGBTQIA+

From the question, are there any of your friends or family members who are LGBTQIA+? Out of 136 respondents, 55.9% representing Yes, they have an LGBTQIA+ family member, 23.5% representing some in their family was LGBTQIA+, 11.8% representing A lot, and 8.8% representing No, they don't have family members who are LGBTQIA+. See Figure 7.

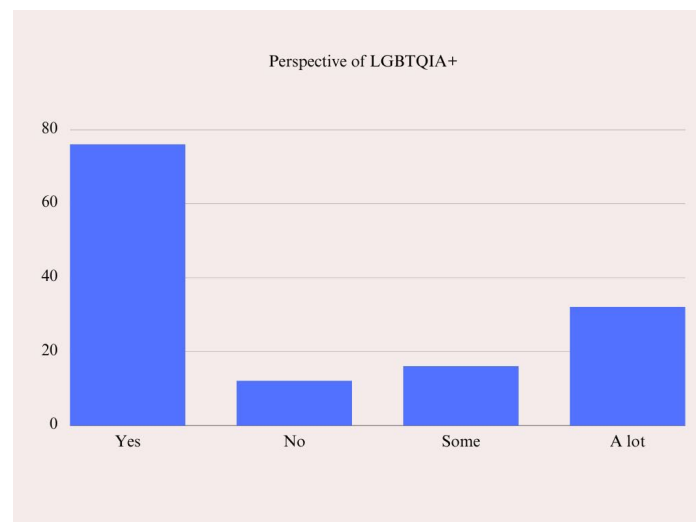


Figure 7 Opinion when friends or family members who are LGBTQIA+

7.8 Any effect of being LGBTQIA+ in Thailand

From the question, are there any effects of being LGBTQIA+ in Thailand? And as answer by 136 people. There are 60 people answered Maybe, representing 44.1% and 44 people answered Yes, representing

32.4%. The remaining 32 people answered No, representing 23.5% of all people. The result majority of answers are maybe and yes which means they still facing problems of being LGBTQIA+ in Thai society. See Figure 8.

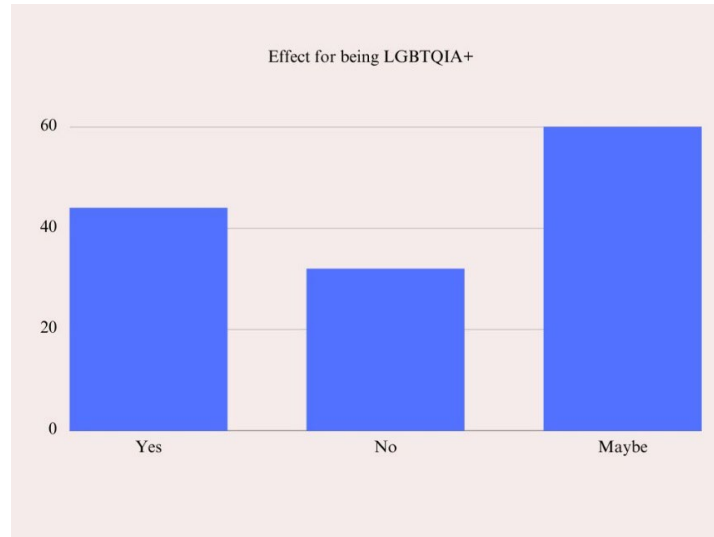


Figure 8 Effect of being LGBTQIA+

7.9 Does Thailand has enough gender equality

From the question, why do you think Thailand has enough gender equality? And as answered by 136 people with various opinions about gender equality. Some of those people give their opinion that “When to compare with other countries, I think Thailand has more gender equality and all gender can live and reveal whatever they are, without insult” and “I feel that Thailand is very open. The actor and singer can be themselves, enable people to be more themselves and there is a lot of campaigning about it, and sexual bullying is very rare.” See Figure 9.

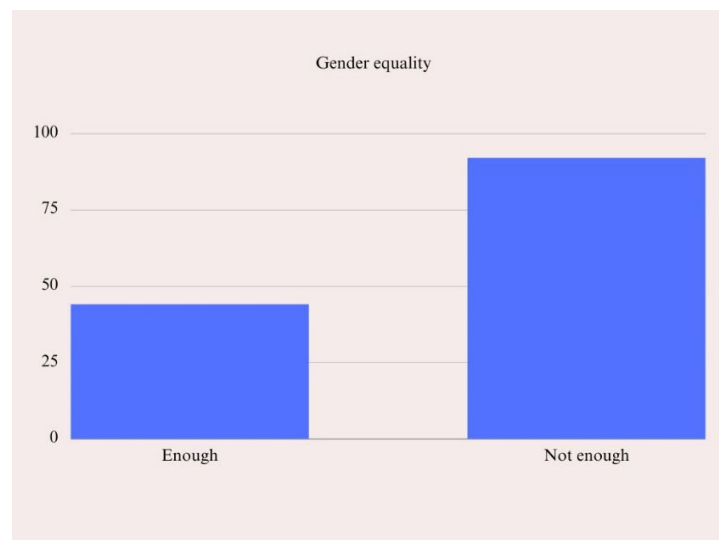


Figure 9 Gender equality in Thai society

7.10 The main factor that makes Thailand have low gender equality

From the question, what are the main factors that make Thailand has low gender equality? And as answered by 136 people. Different opinions are divided into 3 factors:

1. The conservative system as believed, social norms, and culture
2. Law and right
3. Making fun with LGBTQIA+ as a bully

The conservative system as believed, social norms, values, and culture. 52 people agree with this factor. One of those people gives their opinion that “In Thailand, still have old traditions and trust which is MAN always be the biggest that gives men the advantage. Also, the culture and beliefs, Thai people believe that a woman must marry a man to have children and continue the culture.”

Law and rights, 24 people agree with this opinion. One of those people gives their opinion that “Same-sex married in Thailand is still illegal, and government support is lacking.”

Making fun with LGBTQIA+ as a bully, 8 people agree with this opinion. Some of those people give their opinion that the “LGBTQ+ community is still victim to bullying and making fun of from many sources like families, media, etc.” And no response to this question 52 people.

7.11 Being LGBTQIA+ might change people’s behavior

From the question, do you think being LGBTQIA+ changes people’s behavior? According to the survey and data from 136 people. The majority of people answered yes and no in the same amount which was calculated as 50 people per each answer and the rest 36 people answered maybe. In the total of 136 responses, most of the old generation in Thai society think that LGBTQIA+ are not men or women so they label them as gender dysphoric people.

7.12 Being LGBTQIA+ could affect work efficiency in the organization

The LGBTQIA+ people seek to build credibility with their abilities, perseverance, and striving more than anyone else. To prove that one is not inferior to others for rights and freedom and equal to males and females as human beings with values and dignity and leadership. Each organization should create a leadership style that is appropriate to its type, structure, vision, mission, culture, and employees. Being LGBTQIA+ people doesn't affect leadership.

7.13 Acceptable of LGBTQIA+

Although Thai society is open-minded and accepting of people of diverse gender groups but found that there is still discrimination against this group. among those who do not yet understand and are not open enough to the differences of others and still stick to only males and females. Some media say that our country has progressive rights to gender and sexuality. But at the local level, there is also racism or bullying, and people who are LGBTQIA+ are accused of being funny to the public.

7.14 Same-sex marriage in Thai society

Have the right to make decisions without being free to marry or register a divorce, including having children whether adopted or children from assisted reproductive technologies, by being able to decide and choose the number of children they can have and family as their heart desires.

8. Conclusion

The survey found that most of the informants were students between the ages of 9 to 24 years old. Most chose to identify as LGBTQIA+ people but chose to tell only their family and friends. Few choose to keep it a secret and the view that gender diversity is mostly positive, with only a small number of negative people, number 2 from a total of 136 informants, and most of the informants were surrounded by LGBTQIA+ people. Most of the voices of LGBTQIA+ people have been found to have an impact on living in Thai society and there is still a lack of gender equality. And found that the main problems arise from old values and social rejection because of adherence to traditions. An old tradition lacks openness and lack of support from the law to have the right to live in a civil marriage according to the law (Amnesty International Thailand, 2021). Were bullied by society that thinks these people are clowns. Being an LGBTQIA+ person does not pose a problem for the leadership position in the organization, just choosing the right person for the right position, is more important than gender. And found that Thai society is quite open to gender diversity, whether in media or advertising, and there are quite a lot of people who come out to reveal themselves in society, but the law does

not accept the acceptance and has not yet been approved for marriage, which is the most demand from a group of people who have a variety of sexual diversity. Most of the voices are from young people and even older people are open but not enough to push people not to stick with old values.

9. Suggestion

According to research results, although revealing identity as LGBTQIA+ in Thai society nowadays will appear more and more. But that does not mean that all people in Thai society can accept this. Because derived from past values, about the culture, beliefs, or living in society. All of them have an impact on being LGBTQIA+. Coming out to society as LGBTQIA+ takes courage and a firm standpoint. Revealing has both good and bad consequences. Extroverts must be ready for resistance or people who disagree, including the impact on daily life both in terms of living study including work because these effects can be a cause that affects the mind. Although Thailand has become more accepting of gender diversity it is a conditional acceptance. Because of the support of LGBTQIA+ in the field of law. In Thailand, there is not enough legal support. This is an important issue that makes a group of people of various genders come together to create a campaign for LGBTQIA+ equality. One of the key issues of LGBTQIA+ demand for equality is marriage equality. The fact that LGBTQIA+ couples are unable to register their marriage like a male-female couple, it's unfair to LGBTQIA+ couples because it means that couples can't have the right to carry out paperwork for each other and including signing a child certification.

The law in Thailand is not yet accepted as support for LGBTQIA+ rights and laws or the Thai government does not support it as it should. This makes life difficult for LGBTQIA+ people because they had to face various problems in society including being subjected to violence both physically and mentally. Some people in Thai society still think that Gender diversity is unusual and unacceptable, for example in bureaucracy. This has implications for evaluating salaries and job titles, and also being insulted to competence. And another important profession is the teaching profession. Thai society values that teachers must be role models for their students. It should be in the rules and be a good example. If reveals that it is a group of LGBTQIA+ people will be seen as wrong. Because other people will see that as heterosexual and set a bad example for children or even a uniform Maybe it's uncomfortable for LGBTQIA+ people to wear it. Because they are assigned to wear clothes according to their gender (Karoornp, 2018). And another obstacle and a problem that a lot of gender diversity people encounter. It is the acceptance of those around them, especially family. Many people may not dare to disclose their identity to their family because they are afraid that their family would be unacceptable and disappointed therefore wanting to keep it a secret rather than speaking out. The acceptance of family members has a huge psychological impact. Although some families say it's acceptable. But may not be 100% acceptable, which will take time. Some people accept that having friends or people around them are LGBTQIA+ people but when it really happened to the family may be unacceptable.

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