

## **Professionalism and Social Behavior of Homosexual Teachers**

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### **Abstract**

This study was designed to find out the professionalism and social behavior of homosexual teachers. The study utilized the mixed methods of research. The quantitative data was collected and done through survey- correlational method with fifteen (15) homosexual teachers as respondent selected through snowball sampling. The qualitative research was done through in-depth interview with five (5) randomly selected. The data in this study were gathered using researcher made professionalism in relation to code of ethics and social behavior questionnaire and an in-depth interview discussion guide. The independent variable of the study was the professionalism while the dependent variable was the social behavior of the homosexual teachers. Specifically, this study aimed to answer the following questions: What is the level of professionalism towards code of ethics of homosexual teachers? What is the level of social behavior of homosexual teachers in terms of behavior towards colleagues, students, community, teaching manner and religious activity? The statistical tools used in data analysis were the mean and standard deviation. The level of significance was set at 0.05 alpha. The overall result of the professionalism in relation to code of ethics of the homosexual teachers (M-4.48, SD-0.14 is very high). Furthermore the social behavior (M-3.64,SD-0.20} is high.

Keywords: Professionalism, Social Behavior, Homosexual Teachers, Code of Ethics.

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## Introduction

Professionalism is one of the vital ingredients in teaching and learning process. It should be valued quality by every educator and school employee. Administrators and teachers represent their school district and should do so at all times in a professional manner. This includes being mindfully aware that you are still a school employee even outside of school hours. In many institutions, teachers must meet standards, to explain what behaviors should the teachers possessed. Teacher credibility also plays a fundamental role in classroom dynamics. They are the medium of transferring the learning to the students.

In some traditional schools, gender and sexuality matters which is one of the important characteristic of every individuals. It has an effect to the personality of a person. According to Psychological Association of the Philippines (2012), homosexuals continue to experience stigma, prejudice, and discrimination in today's society. This stigma is manifested in actions such as: bullying, teasing, and harassment of adolescent homosexuals in families, schools and communities. As a result, some homosexuals are struggling to come out in the open which gives them the social pressure to hide, suppress or even attempt to change identities and expression to strive for social acceptance and enjoyment of rights.

In educational institutions, it was found that Homosexual people are subject to discrimination, bullying and abuse under the guise of "academic freedom" which allows educational institutions to create their own policies (UNDP, 2014). In this connection, teachers tend to be the role model of the young learners, they serve as the focal figure in the field of education. We cannot neglect the fact that there are also teachers that classified themselves as Homosexual. In many school districts, the classroom is still a difficult place for LGBT students and teachers. According to Jennings 2008 Lesbian and gay teachers often lead secretive lives in school because they believe that identifying themselves to colleagues, students, and their parents would result in one of two unacceptable situations, they would either lose their jobs or their credibility in the school community. It attests that it is vital to study the experiences of the LGBT teachers. We should look upon the teachers skills and passion not based on their sexual orientation. Social behavior consists of conduct that executed by an individual in the society. It is important to the development of the people in the society. In the past, people views about homosexual teachers is that they must show behaviors that is appropriate for their profession. Their interaction with their colleagues, students and community may vary from one another. Societal attitudes towards the homosexual teachers vary greatly in different cultures.

Homosexuality, in modern society is now open. It is no longer regarded as shocking and highly immoral. But now, we have the Anti- Discrimination Bill provides that the Philippines is a signatory to numerous international agreements that seek to ensure respect for the human rights of all persons regardless of sex, sexual orientation or any other condition because equality has no exceptions and discrimination should be tolerated. Every one of us, as human beings have rights regardless of one's sex

or gender. The Philippines is one of the country in the world that is known as gay-friendly nation. According to Pew Research Center (2014), 73% of Filipinos that is in the right age agreed with the statement that homosexuality is accepted in our society. It proves that through the widespread mode of expressing one's feeling it makes the change in orientation possible.

Nowadays teachers tend to be the epitome of academic enrichment and virtue oriented. They should act in accordance with the code of ethics set by the government. However, due to the changing environment, cultures as well as the personality and perspectives of an individual there are undeniable modifications took place like the sexual orientation. It is openly heard that homosexual teachers were degraded once they have decided to open their true identity with the people around them. In line with this, the researcher deemed it necessary to conduct a research about the level of professionalism and social behavior of homosexual teachers.

This study is anchored on the theory of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957). According to MCleod 2014 in his article, Cognitive dissonance refers to a situation involving conflicting attitudes, beliefs or behaviors. This produces a feeling of discomfort leading to an alteration in one of the attitudes, beliefs or behaviors to reduce the discomfort and restore balance, etc. Dissonance occurs most often in situations where an individual must choose between two incompatible beliefs or actions.

Another theory that is anchored to the study is the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), it states that the cognitive formulation of social learning theory that has been best articulated by Bandura, explains human behavior in terms of a three-way, dynamic, reciprocal model in which personal factors, environmental influences, and behavior continually interact. SCT synthesizes concepts and processes from cognitive, behavioristic, and emotional models of behavior change, so it can be readily applied to counseling interventions for disease prevention and management.

This study aims to determine the relationship of the professionalism and social behavior towards the teaching approach of the Homosexual Teachers. The conceptual framework of the study is shown in figure 1, the independent variable is the code of ethics that affects the dependent behavior, the behavior towards students, behavior towards colleagues and teaching manner.

## Conceptual Framework of the Study

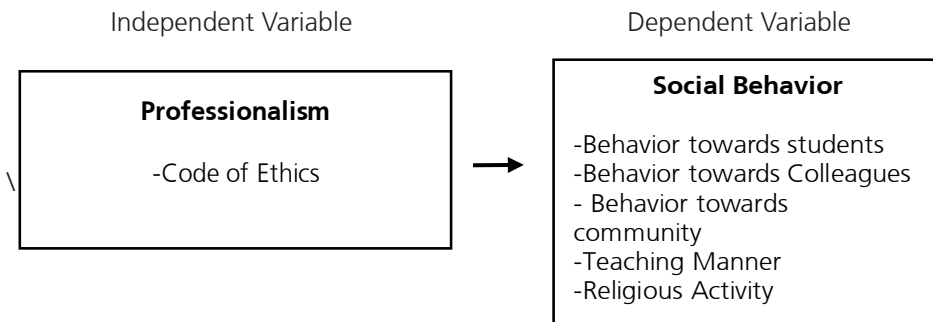


Figure 1. Professionalism and Social Behavior of Gay Teachers

Generally, this study was designed to determine the level of professionalism and social behavior of homosexual teachers in Tapaz, Capiz. It focused only on the gay teachers. Specifically, it sought to answer, the following questions: 1) What is the level of professionalism towards code of ethics of homosexual teachers? 2) What is the level of social behavior of homosexual teachers in terms of behavior towards colleagues, students, community, teaching manner and religious activity?

In embracing the true identity of the homosexual teachers, this study may be found of great help for them by showing who they are to the people that surround them, especially their family and friends. The outgrowth of this study will be beneficial to the other teachers to let them understand the experiences of their co-workers who are homosexual. Secondly, for the students to help them to be aware of the conduct of the teachers in the education process and the society. Thirdly, the family of the homosexual teachers wherein they will know how the members of their family who belongs to the said gender perceives and carry themselves in the society and lastly, future researchers, it would be easy for them to find relative factual information about homosexuality in relation to their study.

## Materials and Methods

The study utilized the mixed methods research design. The survey-correlational method was used in this study to determine the level of professionalism and social behavior of homosexual teachers. Survey Method refers to the use of data collection methods that collect both quantitative and qualitative data.

The in-depth interview was utilized for the qualitative data, it is conducted using a discussion guide which facilitates the flushing out of the respondent's views through open ended questioning. (Retrieved April 11, 2018 from <https://www.b2binternational.com>)

The participants of the quantitative study through survey-correlational method were the one who classified their selves as homosexual situated and currently

teaching to any of the schools located in Tapaz, Capiz.

In determining the level of professionalism and social behavior, the researcher utilized snowball sampling to determine 15 respondents who were open to the society. Snowball sampling (also known as chain-referral sampling) is a non-probability (non-random) sampling method used when characteristics to be possessed by samples are rare and difficult to find. This sampling method involves primary data sources nominating another potential primary data source to be used in the research. In other words, snowball sampling method is based on referrals from initial subjects to generate additional subjects. Therefore, when applying this sampling method members of the sample group are recruited via chain referral. (Retrieved March 7, 2018 from <https://research-methodology.net/sampling-in-primary-data-collection/snowball-sampling>). Through this method, the researcher identified 15 participants and made sure that they were open as gay in the society based on the data gathered information about them.

The quantitative data in this study was gathered using researcher-made and pilot tested questionnaires. On the other hand, the qualitative data was collected using the in-depth interview discussion guide through the questions formulated by the researcher.

To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, it was subjected to face validation zeroing on its content. Validation was done by examining all the items on the questionnaire to make sure that the statements were suitable and significant in collecting the necessary data.

In conducting the study, a permission letter was secured for each respondent and then started the distribution of the research questionnaire once they were decided. This study was limited only to the gays and to the teachers situated and currently teaching to any of the schools located in Tapaz, Capiz.

The data needed for the study were gathered using the validated researcher-made questionnaire for professionalism it contains 60-item and for social behavior 70-item questionnaire. The data that were obtained from the tests were processed, encoded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

To validate the findings that obtained through the researcher-made and pilot tested questionnaires, to fix some biases and weakness of the quantitative data with more meaningful answers to the research questions, an in-depth-interview was used.

The interview guide that was utilized in this study was formulated by the researcher and face content validation. From the 15 respondents for the quantitative, the researcher openly asked five participants for the willingness to participate in the in-depth interview. They were given the opportunity to be open and express their ideas based on their personal experiences. The researcher transcribed the transcript of the in-depth interview and gave the participants a copy to make sure the correctness

of the data gathered. However, since the study is controversial, the researcher allowed the participants to send the answers online through an application called messenger. Among five participants two answered face to face interview and three answered online.

The data gathered from the study was analyzed using the computer-processed statistics (SPSS) software. The statistical too that was used were listed below:

Mean. This is use to employ manner the mean score that will be obtain from the professional and social behavior questionnaire which will be categorize as with a mean score of Always Done (4.21-5.00), Often Done (3.41-4.20), Sometimes Done(2.61-3.40), Rarely Done (1.81-2.60), Never Done but Aware (1.00-1.80).

Standard Deviation. This test was used to determine the homogeneity of the professional manner and social behavior of the LGBT teachers.

## Results and Discussions

### Professionalism of Homosexual Teachers

Table 1 presents the level of professionalism of homosexual teachers in relation to the code of ethics, the level of professionalism was determined using the mean and standard deviation.

Generally, the result of the professionalism in relation to the code of ethics of the homosexual teachers is very high (M-4.48, SD-0.14).

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation of Professionalism of Homosexual Teachers

Variable	Mean	Description	SD
Professionalism	4.48	Very high	0.14

Scale	Description
4.21-5.00	Very high
3.41-4.20	High
2.61-3.40	Moderate
1.81-2.60	Low
1.00-1.80	Very Low

The very high result of the level of professionalism implies that homosexual teachers consistently follow the code of ethics and live up with their standard. The researcher considered these following reasons for the very high result on the level of professionalism: first, is the location of the homosexual teachers since most of them live in the barangay of Tapaz and they tend to finish their college in this place. They have to live with their choice as they wanted to help their family.

This is supported by the statements of two of the discussants in the in-depth interview when they asked about why they chose being a teacher.

D1: The reason why I choose to be a teacher because our family don't have enough money to send me in the prestigious school in the City. It's the last option I have since it's the only course offered in the CAPSU-TAPAZ that caught my interest.

D2: I choose to become a teacher because I don't have the choice. It is one of the courses which my family can afford in sending me to school.

Second reason is that they are also concerned about coming out as a homosexual because of employment security and discrimination that can affect their promotion. Despite that they are open to the society they remain modest because they are the ones who motivate their young relatives to value education. This is supported by the statements below of the discussant.

D2- I act professionally inside and outside the classroom because I don't want to be discriminated by other people of who I am so I have to act as a person of respect.

D3- Fear is pervasive among us, as a professional, I should do what is right despite of my gender even though there are times that I am tempted to do something like what other gays did but I always told myself, I am a teacher, I will not do such thing.

The participants wanted to be respected by the people in the society the reason why they remain to be modest. This is supported by the study that proves this result, it states that historically, lesbian and gay (hereafter L/G) teachers in schools have experienced silencing and discrimination both nationally and internationally. This is disquieting considering the potential ramifications of discrimination not only upon individuals in terms of personal and professional psychosocial wellbeing, but also workplace costs, productivity, and the enabling of queer-positive workplace cultures. (Ferfolja and Stavrou, 2015). Another article that can prove this result states that, coming out can be a risk especially during placements; fear of being stereotyped and fear that being open about your identity may limit your choices of employment. In addition, the fears were shared around threatening behavior, verbal abuse, bullying and violence against LGBT Teachers, or the fear of such things happening leading to teachers choosing not to be open about their sexuality or gender identity. (LGBT Youth Scotland, 2016).

Third reason is they think that it is necessary to strictly separate their personal and professional lives.

D3: For me, our personal behavior should not go along with our profession as a teacher therefore, there is a variation or changes when I deal with the people inside and outside of the school campus.

The respondents pointed out that their sexual orientation may not affect their personal and professional lives.

This is proven by the research that addresses such issues in Australian workplaces reflects international findings of inequitable treatment affecting the professional and personal lives of many sexuality and gender diverse teachers. (Ferfolja & Stavrou, 2015).

Fourth reason is the educational attainment of some participants and passion to teach that they are able to follow the code of ethics. This is supported by the answer of the discussant when he asked about being a teacher.

**D4: I choose to be a teacher because as someone who's an achiever since primary years until college, I have grown to love and appreciate the atmosphere of being in the school and that through being a teacher I will be able to continue this passion.**

This is supported by the article "why professional development matters" In education, research has shown that teaching quality and school leadership are the most important factors in raising student achievement. For teachers and school and district leaders to be as effective as possible, they continually expand their knowledge and skills to implement the best educational practices (Mizell. L. 2010).

By the answer of the discussant it simply means that their passion and love for teaching lead him to have a high professionalism.

### **Social Behavior of Homosexual Teachers**

Table 2 shows the Social Behavior of the homosexual teachers in terms of behavior towards colleagues, students, community, teaching manner and religious activity, the level of social behavior of homosexual teachers was determined using the mean and standard deviation. The result of behavior towards colleagues is high (M-3.71, SD-0.23), behavior towards students is moderate (M-3.32, SD-0.49), behavior towards community is high (M-4.09, SD-0.23, teaching manner is high (M-4.09, SD-0.42), religious activity is also high (M-3.64, SD 0.49).



Table 2. Mean and Standard Deviation of Social Behavior of Homosexual Teachers

Variables	Mean	Description	SD
Behavior Towards Colleagues	3.71	High	0.23
Behavior Towards Students	3.32	Moderate	0.49
Behavior Towards Community	4.09	High	0.23
Teaching Manner	3.54	High	0.42
Religious Activity	3.49	High	0.38
Overall Behavior	3.64	High	0.20

Scale	Description
4.21-5.00	Very high
3.41-4.20	High
2.61-3.40	Moderate
1.81-2.60	Low
1.00-1.80	Very Low

The over-all result is high (M-3.64, SD-0.20), except for the behavior towards students which is moderate (M-3.32, SD-0.49).

This implies that the homosexual teachers' behavior when he deals with his colleagues, in his community, teaching manner and religious activity except for the students is harmonious since homosexual teachers socialize and get acquainted with the different set of people with pleasant personality and most of them were accepted by their family and in the community they belong.

There might be some reasons why the level of behavior towards colleagues is high. Since the participants are consistently aware of the code of ethics, they always do what they think is right for their profession. There are various seminars and trainings attended by the teachers nowadays for their professional growth. They treated their colleagues with respect and norm oriented. This is made true by the statement of another discussant in the in-depth interview.

**D5: For colleagues, you have to treat them professionally by giving them respect.**

This is made true by the study that pointed out that parallel to Richardson's call for reflexivity in research on homosexuality, Hart urged "professionals... [to] cease to see themselves as neutral technicians and instead recognize their role as moral agents". (Clarke, 2016).

The moderate result of social behavior towards students might be affected by the temptations and also with their admiration to the same sex. This is made true by the discussant.

D2- Honestly, sometimes I am bias with my male and female students I am giving more attention to my male students compared to the female one.

This is supported by the study of Anderson, K., Kanner, M. (2011), stated that researchers found on average, that " Lesbian and gay professors were rated as having a political agenda, compared to heterosexual professors with the same syllabus," according to the study's abstract. Other studies have come to similar conclusions: In 2009, for example, a study<sup>1</sup> featuring 18,000 high scholars found that gender bias factors in how students perceive their science teachers (male teachers were graded higher than females even though students performed equally well in their courses regardless of an instructors' gender.

As to their relationship with their community, it is beneficial that gay teachers must know how to deal pleasantly with the different set of people in the community. D5: For community, you have to set a good behavior to others and at the same time, you have to put some restrictions to yourself.

This is supported by the study of Admour 2014, the importance of the teachers is impeded in the view of society to him as the person who takes care of and invests such wealth by the best ways, besides following up their growth in all aspects that accomplish the objectives and ambitions of society.

The high result of teaching manner also implies that gay teachers are flexible teachers and it will leads to a better connection with the students in the classroom setting.

This is supported by the study states that Homosexual Teachers, who come out in the pedagogical setting, will bring non-heterosexual ideas into the teaching curriculum, which is especially beneficial to homosexual students. (Clarke, 2016)

More so, the engagement of gay teachers to religious activity is high because gay teachers respect different religions as it serves as their guide in their everyday living and very active in some religious activity.

This is supported by the essay of Jennings, 2008 Teachers respect the dignity, rights and opinions of others by; respecting cultural, ethnic and religious differences, valuing and acknowledging the contributions made by others in meeting school department goals.

## **Conclusions**

In view of the foregoing findings, the following conclusions were formulated:

Majority of the homosexual teachers involved in this study is knowledgeable enough with the code of ethics. They are eager to be promoted. When they are aware of the code of ethics, this will lead for them to do the right thing and abide what is

written in the code of ethics. Moreover, they have a high expectation for their selves to be promoted in their profession when they remain modest, it leads to have very high result of professionalism. The teacher's code of ethics is an important ground for a teachers since it reflects all school trust for them, which in turn is reflected positively on the society.

A high level on the result of social behavior means that their behavior towards colleagues, students and community, will lead to harmonious interaction with the people that surround them and a norm oriented one because they follow what is right

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that homosexual teachers may explicitly maintain their outlook as a professional. Since the result for the professionalism is very high, teachers may create amiable atmosphere by having group sharing facilitated by peer educator of the institution that can help their co-homosexual teachers to be open in their sexual orientation.

School Administrators may conduct seminars and symposiums to facilitate and maintain the high professionalism of the homosexual teachers. They may also integrate in their programs by having a teambuilding with reflective activity that contributes to the development of professional identity that take into account the other identities that teachers bring with them as they eager to improve their career. Not only the identity of the teachers but also professional development opportunities that can help them to grow.

Teachers need to be more sensitive to the behaviors and feelings of homosexual teachers, to be able to help them in the society who experienced to be discriminated. It is recommended to the teachers to enhance their knowledge on the status of homosexual in the society by reading more articles about gays.

The support of the family is essential in raising the self-esteem of the person. It is recommend to the family that they may aware and may join some organizations that provide support and information about gays that will be useful for them.

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