

PARENTS WITH HOMOSEXUAL ADOLESCENT CHILD OF BARANGAY GONZALES, TANAUAN CITY, BATANGAS: AN ASSESSMENT

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Abstract

Categorizing individuals by their sexual orientation is a recent concept. Society has already used the term homosexual as to refer to people who are gays and lesbians. Being different is never easy, especially when it is viewed negatively by many segments of the society. This study aims to determine the acceptance or rejection of parents with children of homosexual preference through assessing their willingness to listen, their responsiveness and their consistency in dealing with their homosexual child as well as to know if there is significant difference on the mean scores of each aspect per demographic profile. The 31 parents who have homosexual child from Barangay Gonzales, Tanauan City, Batangas are the respondents of the study. Data was gathered by researchers through constructed test instrument that was validated and passed the reliability tests. In the study, it was found out that respondents accepted the sexual preference of their child in terms of assessing their willingness to listen, responsiveness and consistency. Results showed across all profiles, the mean scores of respondents have no significant differences in terms of age, gender, civil status and educational attainment.

Keywords: *homosexual, responsiveness, consistency, willingness to listen, parent-child relationship*

INTRODUCTION

Society is very particular in terms of valuing the importance of family relationship especially among Filipinos. Parents are held responsible if their child went to a wrong path or direction, especially when it comes to the

child's sexual preference. Lesbians and gays nowadays became part of the main stream media such as for the occurrence of the noontime show, "It's Showtime", that exposed lesbian and gay Filipinos to the public in their segments "That's My Tomboy" and "I Am PoGay".

Exposing sexuality to the parents among adolescents is very crucial and risky because not all people will understand, accept and love them as the way they are. In general, parents who are responsive, consistent, willing to listen, and willing to give adolescents a voice in decision making will have healthy relationships with their adolescents (Cobb, 2007). Showing sympathy and understanding on the situation through open communication and willingness to listen of the parents can lead to a healthy relationship of parents and child. Being responsive is a vital role of parents and can be observed by being open and aware to their child's needs as well as showing support, which is one way of assessing that they accept their child. Consistency of parenting to a homosexual child is an essential task for they must be open and must secure the preferred sexual orientation of their child.

Parents' reaction towards the 'coming out' of their children possibly made them blame themselves, asking themselves what they did wrong, grief thinking that their child no longer exists, worry because of the discrimination towards homosexual, religious confusion. This is because most Filipinos are very God-centered, and stigma thinking what might others think about their child and what others might think of them as their parents. On the positive note, they might experience relief when they found out what has been bothering their child for all these years (La Sala, 2011).

Though many countries are still unwelcome to homosexual individuals, some studies dealing with homosexuality state that it has been decreasing over the last thirty years (Smith & Mathews, 2007). At this point, the researchers come up with the study to assess if parents that have

homosexual child have a high level of acceptance towards their child, or on the contrary, have a low level of acceptance through measuring the level of willingness to listen, responsiveness and consistency.

Research Framework

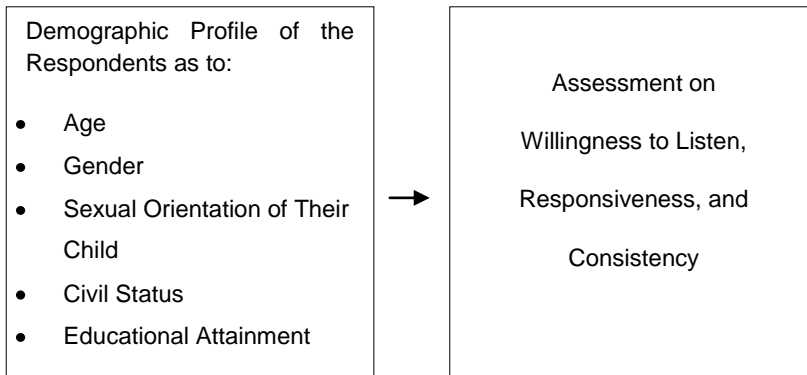


Figure 1. Framework of the study

Figure 1 represents factors such as the demographic profile of the respondents as to age, gender, sexual orientation of their child, civil status, and educational attainment. Three factors will be assessed as based on Cobb (2011) such as responsiveness, consistency and willingness to listen of parents towards their homosexual children. Parents who are responsive, consistent, willing to listen, and willing to give adolescents a voice in decision making will have healthy relationships with their child. All this may sound good in theory; however, many parents may find it hard and difficult because they may also suffer from their own crisis.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to determine the acceptance or rejection of parents

with children of homosexual preference.

Specifically, this aimed to achieve the following:

1. to determine the demographic profile of parents with children of homosexual preference when they are grouped according to age, parent's gender, civil status, child's gender and educational attainment
2. to determine the assessment of parents towards their children being homosexual as to willingness to listen, responsiveness and consistency
3. to determine if there is a significant difference on the mean scores of each aspect per demographic profile

METHOD

The researchers used the descriptive method to acquire data needed to make this study possible. Descriptive research design is a scientific method which involves observing and describing the behavior of a subject without influencing it in any way (Shuttleworth, 2008). This study used the survey approaches that undergo reliability and validity test. Parents from the specific barangay were asked to fill up the constructed test instrument. In order to know if such parents having a homosexual child accepted or rejected the sexuality of their child.

The researchers' respondents were from Barangay Gonzales, Tanauan City, Batangas. Barangay Gonzales has a total of 418 families in which 19 families participated in this study. Purposive sampling technique was used. There were 31 parent respondents who were asked to specify

their interrelated rating for each category under each factor namely willingness to listen, responsiveness, and consistency.

Frequency distribution tables and percentage count, weighted means, T-Test and analysis of variance were used in treating the statistical data derived from the respondents' answers in the test instruments.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Below are the results of the gathered data:

Demographic profile of the respondents

Table 1 shows the age range of the respondents. Most of the respondents are aged 50 to 54 years old and the lowest number of respondents, which is 1, belongs to the age group of 60 to 64 years old.

Researchers found out that those parents who belong to the age bracket of 50 to 54 has the highest range of acceptance of their homosexual child because they have been exposed longer to the culture of the society.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to age

Age	F	%
60 – 64	1	3.23%
55 – 59	6	19.35%
50 – 54	8	25.81%
45 – 49	4	12.9%
40 – 44	3	9.68%
35 – 39	5	16.13%
30 – 34	2	6.45%
Others	2	6.45%
Total	31	100%

Table 2 shows the distribution of the gender of the parents. Sixty-one percent of the respondents are female parents while 39 % are male parents. Majority of the respondents are females because most male parents refused to participate in the conducted research for some reason which they never mentioned.

Mother tends to be the good listener more often than father. The study dominated by females which can associate that they more accepted their homosexual child rather than fathers.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents according to parent's gender

Parent's Gender	F	%
Father	12	38.71%
Mother	19	61.29%
Total	31	100%

Table 3 shows only three particular status of parents such as single parent (widow), married (stay at home) and cohabiting (live-in). Parents who are married and currently both were living in the same home have 74% of the respondents which is also the highest percentage. Single Parents who raise their lesbian or gay child are the second highest having 19% and lastly, parents who are not married and presently live-in with their partners is 7% of the total respondents.

Married couples dominate the present study than the singles and cohabiting. Researchers presume that married are more accepting towards the sexuality of their child because the study conducted were mostly parents who are married.

Table 3. Distribution of respondents according to civil status

Civil status	F	%
Single Parent (Widow)	6	19.35%
Married (Stay at Home)	23	74.19%
Cohabiting (Live-in)	2	6.45%
Total	31	100%

Table 4 shows the sexual orientation of the respondents' child. Parents with gay child dominate the percentage in the Barangay Gonzales for having 77% while parents having lesbian child is only 23%.

This implies that there is increasing number of gays in the area of study.

Table 4. Distribution of respondents according to child's sexual orientation

Child's Sexual Orientation	F	%
Gay	24	77.42%
Lesbian	7	22.58%
Total	31	100%

Table 5 shows the educational attainment of the respondents which the highest percentage falls into high school graduate at 42%. The educational attainment of the respondents that got the least is college undergraduate at 3%.

The respondents' educational attainment falls higher in high school graduate that even though they are not highly educated, they still praise their children and are able to accept the sexual identity of their children

Table 5. Distribution of respondents according to educational attainment

Education	F	%
High School Undergraduate	8	25.81%
High School Graduate	13	41.94%
College Undergraduate	1	3.23%
Vocational	2	6.45%
College Graduate	5	16.13%
Others	2	6.45%
Total	31	100%

Table 6 shows that parents are moderately willing to listen to their homosexual child. The willingness to listen, with the highest mean of 2.87, meant that they show sympathy when their child is hurt or frustrated. They have a will in listening to the feelings, thoughts, and emotions of their child. They feel bad when their child becomes upset. On the contrary, the willingness to listen that is measured to be having the least mean at 2.71 is '*let my child feel that communication between us is very important with respect to homosexuality*'. It shows that most of them have the moderate willingness to listen to their homosexual child and they are willing to communicate to their child with due respect on his/her sexual orientation.

Willingness of parents to listen to their homosexual child is very essential to the study wherein parents confirmed that they are still willing to listen, show sympathy, be supportive and have an open communication between them and their homosexual child.

Table 6. Assessment of parents towards their children being homosexual (mean level of willingness to listen)

Willingness to Listen Statements	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. I show sympathy when my child is hurt or frustrated.	2.87	WTL – M
2. I accept other people’s sentiments about my child.	2.84	WTL – M
3. I unconditionally listen to the things that are being shared by my child.	2.84	WTL – M
4. I am not dictating what my child should not do.	2.84	WTL – M
5. I understand the situation of my child and what he/she is going through.	2.84	WTL – M
6. I am listening to my child’s concern about his/her preferred sexual orientation/preference.	2.81	WTL – M
7. I am always listening when my child is saying things about himself	2.81	WTL – M
8. I am integrating views and misunderstanding about my child in a positive way.	2.81	WTL – M
9. I am listening to my homosexual child because it is a parental task that is something to be observed in parent-child relationship.	2.81	WTL – M
10. I am discussing with my child issues concerning homosexuality.	2.77	WTL – M
11. I still listen, even if there are times my child speaks about things that somehow unparallel to my thoughts	2.77	WTL – M
12. I argue about things directly to my child so that my child will be guided.	2.77	WTL – M
13. I am listening to my child’s view about his/her romantic relationship.	2.74	WTL – M
14. I let my child feel that communication between us with respect to homosexuality is very important.	2.71	WTL – M
Average of Willingness to Listen	2.8	Willingness to listen is observed at moderate level

LEGEND:

WTL – H (Willingness to listen to their homosexual child by parents is observed at high level)

WTL – M (Willingness to listen to their homosexual child by parents is observed at moderate level)

WTL – S (Willingness to listen to their homosexual child by parents is observed at slight level)

WTL – N (The parents have no willingness to listen to their homosexual child)

Table 7 shows that, generally, parents' responsiveness towards having homosexual child is at moderate level. The parents' responsiveness statements that have the highest mean of 3 are they give praise when their child is doing well; they are willing to help their children whenever they need; and they respect the opinion and suggestion of their children. On the contrary, the responsiveness that was measured to be the least mean for having 2.45, which means no support is given by the parents to their homosexual child, is they love to see their child wearing his/her comfortable shirts, pants, shorts, and dress.

Being responsive, in terms of parenting, shows the warm, openness, and awareness of the parents to their homosexual child is associated as well with acceptance. In the study, most parents tend to praise, help and respect the opinions of their child; however, support is not given to their child in cross dressing. Limitation of acceptance is measured wherein they do not want to see their child wearing clothes that are not suitable for their sex

Table 7. Mean level of responsiveness

Responsiveness Statements	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. I give praise when my child is doing well.	3	S – M
2. I am willing to help my child whenever he/she needs.	3	S – M
3. I respect my child's opinion and suggestion.	3	S – M
4. I show patience with my child.	2.97	S – M
5. I feel proud about my child, whenever people compliment or praise him/her.	2.97	S – M
6. I joke and play around with my child.	2.94	S – M
7. I am seeing things from my child's perspective.	2.94	S – M
8. I always give advice to my child regarding love relationships.	2.94	S – M
9. I help my child in making the best decision for his/her life.	2.9	S – M
10. I tell my child my expectations regarding behavior before he/she engaged in an activity.	2.9	S – M
11. I avoid using harsh words whenever I am scolding my child to avoid hurting his/her feelings.	2.9	S – M
12. I am updated about my child's hobbies and wants.	2.87	S – M

13. I understand my child's preferences.	2.81	S – M
14. I love to see my child wearing his/her comfortable shirts, pants, shorts, and dress.	2.45	S – N
Average of Responsiveness	2.9	Support is observed at moderate level

LEGEND:

- S – H (Support to their homosexual child by parents is observed at high level)
- S – M (Support to their homosexual child by parents is observed at moderate level)
- S – S (Support to their homosexual child by parents is observed at slight level)
- S – N (No support is given by parents to their homosexual child)

The table below shows that parents' consistency of having a homosexual child, in general, is at moderate level. The consistency statements that have the highest mean of 3 are that they are consistent in parenting the journey of their child and assuring that their child will not be harmed by others. On the contrary, their consistency that is measured to be the least mean for having 2.87 is they are consistent supporting their child's preference in buying and choosing clothes but still parents of homosexual child is moderately open to their child's gender orientation.

In the study, consistency in parenting is one factor that should be measured to know if parents do constantly accept their child even if they 'come out'. It gives an idea that they have accepted the sexuality of their child. Being consistent in parenting their child's journey and assuring that no one can harm them is a declaration that parents proposed constancy in their child.

Table 8. Mean level of consistency

Consistency Statements	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
I am consistent to my child in:		
1. Parenting in my child's journey.	3	BO – M
2. Assuring that my child will not be harmed by others.	3	BO – M
3. Showing love and care child.	2.97	BO – M
4. Giving advice that will help develop my child's personality.	2.97	BO – M
5. Spending enough time with my child.	2.97	BO – M
6. Praising my child's achievement.	2.97	BO – M
7. Giving my child a full attention that he/she needs.	2.94	BO – M
8. Giving advice to my child whenever he/she asked for.	2.94	BO – M
9. Helping my child to solve his/her problems.	2.94	BO – M
10. Securing my child's welfare against discrimination	2.9	BO – M
11. Giving comfort and understanding regardless of ups and downs in my child's life.	2.9	BO – M
12. Understanding and comfort my child when he/she is upset.	2.9	BO – M
13. Giving enough attention to the needs and feelings of my child.	2.9	BO – M
14. Supporting my child's preference in buying and choosing clothes.	2.87	BO – M
Average of Consistency	2.94	Being Open is observed at a moderate level

LEGEND:

- BO – H (Being Open to their homosexual child is observed at a high level)
- BO – M (Being Open to their homosexual child is observed at a moderate level)
- BO – S (Being Open to their homosexual child is observed at a slight level)
- BO – N (Not being open to their homosexual child is observed at a high level)

Table 9 shows that the consistency of the parents to their child was measured high for having the mean of 2.94, which says that they accepted their homosexual child and they are open to their children. The responsiveness of the parents has the mean score of 2.9, still shows that the parents accept their homosexual children. Lastly, the willingness to listen

having mean score of 2.8, which is the least, still confirmed that the parents accept their homosexual children.

Overall assessment guide the researchers to determine in what extent parents can accept their child and it proved that they are in the moderate level of acceptance on the sexuality of their child.

Table 9. Overall assessment

Overall Assessment	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Average of Willingness to Listen	2.8	The Parent Accepted the Homosexual Child
Average of Responsiveness	2.9	The Parent Accepted the Homosexual Child
Average of Consistency	2.94	The Parent Accepted the Homosexual Child
Total	2.88	The Parent Accepted the Homosexual Child

Table 10 shows the significant difference on the mean scores of each aspect per demographic profile. As a result, the age of the respondents in terms of willingness to listen, responsiveness, and consistency are 0.63, 0.47 and 0.47 as the significant values, respectively. Therefore, there is no significant difference on the mean scores of each aspect in terms of the age of the respondents. It is because respondents are old enough that they seem to understand and accept the sexual orientation preferred by their children.

Researchers presume this is a result of maturity and willingness of parents to be open and supportive to his or her child. Most of them fall under the age bracket 50 to 54 years old that are already exposed to the societal and cultural changes.

Table 10. Test of significant difference based on age

Age	Frequency	Significance	Verbal Interpretation
Average of Willingness to Listen	0.76	0.626	Not significant
Average of Responsiveness	0.979	0.47	Not significant
Average of Consistency	0.987	0.465	Not significant

Table shows the significant difference on the mean scores of each aspect per demographic profile. As a result, the gender of the respondents in terms of willingness to listen, responsiveness, and consistency are 0.35, 0.21 and 0.17 as the significant values, respectively. Therefore, there is no significant difference on the mean scores of each aspect in terms of the gender of the respondents.

Gender of parents is not the source of their acceptance, it's just that the study is dominated by females; nonetheless, no matter what the respondent's gender, whether he is a father or she is a mother, they will both accept their child for what he or she preferred sexual preference.

Table 11. Test of significant difference based on gender

Parent's Gender	Frequency	Sig.	Verbal Interpretation
Average of Willingness to Listen	0.921	0.345	Not significant
Average of Responsiveness	1.674	0.206	Not significant
Average of Consistency	1.978	0.17	Not significant

Table 12 shows the significant difference on the mean scores of each aspect per demographic profile. As a result, the civil status of the respondents in terms of willingness to listen, responsiveness, and consistency are 0.21, 0.18 and 0.12 as the significant values, respectively. Therefore, there is no significant difference on the mean scores of each aspect in terms of the civil status of the respondents.

Parental guidance is much suitable if both parents agreed upon the same decision. However, accepting homosexual child will not be determined by the relationship or the status of mothers and fathers because they should both have an open mind and equal treatment to any sense of sexuality, this will then be the foundation of acceptance.

Table 12. Test of significant difference based on civil status of respondents

Civil Status	Frequency	Sig.	Verbal Interpretation
Average of Willingness to Listen	1.638	0.212	Not significant
Average of Responsiveness	1.801	0.184	Not significant
Average of Consistency	2.301	0.119	Not significant

Table 13 shows the significant difference on the mean scores of each aspect per demographic profile. As a result, the child's sexual orientation of the respondents in terms of willingness to listen, responsiveness, and consistency are 0.12, 0.16 and 0.20 as the significant values, respectively.

Therefore, there is no significant difference on the mean scores of each aspect in terms of the child's gender of the respondents.

The present study is dominated by gays and for that, whatever sexual orientation of the child does not determine the willingness to listen, responsiveness and consistency of the parents.

Table 13. Test of significant difference based on child's sexual orientation of respondents

Child's Sexual Orientation	Frequency	Sig.	Verbal Interpretation
Average of Willingness to Listen	2.529	0.123	Not significant
Average of Responsiveness	2.136	0.155	Not significant
Average of Consistency	1.697	0.203	Not significant

Table 14 shows the significant difference on the mean scores of each aspect per demographic profile. As a result, the educational attainment of the respondents in terms of willingness to listen, responsiveness, and consistency are 0.47, 0.42 and 0.54 as the significant values, respectively. Therefore, there is no significant difference on the mean scores of each aspect in terms of the educational attainment of the respondents.

Educational attainment of the parent's does not affect the level of parenting and what children's outcomes because education is a matter of degree. It does not measure how often you understand, love, accept, and support your child sexual preference. Being entitled of any degree is very pleasurable, however, being open minded is much more satisfying.

Table 14. Test of significant difference based on educational attainment

Educational Attainment	Frequency	Sig.	Verbal Interpretation
Average of Willingness to Listen	0.941	0.472	Not significant
Average of Responsiveness	1.03	0.422	Not significant
Average of Consistency	0.836	0.537	Not significant

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusions

The study is conducted by the researchers and they come up with the following conclusions:

1. Majority of the respondents aged 50 to 54 years old show the highest range of percentage and the ages 60 to 64 years old have the lowest range of percentage whose children are known to be homosexual in Barangay Gonzales, Tanauan City, Batangas. The study is dominated by female respondents which show to have the highest percentage rather than male. Majority of the civil status of respondents is married and both parents stay at home. The sexual orientation of the child's respondents is grouped into gays and lesbians, and as to the results, the gays have the highest percentage. In terms of educational attainment of the respondents, most of them fall into the high school graduate category.
2. In general, parents accept their children as homosexual in terms of their willingness to listen, responsiveness and consistency. Parents have the willingness to listen to their homosexual child in which they show sympathy when their child is hurt or frustrated.
3. However, support is not given by parents in terms of letting their child see wearing his/her comfortable shirts, pants, shorts, and dress. Parents of homosexual child are open to their child's sexual orientation in terms of being consistent in

supporting their child's journey – coming up in terms of their sexual orientation.

4. Lastly, there is no significant difference on the mean scores of each aspect per demographic profile.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are drawn based from the conclusions:

1. Parents of teenagers must fully understand their child in terms of sexual preference they prefer to. Parents' love and support is vital to make adolescents stronger. If faced with this kind of changes, consulting a psychologist is advisable especially if situation becomes very serious such that the life of their child is at risk.
2. To the children, especially for the homosexuals, their understanding is important in building a good relationship with their parents. This stage, in the lives of their parents, is very critical. As their child, they have to be sensitive to the feelings and emotions of their parents.
3. Schools must give seminars to parents on the importance of individuality such as sexual orientation. Also, schools must give students and parents a convention that will enlighten and encourage the both of them to deal with individual differences, especially in terms of sexuality.
4. Future researchers may conduct the study in a larger population such as in municipality, wherein they may engage

other respondents from different areas. They should also further enhance the study of homosexuality because times are changing really fast and people are becoming more aware of the changes in their body, emotions, sexuality and mentality, even at an early stage of development.

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