



A collaborative research project by NOUS Counselling (NCAT) and Art Therapy and Khulisa Social Solutions (KSS)

**Homophobic Bullying in Schools
LGBTQI+ Wellbeing Survey
July 2019**

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Section A: OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

1. Introduction

NOUS Counselling and Art Therapy (NCAT) in collaboration with Khulisa Social Solutions (KSS) conducted an online survey during July 2019 to analyse homophobic bullying as well as LGBTQI+ wellbeing in South Africa.

The data for both the homophobic bullying in schools as well as LGBTQI+ wellbeing will be presented in this document. The reason for presenting both these surveys in one document, although focussed on different age groups and specific issues, is to showcase that both of these surveys results emphasises the need for LGBTQI+ awareness in South Africa. Not only in schools but also communities.

The homophobic bullying survey was targeted at individuals who identify as LGBTQI+ as well as individuals who do not identify as LGBTQI+. The LGBTQI+ wellbeing survey only focussed on individuals from the LGBTQI+ community in South Africa. The homophobic bullying survey together with the LGBTQI+ survey intended to identify whether homophobic bullying was still prevalent in South African schools and if LGBTQI+ topics are being discussed in schools as part of their Life Orientation programme. The LGBTQI+ wellbeing survey focussed on mental health within the community; to assess whether enough support is available to LGBTQI+ individuals and if an LGBTQI+ focussed psychological model should be created that would be better equipped in aiding LGBTQI+ individuals.

The homophobic bullying survey did not focus on specific schools nor was particular provinces targeted. Both the aforementioned surveys were pilot surveys that assessed the overall mood of LGBTQI+ bullying as well as LGBTQI+ wellbeing/mental health.

The homophobic bullying survey consisted of 100 respondents from various backgrounds in South Africa and was distributed online, through *Survey Monkey*. The specific age group that was targeted for the survey consisted of individuals between the ages of 13/younger – 18.

The LGBTQI+ wellbeing survey consisted of 510 respondents from varying cultural backgrounds in South Africa. This survey was also distributed online through social media platforms. The survey was compiled with *Survey Monkey*. It should also be noted that this survey was supported by Gay Pages South Africa and was also distributed through their various online social media platforms.

Data from both surveys were gathered and analysed by Juan M. Terblanche from NCAT. Juan M. Terblanche is the owner, founder, counsellor and art therapist at NCAT.

The outcome of these two respective surveys is to create psycho-educational programmes that can be implemented in schools/communities, specifically vulnerable communities which have already been identified through these pilot surveys.

It can be understood from the pilot survey that LGBTQI+ youth have little or no knowledge on LGBTQI+ issues within communities; families are uneducated, this can be due to religious intolerance (more than 50% of individuals from the pilot survey have listed this as a problem in their immediate environment) or little to no information available to individuals.

2. A brief overview of outcomes

Both surveys identified the following problem areas:

- Teenagers/Young LGBTQI+ adults don't understand their sexuality and how sexual identity develops.
- The majority of teenagers who participated in these surveys identified as "gender fluid"
- Teenagers and young adults stated that they explore their identities with fear and promiscuity
- Religious intolerance
- Difficulties with "coming out"/identifying as gay/lesbian/bisexual etc. (Mental health professionals are not fully equipped to deal with this)¹
- Suicidal rates are high
- Suicidal ideation
- Straight people don't respect LGBTQI+ individuals' boundaries
- LGBTQI+ specific trauma counselling
- Family/community education around LGBTQI+ individuals
- Internalised sexism/homophobia/cultural homophobia
- Conversion therapy is still practised in SA²
- Heterosexual AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) does not understand LGBTQI+ issues
- Not enough LGBTQI+ support groups in various rural communities
- Upper-middle-class LGBTQI+ individuals don't face the same problems as those in rural areas
- Understanding masculinity, especially connected to individuals from rural areas
- LGBTQI+ individuals don't want to talk to about sex-related issues with straight counsellors as they won't understand³
- Individuals need "tools" on how to face every day lived experiences

¹ Please note responses on page

² This was also a prevalent theme that recurred in another survey conducted by NCAT. The Psychological Society of South Africa has deemed this practice harmful and dangerous to medical ethics. Please refer to https://www.psyssa.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/PsySSA_position_statement_sexual_gender.pdf

³ Although PsySSA has published their position on LGBTQI+ therapy, the majority of mental health workers in South Africa are still not adequately trained to assist LGBTQI+ individuals. Please refer to page

- Cyberbullying

3. Homophobic Bullying Questionnaire

1. Which age bracket do you belong to?
2. Are you male or female?
3. To which cultural group do you belong? (i.e. Zulu, Pedi, Tswana, Afrikaans, English, Greek etc).
4. Do you attend a Public, Private, Private Christian or Private Catholic School?
5. Do you know what the acronym LGBTQI+ stands for?
6. Have you ever experienced or witnessed homophobic behaviour at your school?
7. Have you ever participated in homophobic bullying?
8. How would you react if your best friend told you that he/she is part of the LGBTQI+ community?
9. Has your school ever addressed homosexuality as part of their Life Orientation programme?
10. If homosexuality has been addressed at your school, do you think it was addressed in a positive, negative or neutral way?
11. To your knowledge do you think you will be supported in your school environment if you were to come out as part of the LGBTQI+ community?
12. On a scale of 1 – 10, please rank how tolerant you feel your classmates and peers are of the LGBTQI+ community. 1 not being tolerant and 10 being tolerant.
13. Are you part of a religious household?
14. To which religion do you belong?
15. In your own words, could you give a brief description of your understanding and view on homosexuality?
16. Do you require support in understanding your sexuality?
17. Have you ever heard the word “gay” being used negatively at your school?

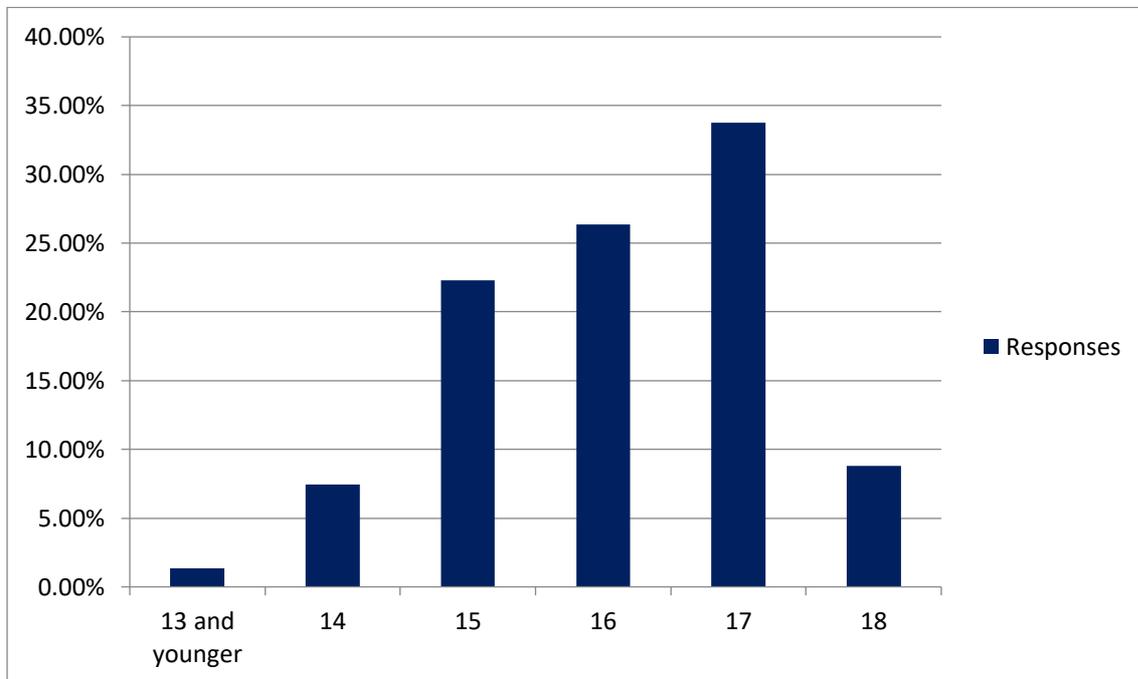
4. LGBTQI+ Wellbeing/Mental Health Questionnaire

1. Which Gender Identity do you associate with, in the LGBTQ Spectrum?
2. To your knowledge do you feel that gender differences celebrate equal rights in South Africa? Why/Why not?
3. Have you ever been discriminated against because of your sexual orientation?
4. Which age bracket do you belong to?
5. To which cultural group do you belong? (That is Tswana, Xhosa, Pedi, Afrikaans, Greek, Portuguese, Italian etc.)
6. What are the difficulties, if any, that you face in your respective cultural group due to your sexual orientation? What, to your knowledge, are the reasons for these difficulties?
7. Are there sufficient support groups in South Africa to assist LGBTQI individuals?
8. What, if any, psychological difficulties do you face as an LGBTQ individual?
9. Do you think it is necessary to create a psychological model that is cantered specifically on the LGBTQ community? Keep in mind that most psychological theory is hetero cantered. Which psychological problems do you think requires specific attention?

Section B: ANALYSIS OF DATA

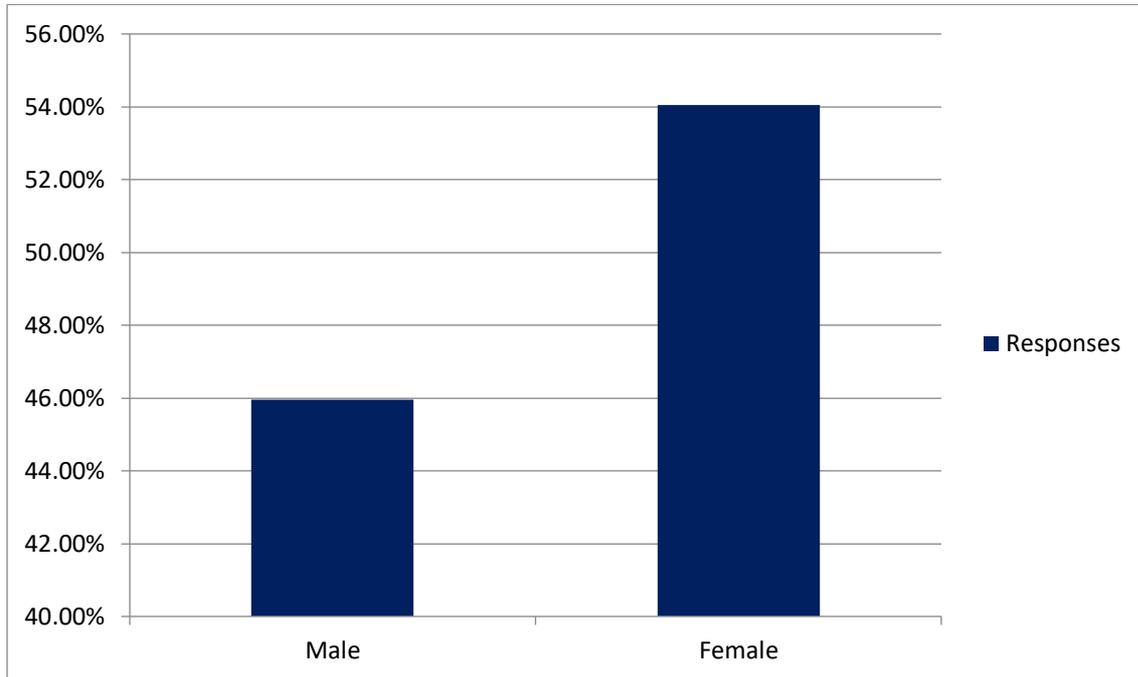
1. HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING

Question 1: Which age bracket do you belong to?



Answer Choices	Responses
13 and younger	1,35% 2
14	7,43% 11
15	22,30% 33
16	26,35% 39
17	33,78% 50
18	8,78% 13
	Answered 148
	Skipped 0

Question 2: Are you male or female?

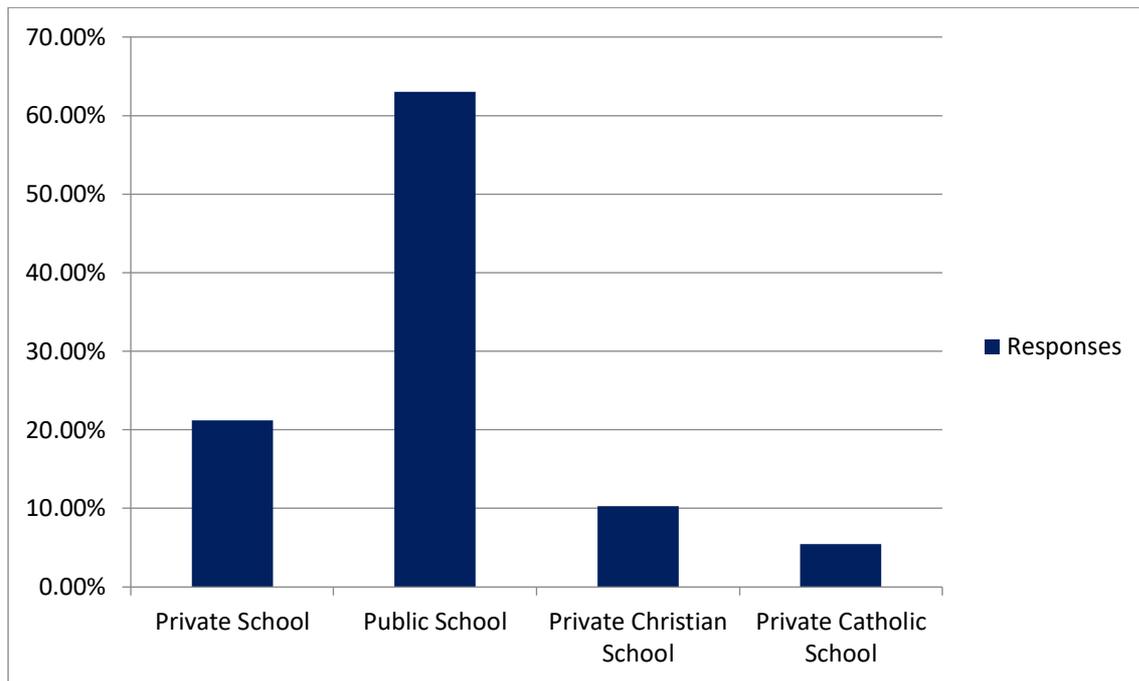


Answer Choices	Responses	
Male	45,95%	68
Female	54,05%	80
	Answered	148
	Skipped	0

Question 3: To which cultural group do you belong? (i.e. Zulu, Pedi, Tswana, Afrikaans, English, Greek etc).

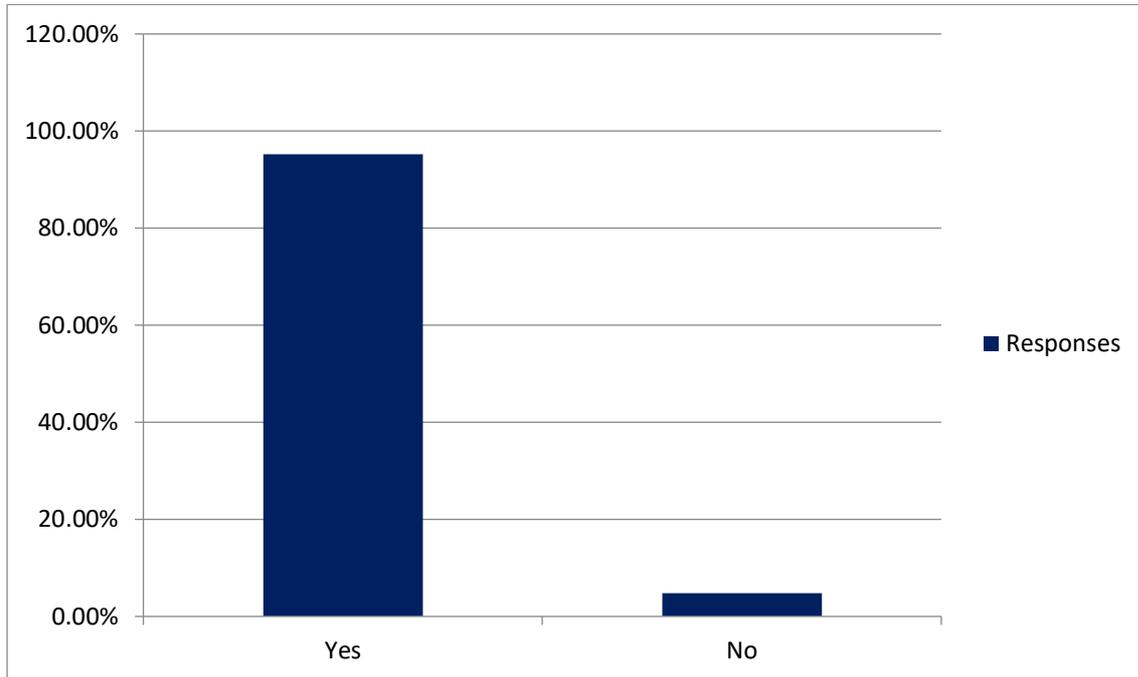
Cultural Group	Percentage
Black, of which include: -Pedi -Nigerian -Tswana -Shona -Zulu -Xhosa	30 %
English	40 %
Afrikaans	18.3 %
Other, of which include: -Jewish -Coloured -Unknown	11.6 %

Question 4: Do you attend a Public, Private, Private Christian or Private Catholic School?



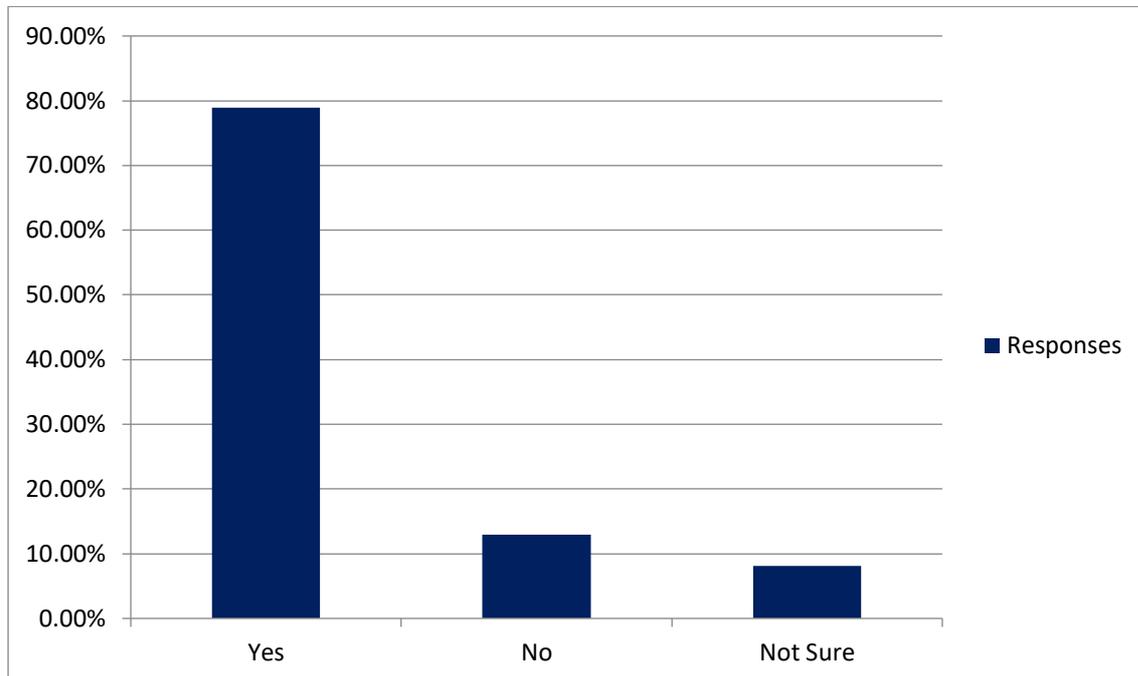
Answer Choices	Responses	
Private School	21,23%	31
Public School	63,01%	92
Private Christian School	10,27%	15
Private Catholic School	5,48%	8
Answered		146
Skipped		2

Question 5: Do you know what the acronym LGBTQI+ stands for?



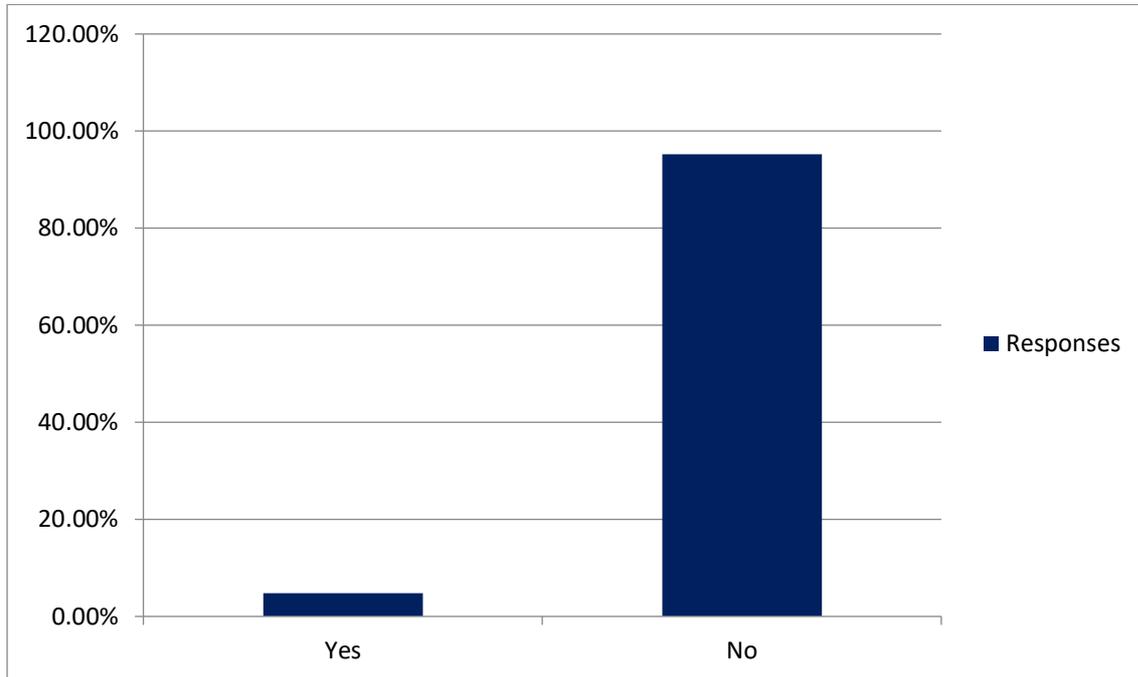
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	95,24%	140
No	4,76%	7
	Answered	147
	Skipped	1

Question 6: Have you ever experienced or witnessed homophobic behaviour at your school?



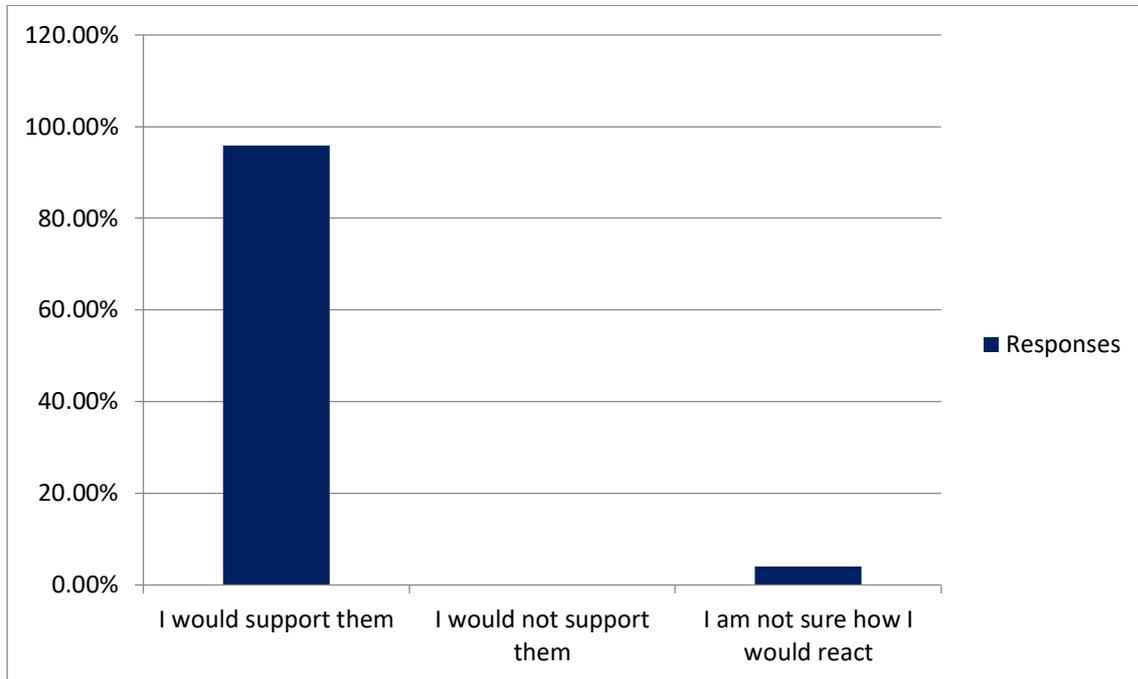
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	78,91%	116
No	12,93%	19
Not Sure	8,16%	12
	Answered	147
	Skipped	1

Question 7: Have you ever participated in homophobic bullying?



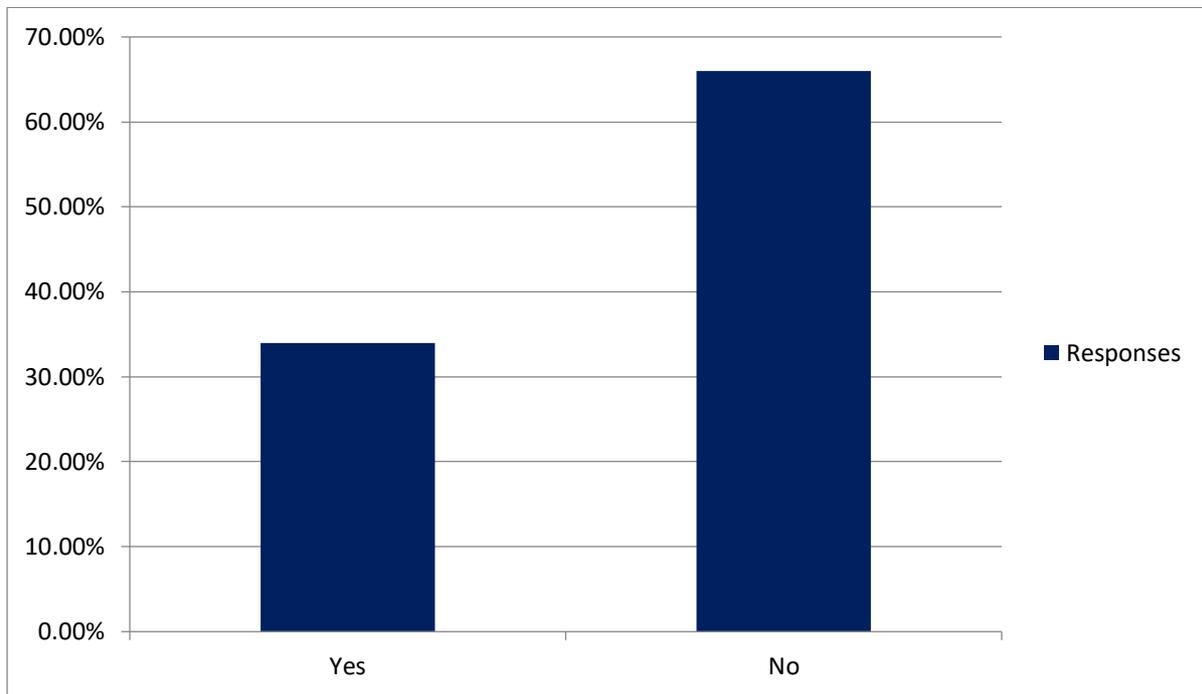
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	4,76%	7
No	95,24%	140
Answered		147
Skipped		1

Question 8: How would you react if your best friend told you that he/she is part of the LGBTQI+ community?



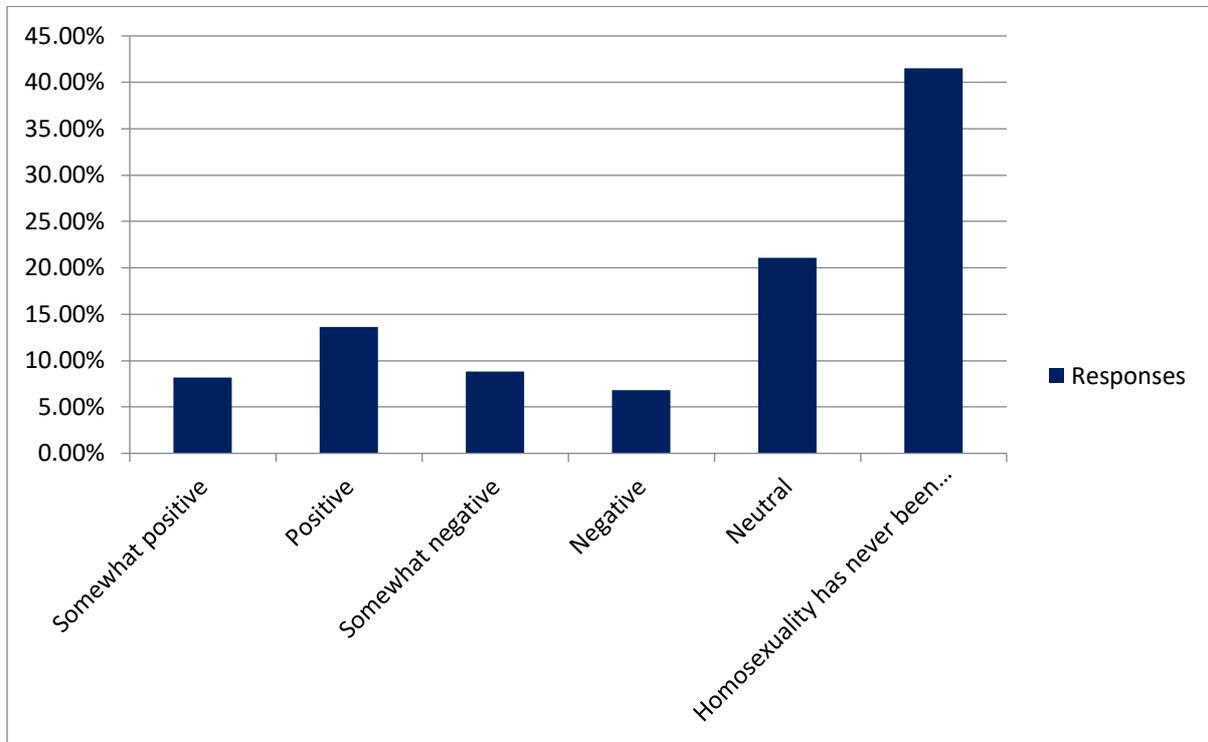
Answer Choices	Responses	
I would support them	95,92%	141
I would not support them	0,00%	0
I am not sure how I would react	4,08%	6
Answered		147
Skipped		1

Question 9: Has your school ever addressed homosexuality as part of their Life Orientation programme?



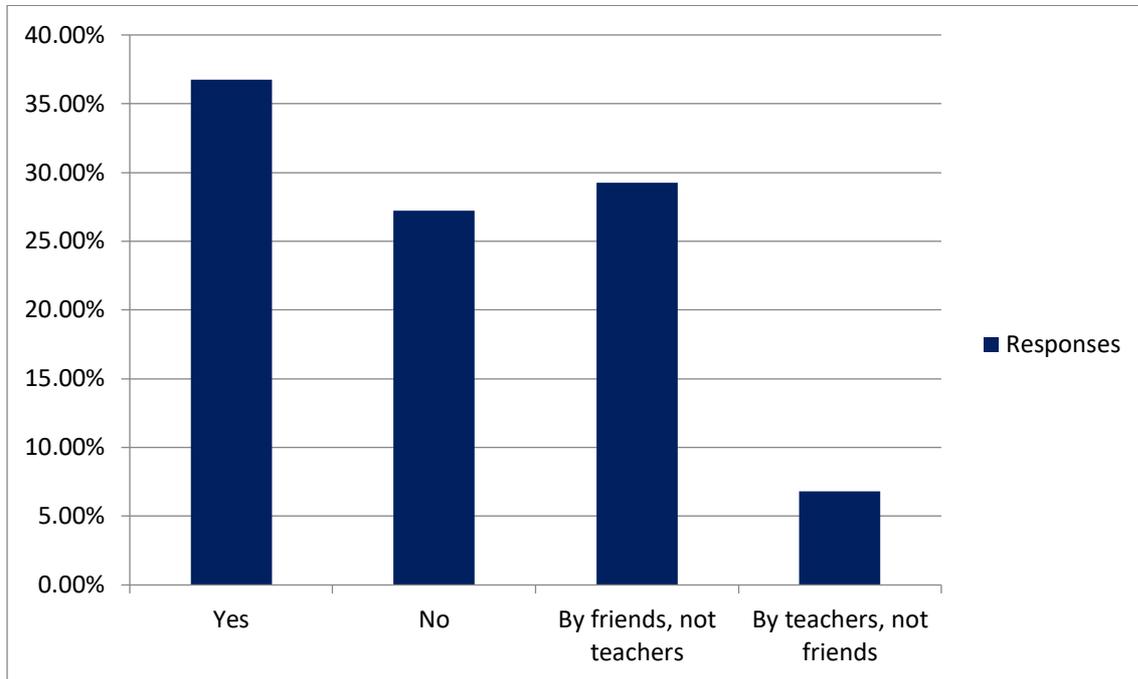
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	34,01%	50
No	65,99%	97
	Answered	147
	Skipped	1

Question 10: If homosexuality has been addressed at your school, do you think it was addressed in a positive, negative or neutral way?



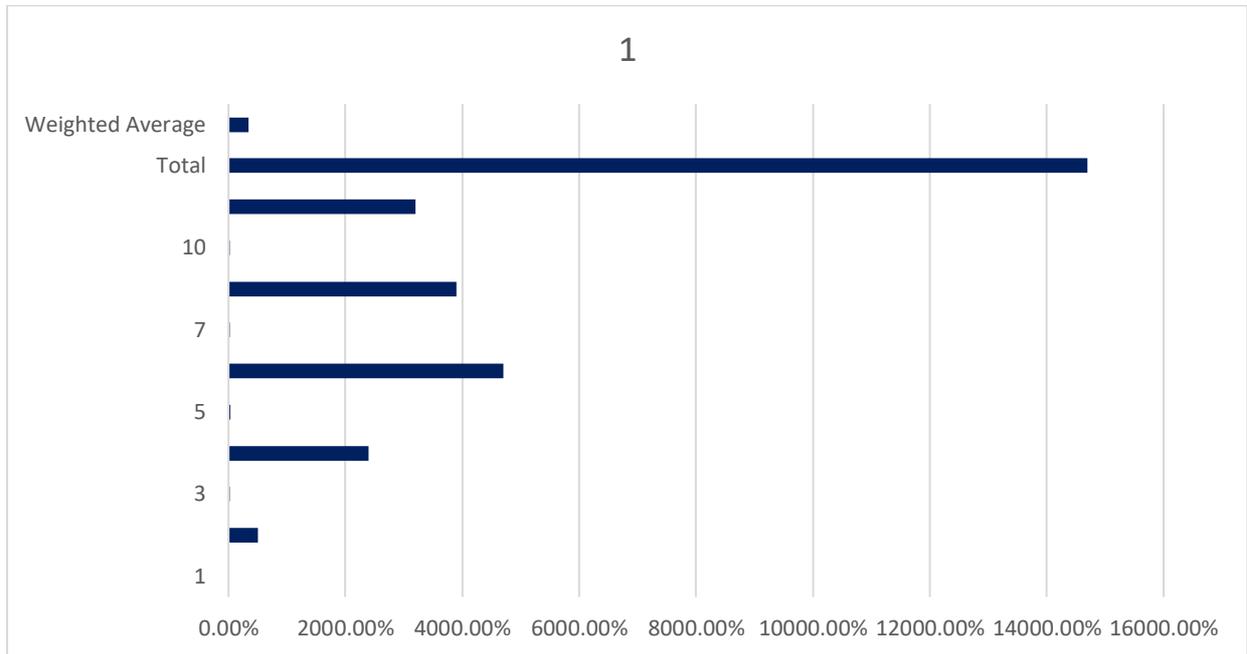
Answer Choices	Responses	
Somewhat positive	8,16%	12
Positive	13,61%	20
Somewhat negative	8,84%	13
Negative	6,80%	10
Neutral	21,09%	31
Homosexuality has never been addressed at my school	41,50%	61
Answered		147
Skipped		1

Question 11: To your knowledge do you think you will be supported in your school environment if you were to come out as part of the LGBTQI+ community?

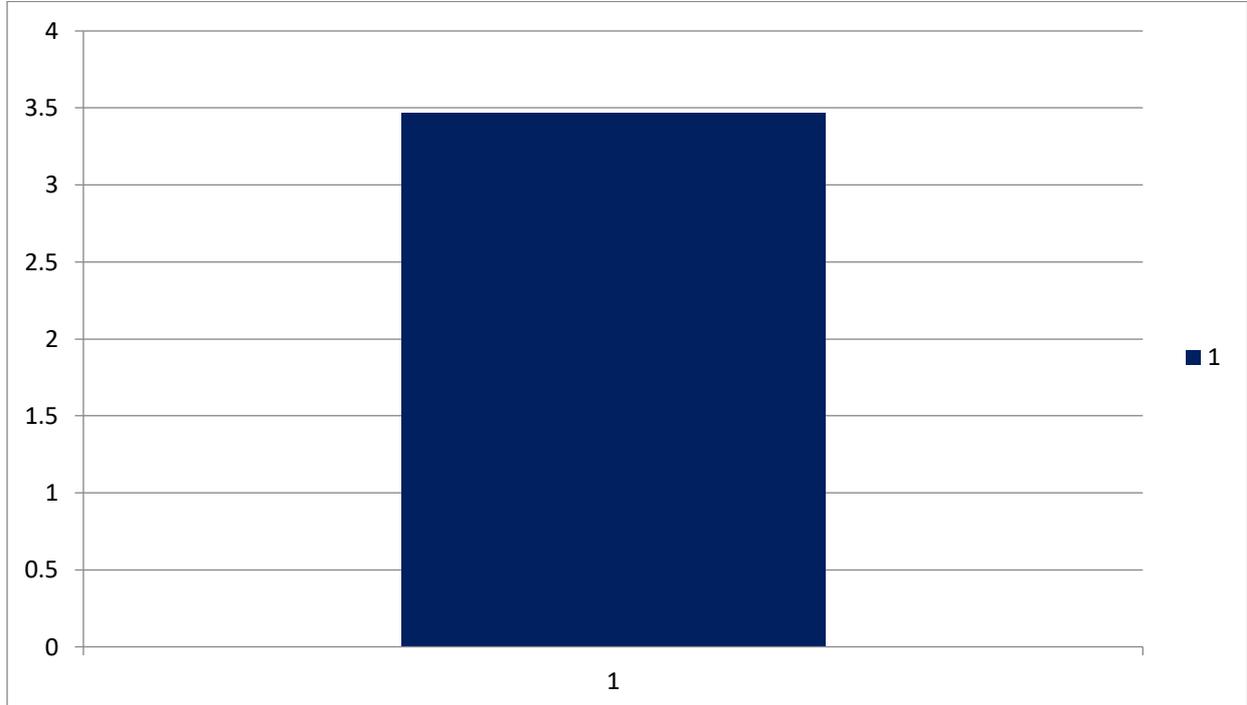


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	36,73%	54
No	27,21%	40
By friends, not teachers	29,25%	43
By teachers, not friends	6,80%	10
Answered		147
Skipped		1

Question 12: On a scale of 1 – 10, please rank how tolerant you feel your classmates and peers are of the LGBTQI+ community. 1 not being tolerant and 10 being tolerant.

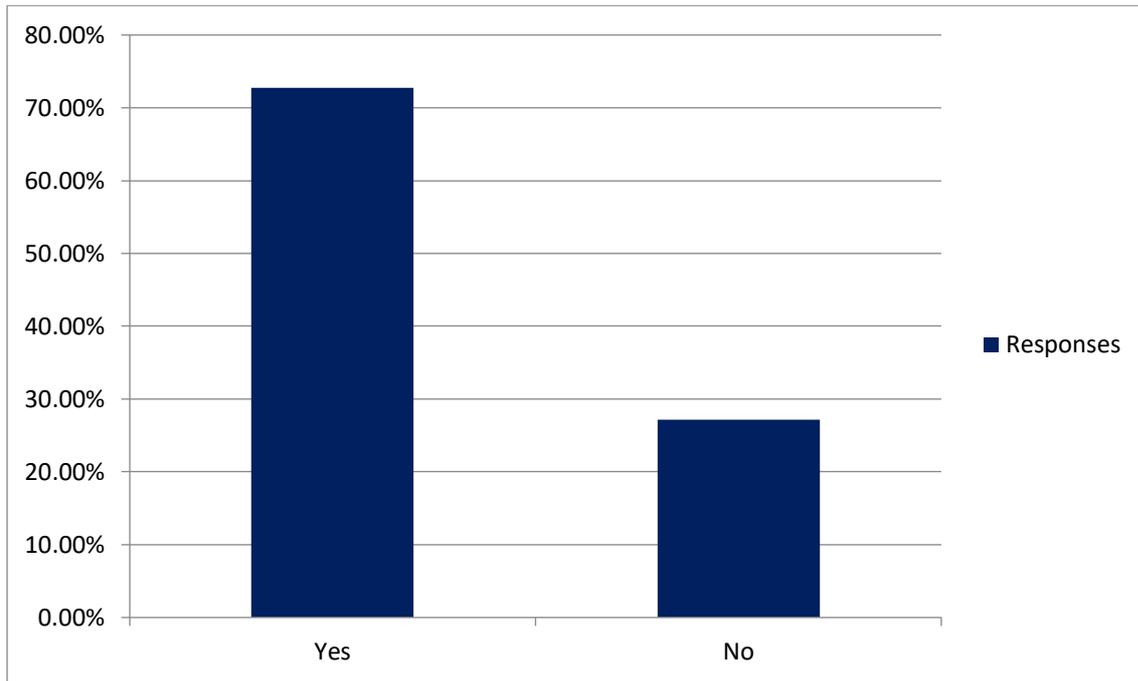


Weighted Average



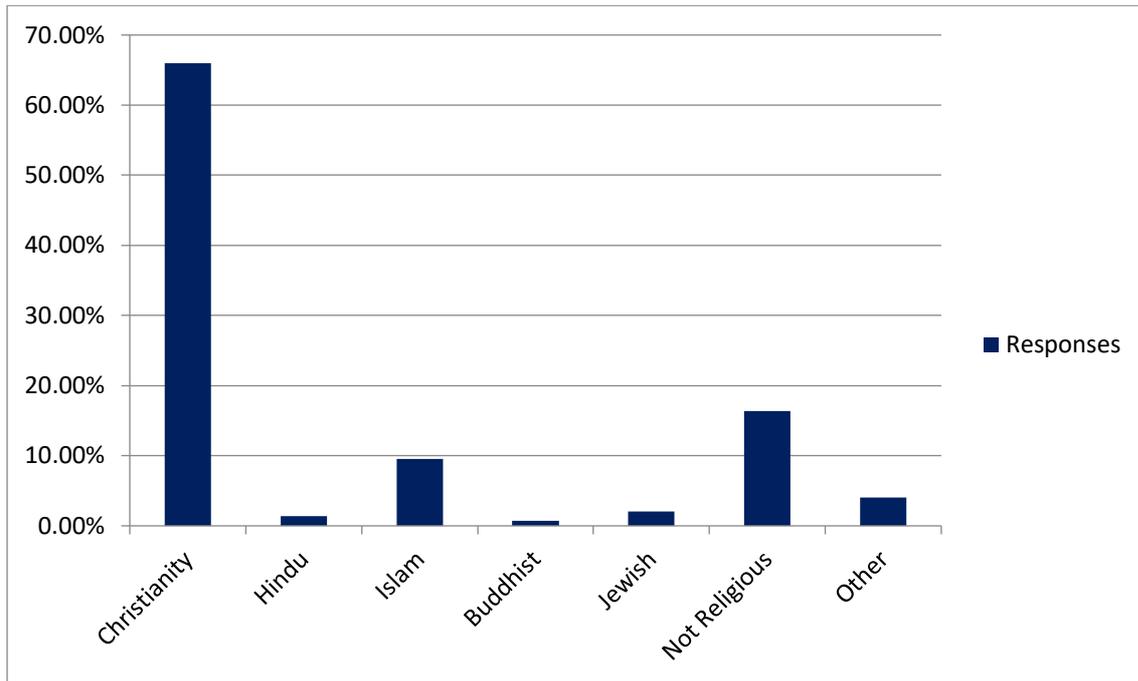
	1	3	5	7	10	Total	Weighted Average
1	3,40%	16,33%	31,97%	26,53%	21,77%	147	3,47
						Answered	147

Question 13: Are you part of a religious household?



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	72,79%	107
No	27,21%	40
	Answered	147
	Skipped	1

Question 14: Which Religion do you belong to?



Answer Choices	Responses	
Christianity	65,99%	97
Hindu	1,36%	2
Islam	9,52%	14
Buddhist	0,68%	1
Jewish	2,04%	3
Not Religious	16,33%	24
Other	4,08%	6
	Answered	147
	Skipped	1

Question 15: In your own words, could you give a brief description of your understanding and view on homosexuality?

Quoted text from respondents.

*No changes have been made to the quoted text.

Respondent #1

“My understanding of homosexuality is basically being sexually interested and attracted to someone of the same sex. Or in my own opinion falling in love or being attracted to who you want to be attracted to. In this case a girl being attracted to both males and females or just female. I'm a member of the LGBTQ+ community and I will highly support anyone who's my friend if they are struggling with this in their life or maybe with homophobic parents or so. I think homophobia is a terrible thing. We should all just learn to love one another regardless of whether one is homo or not. “

Respondent #2

“I don't know any lgbtq people personally, but I have watched many YouTube videos to educate myself on the subject”.

Respondent #3

“Homosexuality is when someone is attracted to the same sex as them. There is nothing wrong with it, but unfortunately due to religious beliefs, these people are ostracized and made to feel worthless”.

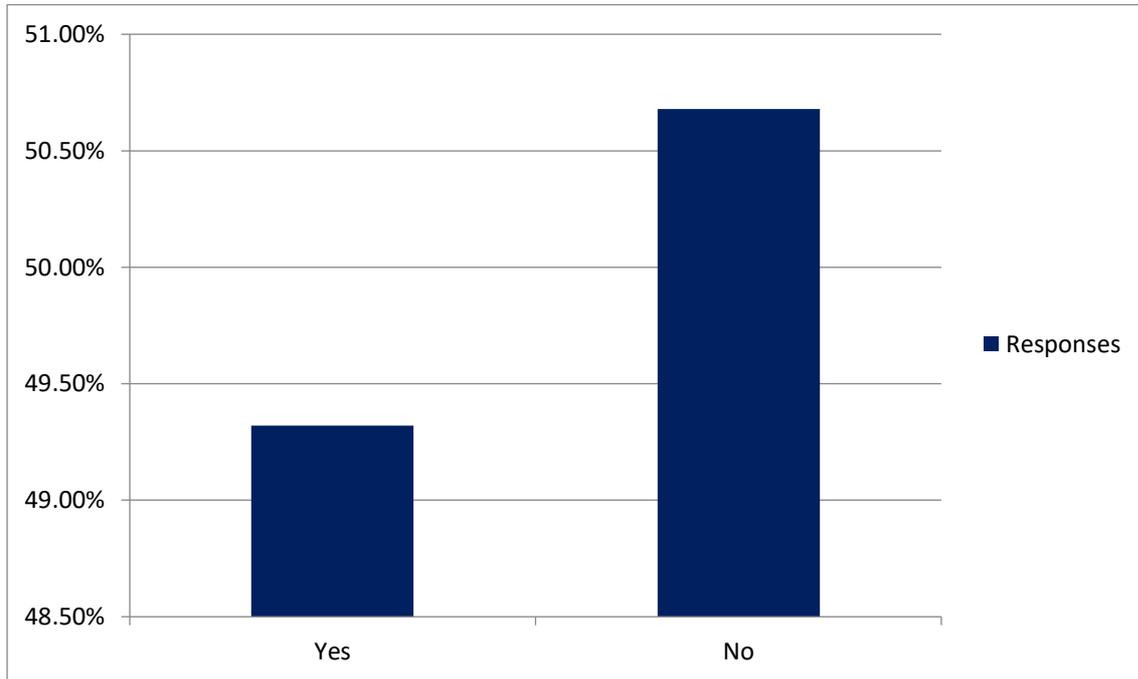
Respondent #4

“An involuntary attraction towards people of the same gender”.

Respondent #5

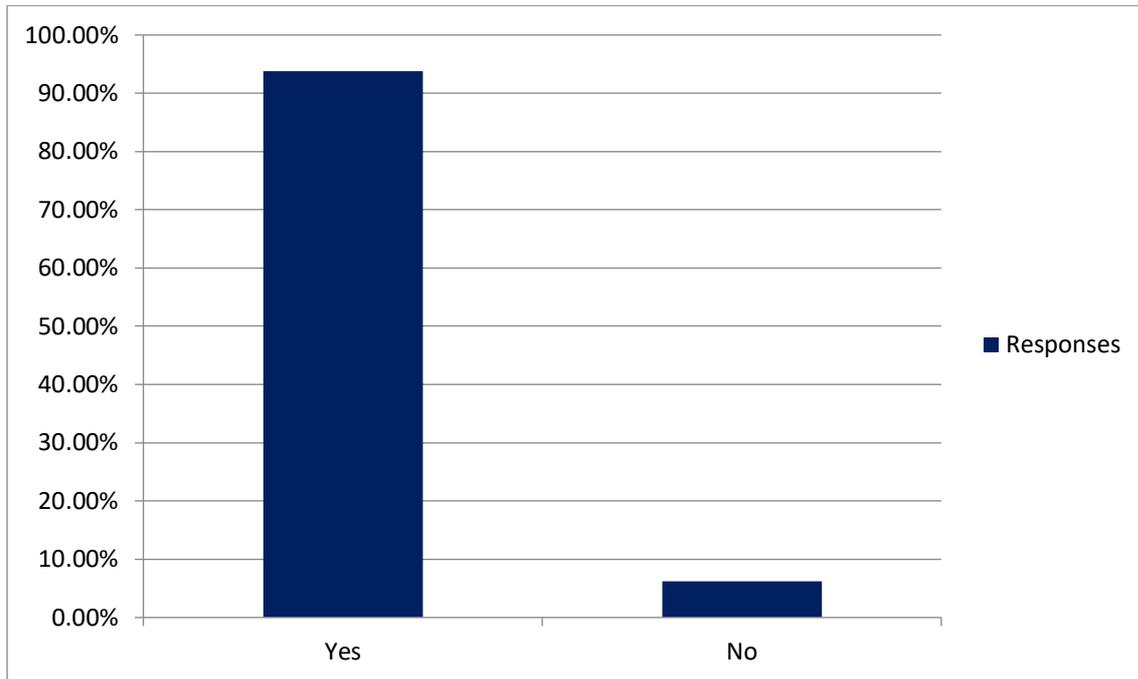
“I believe that everyone should be free and comfortable in their own skin...even though I am a Christian”.

Question 16: Do you require support in understanding your sexuality?



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	49,32%	73
No	50,68%	75
	Answered	148
	Skipped	0

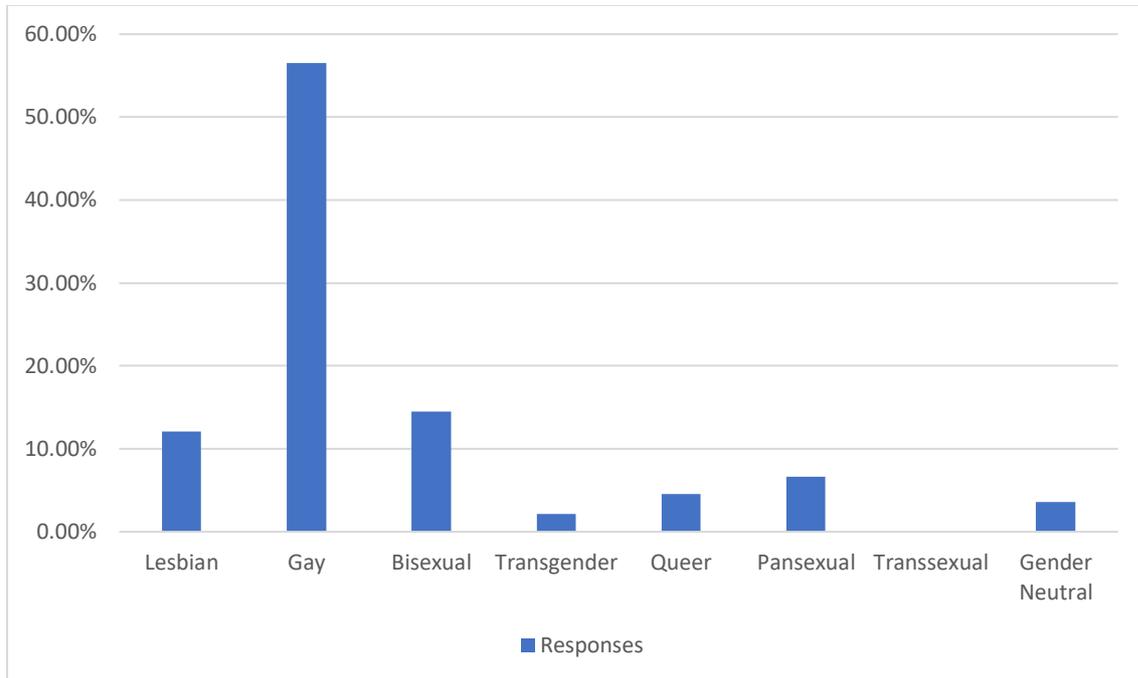
Question 17: Have you ever heard the word “gay” being used negatively at your school?



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	93,80%	121
No	6,20%	8
	Answered	129
	Skipped	19

2. LGBTQ+ WELLBEING/MENTAL HEALTH SURVEY

Question 1: Which gender do you associate with on the LGBTQ spectrum?



Answer Choices	Responses
Lesbian	12,08%
Gay	56,50%
Bisexual	14,50%
Transgender	2,11%
Queer	4,53%
Pansexual	6,65%
Transsexual	0,00%
Gender Neutral	3,63%

Question 2: To your knowledge do you feel that gender differences celebrate equal rights in South Africa? Why/Why not?

Respondent #1

No. As inclusive as our laws may be, South Africa's social spaces are exclusionary, sometimes even within the LGBT community.

Respondent #2

That's a difficult question, but honestly, I would say no. The legal system in South Africa too often fails those who depend on it.

Respondent #3

No. I especially feel that within the "community" Trans people are shunned until it suits the LGBT brand...

Respondent #4

Still not acceptable in some cultures to be anything other than straight. The law says one thing but in reality its another

Respondent #5

No. Straight white men are still seen as top of the hierarchy and that feeds it's way into multiple facets of daily life. When I was dating, I was too afraid to hold my boyfriend's hand in public and when hanging out with my gay friends, I've been mocked and insulted because of being gay.

Respondent #6

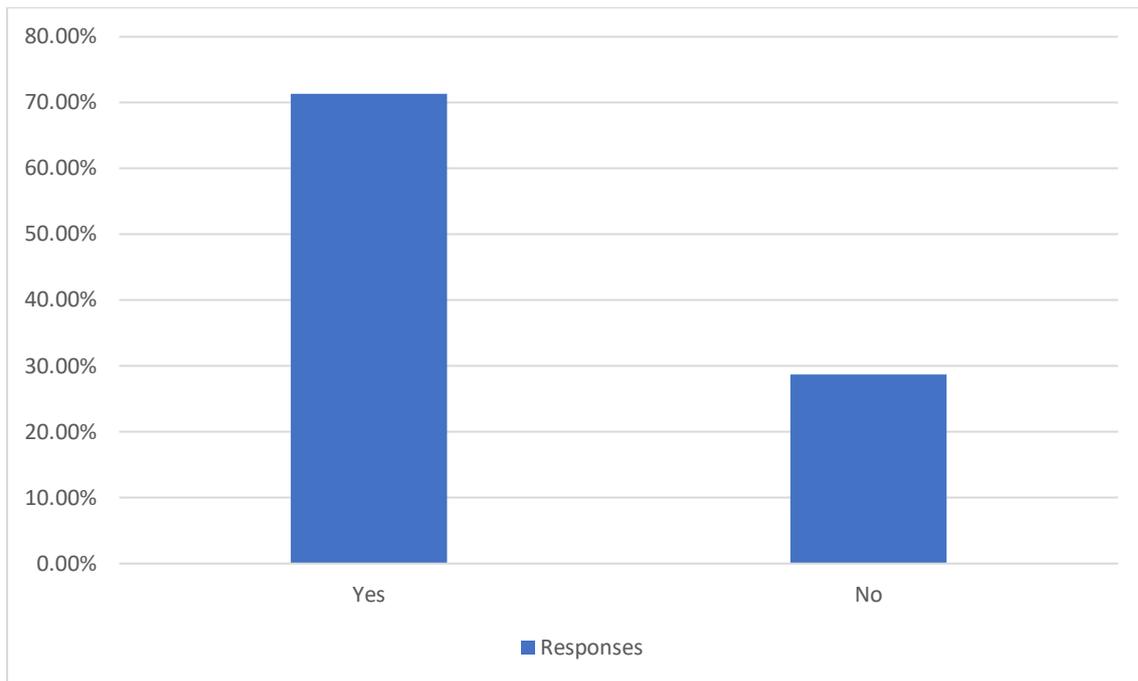
No, I honestly don't. The more you "show" your sexuality, the more you are frown upon. I have an example- my husband's company called the whole department in to hear how they

would feel about employing a trans person. At first I thought it was strange that they made such a fuss. Like highlighting a problem that wouldn't necessary be there. The thing that was upsetting was that the trans lady scored higher in the company tests than most (so clearly she can do the job) and this was the only company willing to give her a chance to work. Numerous companies showed her the door because of her "strangeness and sexuality". So sad. She deserve the best.

Respondent #7

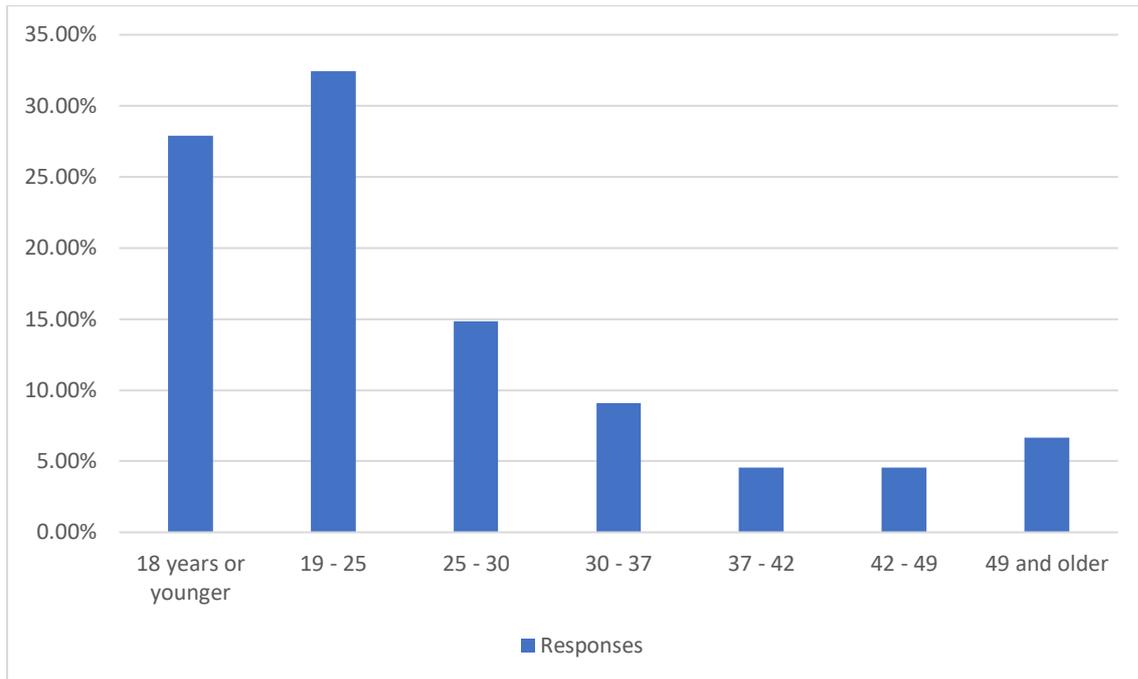
I am not too sure. For many years I have drifted further away from the community due to immaturity and pettiness

Question 3: Have you ever been discriminated against because of your sexual orientation?



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	71,30%
No	28,70%

Question 4: Which age bracket do you belong to?



Answer Choices	Responses
18 years or younger	27,88%
19 - 25	32,42%
25 - 30	14,85%
30 - 37	9,09%
37 - 42	4,55%
42 - 49	4,55%
49 and older	6,67%

Question 6:

What are the difficulties, if any, that you face in your respective cultural group due to your sexual orientation? What, to your knowledge, are the reasons for these difficulties?

Respondent #1

My family doesn't want me to get married or have kids. Their reasoning is partly religious and partly 'it's not right'.

Respondent #2

Mainly stubborn ignorance and hatred. Afrikaners, especially the older generation, are very stuck in their ways. I've been beaten up by Afrikaner men because I'm a "moffie". I've been endlessly taunted by them. Had rocks thrown at me. Spat on. I could go on and on.

Respondent #3

The generalized stereotypes. People often say that bisexuals are promiscuous, we are greedy, that it's just a phase and we are sometimes pushed to a corner because people forcefully want you to admit that you like one gender more than the other which is wrong.

Respondent #4

Very conservative and orthodox community in SA, especially Joburg, often facing prejudice and sometimes excommunication from the community, or people moving away from the community to live their lives fully. We unfortunately had a gay teen take his own life very recently owing to the feeling that there was no place for him within society and within the community. However, for a very large part, especially as the world is changing, the youth, and many older people in the community are becoming increasingly accepting and welcoming, allowing a space for Judaism and queerness to co-exist.

Respondent #5

People not being accepting of my sexual orientation because of heterosexual norms, ignorance and not having knowledge - case in point, IVF- and backward thinking around gender roles, therefore being centralized around lobola.

Respondent #6

Initiation.. because they treat you harsher than the other initiates when you gay to prove how strong you are

Respondent #7

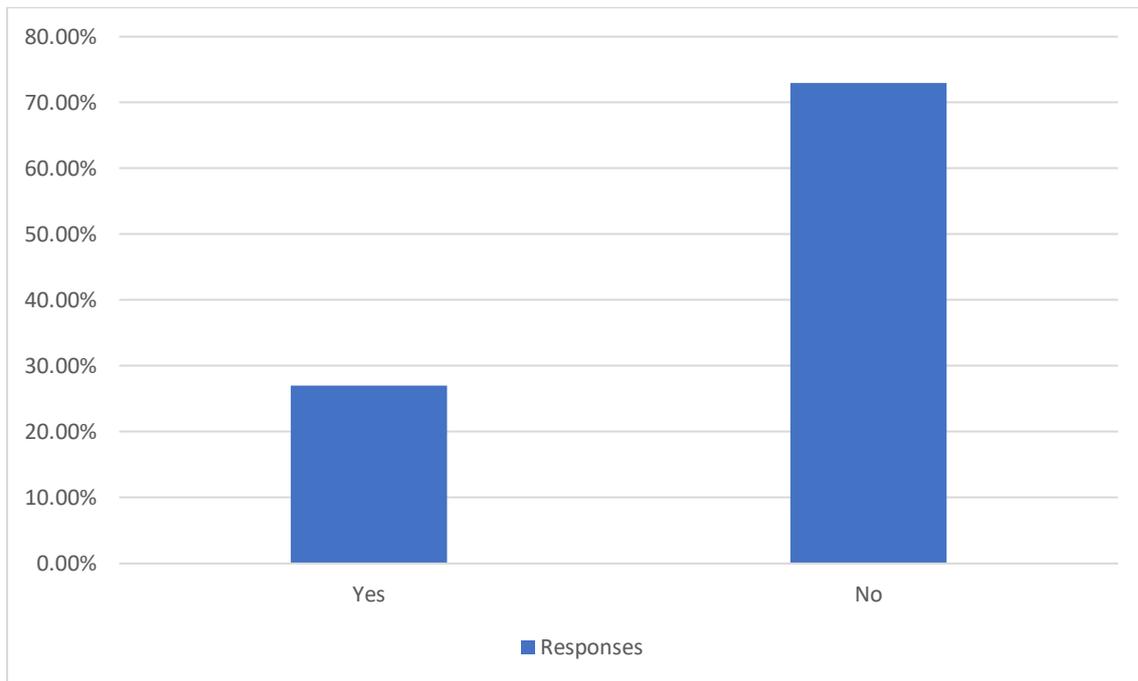
Erasure and invisibility as a result of heteronormativity and heterosexism. Friends husband is concerned I will influence her and as a result our interaction is restricted. I have had a therapist tell me that being gay is why I have struggled. Religion has made it impossible for me to speak openly and freely about all aspects of my life with close family. I have to censor what I talk about around certain people so as not to experience awkward silences if I talk about, for example, a partner.

Respondent #8

As a black lesbian women I do not feel safe in some communities when I am with my partner - particularly in townships

Question 7:

Are there sufficient support groups in South Africa to assist LGBTQI+ individuals?



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	27,05%
No	72,95%

Question 8:

What, if any, psychological difficulties do you face as an LGBTQ individual?

Respondent #1

At first while discovering my sexual orientation and sexuality it was difficult to accept and I experienced depression and severe anxiety. This was mostly due to being scared of coming out to family and friends. There are still moments where I experience anxiety and depression due to my sexual orientation.

Respondent #2

Depression, because you are told that you are unnatural and going to hell. Even parents call you names demeaning you making you feel as if you do not belong. You have trouble socializing because of fear.

Respondent #3

I'm very open about who I am, and being effeminate, I face quite a bit of stares and comments when I'm out in public. It makes me incredibly self-conscious. When I see a group of men come towards me in the street, for example, I look at the group and cross the street. I'm deathly afraid that I will be beaten up or killed if I give them the slightest provocation such as looking at them in the eyes. I'm always conscious of this possibility when I meet someone new. I always expect an adverse reaction.

Respondent #4

I struggle to open up to Psychologists or church leaders or anyone really to be open about my struggles, and ending up stuffing it down so hard and when it bubbles or blows up, I isolate myself until it passes.

Respondent #5

Miss out on a lot of developmental, sexual and maturity-related milestones and life events, at least until a much later age. Body image issues. Self-love issues. Shame - tons and tons and tons of shame. If you're closeted, having to live in constant fear of being found out. Loneliness as often it is difficult to make LGBTQ+ friends, and even more difficult to find a romantic relationship in many cases. Residual psychological torment or issues resulting from childhood bullying/torment/etc, particularly pertaining to queerness. Internal struggle of not being true to oneself, lying about one's identity (again with the shame thing), unhappiness, etc

Respondent #6

As a monogamous bi woman with a male partner, I struggle with integrating what I am with how people see me. Among LGBT people I feel like a fake because I pass as straight (not through choice). Among straight people, I either feel like an undercover insurgent when they assume I'm straight, or like an attention-seeking stereotype when I tell them I'm bi, invariably apropos of nothing because it never comes up naturally. I don't belong anywhere. I have wonderful supportive friends and family, but nobody who knows what my experience is like without being told. I would give anything for a bi community. I love my partner and mostly it's easy enough to know that I probably won't ever have sex or be in a relationship with a woman again. But every few years I go through phases where it's harder, and I've realized I get dissatisfied and angry with my partner when all he's done is not be a woman. It was hard realizing that I was bi. I don't mean emotionally hard; I mean it was difficult to figure out what I was. There were no out bi public figures when I was growing up. I honestly thought bisexuality wasn't a real thing. I knew I wasn't lesbian because I liked boys, so I assumed that all straight girls liked girls too, as I did, and that they just denied it because of religion. The day - in my freaking thirties! - that I finally fully and properly grasped that straight women do not desire other women was such a shock. It was like the world had suddenly come out to me as straight, and pulled the carpet out from under my feet. Nothing was what or how I thought it was - it was like the big reveal in Fight Club, looking back on nearly my whole life and recognizing all the relationships and conversations and events and people that I had utterly, utterly misunderstood. Stupid (and arrogant - I was so arrogant!), I know, but pretty confusing and stunning to process. My earlier life would certainly have been more understandable if

there had been some level of bi visibility in my world. I've been depressed on and off all my life. I don't know how much that has to do with any of this, but I'm sure it's not unrelated.

Respondent #7

I suffer from bipolar depression type 2, so I do have psychological challenges that are not limited to my being gay. I'm also somewhat unusual in that I have traveled to more than 70+ countries so far, one of the first people in the world (outside of those that participated in the clinical trials in San Francisco) to have gone on PrEP. Therefore, I'm more 'sexually liberated' than most fellow LGBT community members in SA, and perhaps, based on my broader exposure, more sensitive to the challenges we face. I'm lucky enough to live in Cape Town, and that the circles in which I move are less discriminatory than on average, but being cognizant of that, adds difficulties in it itself.

Respondent #8

Depression, loneliness, alienation, marginalization, negative self-image, sense of failing and falling behind, suicidal thoughts, guilt, unrealistic dreams and fantasies.

Question 9:

Do you think it is necessary to create a psychological model that is centred specifically on the LGBTQ community? Keep in mind that most psychological theory is hetero-centred. Which psychological problems do you think requires specific attention?

Respondent #1

I think that a LGBTQ-centred psychological model would be very beneficial to the community. Depression and anxiety are most prevalent in my opinion and need specific attention.

Respondent #2

I do indeed. There are a whole range psychological aspects that are, I feel, of paramount importance to the LGBT+ community. Gender identity, self-acceptance/self-love, body image issues (a very common but seldom spoken of issue among gay men in particular), and, as with myself, trauma counselling

Respondent #3

Yes I do. And I think anxiety and depression should be the main focus. The conversation begins in the mind first and we absorb so many stories about how evil it is to be from the LGBTQ community. How unafraid we are. How God created men and woman as if being gays guy or women is filthy

Respondent #4

I totally agree and existing therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists should be adequately trained not to push their own agendas onto patients, I've had some very negative situations when I brought up my interest in both sexes, and then I watch what I say so as to not offend.

Respondent #5

Most definitely. My top two would have to be: #1 Transsexual people need more help, and people need to be educated about them. #2 Gay men are invalidated to the point where they invalidate other gay men and it ends in a vicious cycle of attacking one another instead of helping each other and supporting one another. There need to be spaces where gay men can feel valid.

Respondent #6

Depression amongst LGBTQ teens, their needs to be more ways for one to be able to voice how they're suffering and talk to someone and seek help

Respondent #7

There already is the PsySA LGBT practice guidelines. It would be good to see people trained in these guidelines before they interact with the LGBTIAQ+ communities. MHCW often have good intentions but have not done the work to interrogate their own biases, ignorance and privileges which leaves them harmful to the communities they want to help regardless of how enthusiastic they are in declaring themselves as 'friendly'.

Respondent #8

Yes. When I approached my psychologist about issues with my sexuality she was unable to aid me or educate me about different types of attraction. She didn't know what a bisexual was or how to help me find out which sexuality suited me best. I ended up sharing my limited knowledge on the subject to help her understand.

Section C: WORK DONE

1. NOUS Counselling and Art Therapy

NOUS Counselling and Art Therapy (NCAT) is a private counselling practice that was founded by Juan M. Terblanche in 2018. Juan M. Terblanche is a registered therapist with the Modern Applied Psychological Association in the United Kingdom.

NCAT was started as a passion project to assist the LGBTQI+ community in Johannesburg. In a short space of time, NCAT has grown to assist the community in Johannesburg, nationally (South Africa) as well as globally. NCAT focusses on creative arts therapy that can assist individuals with the emotional turmoil they are facing, especially now during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Creativity and being creative has immense benefits in the therapeutic relationship; assisting individuals to express themselves better than through words, which often fail us. Through utilising simple creative expression, be it through colour, objects and symbols, the individual starts to understand their problems better as they can physically express emotions that do not have physical shapes. It is through this process that individuals integrate self-awareness of the "monsters" that "haunt" them and can better cope with their psychological trauma/hurdles.

Apart from Terblanche's counselling work he also assists NGOs, such as the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG) and Gateway Mental Health with counselling assistance. Terblanche also works closely with Lesley Ann van Selm from Khulisa Social Solutions (KSS - <https://www.khulisa.org.za/>) in developing projects that can assist the LGBTQI+ community in marginalised communities in South Africa.

Terblanche also assists with voluntary work for UNICEF South Africa as well as Childline South Africa. Terblanche is a firm believer in promoting LGBTQI+ rights in marginalised communities

across South Africa through psycho-educational programmes on gender diversity.

It is our job to light the beacon for this generation so that they can carry it forward for generations to come, just as generations before us have done.

2. Khulisa Social Solutions

Over the past 21 years, Khulisa worked throughout SA using Community Engagement models that ensure inclusivity, co-planning, rights-based training & empowering the marginalised with an understanding of access to justice & connecting with appropriate service providers to advocate change within their communities (incl. sexual reproductive rights, HIV/AIDS prevention, domestic violence, gender equality & sexual offences). During 2017/18 Khulisa rendered services in 163 communities in 6 provinces. Since its inception Khulisa worked with members of the LGBTQI community through the establishment of support groups, provision of mentorship, mediation of cases about correctional rape, human rights, storytelling, promotion of public speakers on issues of gender equality & family mediation where conflictual situations arose with gay people 'coming out'. 12 years ago Lydia Sono was a participant in Khulisa's Make It Better (MIB) Youth Development Programme, was offered a job with our organisation & has been supported by us since she disclosed herself as a lesbian. Through funding secured by Khulisa to establish an Ubuntu Club (a community-based structure that provides a safe environment in which members learn about & discuss topics, both personal & community-related) her focus was on supporting LGBTQI people in a deeply rural area Nkomazi near Schoemansdal.

Section D: CONCLUSION

Although LGBTQI+ individuals are afforded equal rights in our Constitution and Bill of Rights, they are still marginalised in modern-day, South Africa. Various LGBTQI+ NGOs have been able to assist these marginalised individuals but have not been able to create training programmes as well as psycho-educational material that can be used to educate those who are not part of the LGBTQI+ community.

Intolerance and acceptance is a big problem. Because there is no tolerance nor acceptance from the “straight” community as well as a lack of trying to understand LGBTQI+ individuals, be it because of social norms, religious intolerance, community norms and family values, a rise in Gender-Based Violence cases committed against LGBTQI+ individuals in South Africa is rising. Not only are we currently experiencing a rise in GBV cases in the LGBTQI+ community but there is also a rise in suicides⁴.

Eighty per cent (80%) of LGBTQI+ individuals are more likely to suffer from depression and anxiety due to their sexual orientation⁵. Due to these psychological traumas that LGBTQI+ individuals are facing, especially in smaller communities, it is more likely to have a higher suicide rate as well as GBV crimes. Lesbians in smaller communities are still facing the threat of corrective rape. KSS can attest to this with the work they are doing with a black Lesbian in the Nkomazi region who work for the LGBTQI+ community and who herself has been a victim of rape.

NCAT and KSS thus put forward the work of Lydia Sono in the Nkomazi region where she tirelessly assists the LGBTI+ community. Sono has been able to create awareness regarding LGBTQI+ rights in her community. Juan M. Terblanche through his private practice also assists LGBTQI+ individuals. His counselling skills and knowledge of LGBTQI+ issues have proven to be invaluable in assisting individuals in this marginalised community. Terblanche has been

⁴ A previous survey conducted by NCAT showed that LGBTQI+ teenagers are 40% more likely than their “straight” counterparts to attempt suicide or have suicidal thoughts.

⁵ Data from previous surveys conducted by NCAT.

identified by his colleagues as the “go-to” person for understanding LGBTQI+ psychological issues in the therapy room.

NCAT and KSS thus propose that better educational programmes be implemented regarding LGBTQI+ rights in South Africa. That emphasis is placed on LGBTQI+ mental health and those mental health workers, as well as community workers, be adequately trained to assist members of the LGBTQI+ community. Although the majority of these mental health workers and community workers may not identify as being part of the community it will allow LGBTQI+ individuals to approach them without fear of prejudice and rejection because of their sexual identity. There is also a big gap in understanding transgenderism in South Africa.

Both KSS and NCAT hopes to continue to assist LGBTQI+ individuals in South Africa and to assist the government as well as local government in understanding and promoting LGBTQI+ rights in South Africa, to create restorative justice projects so that perpetrators can understand the psychological trauma of LGBTQI+ individuals and through this restorative justice process assist others in creating peace-making communities in terms of LGBTQI+ rights.

CONTACT DETAILS

Juan M. Terblanche

Counsellor and Art Therapist: NOUS Counselling and Art Therapy

juan@nousart.co.za

072 763 9900

www.nousart.co.za

Lesley Ann van Selm

Managing Director: Khulisa Social Solutions

lesleyann@khulisa.org.za

082 601 2299

www.khulisa.org.za