

Perceptions of voters toward the members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgenders (LGBT) community in politics

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine the perception of the respondent-voters of Laoag City towards the participation, qualifications, and role of the members of the LGBT community in politics. It utilized the descriptive design and survey-questionnaire was used to gather the data. Frequency and percentage were used for the profile of the respondent-voters. Weighted mean was applied to find out the level of perception of the respondent-voters towards the participation, qualifications and role of the members of the LGBT community in politics. Chi-Square test was adopted to determine the significant relationship between the profile of the respondent-voters and their corresponding perceptions. 398 respondents were selected through stratified random sampling in the 80 barangays of Laoag City. Majority come from the age range of 18-27 years old; female; single; high school graduate; roman catholic; and reside outside of the city proper. Based on their perception, they “Agree” on the participation; qualifications; and role of the members of the LGBT community in politics. There is a significant relationship between personal profile of the respondent-voters of Laoag City and their perception towards the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. Age; religion; educational attainment; and residence of the respondent-voters are significantly related to their perception towards the qualifications and role of the members of the LGBT community in politics. However, sex and civil status of the respondent-voters of Laoag City are not significantly related to their perception towards the qualifications and role of the members of the LGBT community in politics.

Keywords: voters, LGBT community, politics

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1. Introduction

In a society where norms and standards are set and observed, where conduct and behavior are prescribed, where popular views and perceptions are the ones accepted, a transgression of the same becomes absolutely unacceptable. Thus, any act that goes against these accepted norms, behavior and perceptions could be viewed unlawful and illegal, more so, immoral. Society's traditional gender norms, demand that man and woman should act correspondingly as such, as dictated by their biological and physiological composition. Any encroachment unto the behavior of one over the other, is deemed as grossly unbecoming and unwarranted. Thus, such kind of behavior is subjected to ridicule and discrimination emanating from the society. Making them feel to be rejected and unwanted.

Negative perspectives towards people who identify themselves as gender queer and or transgenders dates so far back. Lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgenders were once known to be individuals who had sexually transmitted diseases. Some religious individuals even perceive them as "sinners" who do not belong to the civilized society. They were even called mentally ill because transgendered individuals were known to be prone towards the mental illness known as "gender dysphoria". Because of these generally unfavorable perception towards lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgenders, the same feel to be alienated from and discriminated by the society, indeed, whether in school or in the work place, or in the field of politics, the lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgenders have been beset with undesirable experiences ranging from simple bullying to serious discrimination. In the midst of all these discriminatory circumstances subjecting the members of the LGBT; discrimination is still commonly viewed and advocated not to be tolerated. In support of this and as a manifestation to this advocacy of non-discrimination, rules, enactments and pronouncements have been made by the government. But these measures and events, while firm on paper and signal a strong view in favor of the LGBT individuals, seem not to be adequate to consequently perceive the LGBT as individuals endowed with an identity worthy of respect and not of discrimination. Locally, a memorandum administered by John Michael Fariñas was declared effective in Laoag City, Ilocos Norte on July 11, 2017 prohibiting the use of derogatory words towards LGBT individuals and to treat them with respect. According to Fariñas, this is in line with the city government's support to the LGBT community and the enactment of the anti-discrimination bill into law. Any employee who violates this directive shall be charged administratively for conduct unbecoming, disrespect, ad insubordination (Alba, 2017).

Currently, LGBT individuals are still subjected to discrimination. Particularly in the field of politics, or as public servants, the doors for them seem to have not yet opened widely despite recent developments manifesting involvement of the LGBT individuals in public service. The memorandum issued by the local city government protecting the rights of LGBT individuals seems not to be enough basis to conclude that society, particularly voters of Laoag City is ready to perceive LGBT individuals positively in the field of public service. The prevailing negative perception could be influenced by some factors internally or externally present in human behavior. Thus, this study was conducted.

1.1 Research Framework

This study was grounded on the social-psychological model by Haddock, et al (1993) signifying that the individual attitudes toward gay men and lesbians were predicted by stereotype, symbolic beliefs and affective reactions. Further, it was couched on another psychological model by Whitley and Aegisdottir (2000) stating that attitudes towards lesbians and gays could be predicted and influenced by gender-role benefits and social dominance orientation. In addition, this study was based on the concept that human perception, attitude, behavior,

or judgment towards a certain phenomenon may be affected by one's value judgment or prescriptive judgment. That Judgment or perception may be based on the personal worth or value given by the person to the phenomenon or may be based on the other factors such as religion or rules as covered by one's prescriptive judgment (Holmes, 1998).

For the conceptual framework of this study, it was based on the research paradigm as depicted under Figure 1. The study determined the perception of the voters of Laoag City towards the participation, qualifications, and role of the members of the LGBT community in Politics. The independent variables are the profile of the respondent, and the dependent variable are the perceptions of the respondent.

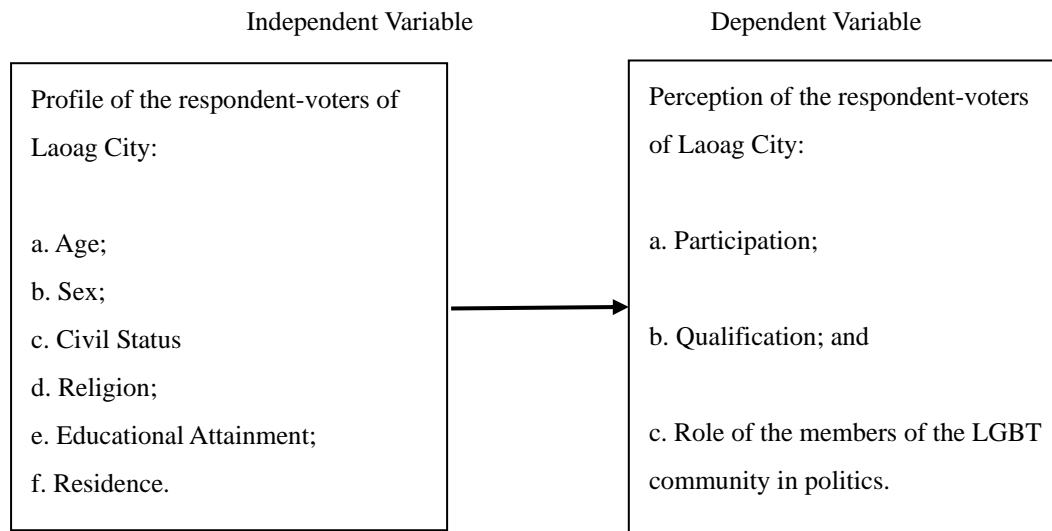


Figure 1. The Research Paradigm

1.2 Research Problems

This study aimed to determine the perception of the voters of Laoag City towards the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. Specifically, it attempted to provide answers to the following queries:

- What is the personal profile of the respondent-Laoag City-voters as to the age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, religion, and residence?
- What is the level of perception of the respondent-Laoag City-voters towards the members of the LGBT Community as to their participation in politics; their qualifications to be in politics; their role in politics?
- Is there a significant relationship between the profile of the respondent-Laoag City-voters and their perception towards the members of the LGBT Community?

1.3 Research Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between the profile of the respondent-voters of Laoag City and their perception towards participation, qualifications, and role of the members of the LGBT community in politics.

2. Methodology

Research Design - The study utilized the descriptive research design, as it focused on defining and describing social phenomena of interest. Since the study describes the perception of the registered voters of Laoag City towards the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics, their qualification and

role in the same, together with a description of their profile and of the relationship of the same, descriptive research is appropriate.

Locale of the Study - The study was conducted in Laoag City, the capital city of Ilocos Norte which is composed of 80 barangays. The said city is one of the most admired and awarded cities in the whole region. It is currently undergoing a massive economic transformation coupled with political, social and cultural evolutions.

Population and Sampling - Registered voters in the 80 barangays of Laoag City comprised the population of the study with a total of 398 respondents, as per Slovin's formula. The respondents were selected through stratified random sampling, as the population was divided into subgroups or strata created. The members of each stratum have similar attributes that of being registered voters of Laoag City.

Data Gathering Instrument - Data were gathered through the use of a questionnaire. The Questionnaire was composed of two parts and were validated by experts, The first part was composed of the profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, and religion, while the second part focused on the perceptions of the respondent=voters towards the participation, qualifications and role for the members of the LGBT community in politics. The questionnaire was validated through Cronbach's Alpha of 0.985 which indicates excellent reliability.

Data Analysis - Simple frequency and percentage were used for the profile of the respondent-voters. The weighted mean, on the other hand was applied to find out the level of perception of the respondent-voters towards the participation, qualifications and role of the members of the LGBT community in politics. Chi-square test was adopted to determine if there is a significant relationship between the profile of the respondent-voters and their corresponding perceptions.

Ethical Considerations - The researchers informed and asked consent from the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences to carry out the study, and asked for assistance in distributing the said questionnaires. Once approved, the researchers administered the questionnaire thru online Google form. In the Google form is where the consent form was placed, where the respondents can read and conform before proceeding to the questionnaire. The respondents who are willing to participate in the study attached their signature and proceeded with the questionnaire. In cases of respondents who are unwilling to participate, they did not sign the consent form and did not proceed in filling out the questionnaire. The researchers retrieved the signed consent forms as well as the filled-out questionnaires and analyzed the data generated. After analysis, retrieved questionnaires including consent forms are stored by the researchers deleted upon completion of the study. The researchers certify that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial and non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in the research. Respondents were not given a time limit to answer the survey questionnaire, however, the respondents that did not submit a response within the given time frame of 5 days, a follow up was made. The researchers maintained the anonymity of the respondent by keeping their records secured. The researchers did not allow non-members to access the gathered data. The gathered data were solely for the members of this research to use and not to pass it to others. After the data gathering is done, all data gathered is kept in a google drive that has a password to access the file. After the research is done, the gathered data will completely be deleted from all computer and accounts that the researchers used to conduct the data gathering.

3. Results and Discussion

Table 1.A presents the age profile of the respondents with their corresponding frequency and percentage. Most of the respondents are at the ages of 18-27 yrs. old having 185 or 46.48% out of the 398 total respondents. This signifies that most of the respondent-voters in Laoag /City are relatively young. While, Table 1.B presents the sex profile of the respondents with their corresponding frequency and percentage. Most of the respondents are females having 204 or 51.26% out of the 398 total respondents. This signifies that the voting population of Laoag City is female-dominated.

Table 1.A

Age Profile of the respondent-voters of Laoag City

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-27 yrs. old	185	46.48
28-37 yrs. old	99	24.87
38-47 yrs. old	59	14.82
48-57 yrs. old	23	5.78
58-67 yrs. old	29	7.29
68-77 yrs. old	3	0.75
	N=398	100

Table 1.B

Sex Profile of the respondent-voters of Laoag City

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	194	48.74
Female	204	51.26
	N=398	100

Table 1.C

Civil Status Profile of the respondent-voters of Laoag City

Civil Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	224	56.28
Married	165	41.46
Widowed	9	2.26
	N=398	100

Table 1.C presents the civil status profile of the respondents with their corresponding frequency and percentage. Most of the respondents are single with 224 or 56.28% out of the 398 total respondents. This shows that most of the voters of Laoag City are not bound by the obligations of married life.

Table 1.D

Religion Profile of the respondent-voters of Laoag City

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Roman Catholic	167	41.96
Iglesia ni Cristo	74	18.59
Baptist	68	17.09
Muslim	30	7.54
Independent	32	8.04
Others (Born again, Jehovah's Witness, Orthodox & Aetheist)	27	6.78
	N=398	100

Table 1.D presents the religion profile of the respondents. From the table, most of the respondents are Roman Catholic with 167 or 41.96% out of the 398 total respondents. This signifies that the voters of Laoag City are dominantly professing the Roman Catholic faith.

Table 1.E

Educational Attainment Profile of the respondent-voters of Laoag City

Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage
College Graduate	178	44.72
High School Graduate	182	45.72
Elementary Graduate	32	8.04
Masteral Graduate	4	1.01
Doctorate Graduate	2	0.50
	N=398	100

Table 1.E presents the educational attainment profile of the respondents. Evidently from the table, most of the respondents are High School Graduates with 182 or 45.72% out of the 398 total respondents. This shows that the voters of Laoag City are at least fairly educated.

Table 1.F

Residence profile of the respondent-voters of Laoag City

Residence	Frequency	Percentage
Within City Proper	159	39.95
Outside City Proper	239	60.05
	N=398	100

Table 1.F presents the residence profile of the respondents with their corresponding frequency and percentage. Most of the respondents are residing outside the city proper having 239 or 60.05% out of the 398 total respondents. This manifests that majority of the voters of Laoag City comes from the rural areas of Laoag City.

Table 2.A

Level of perception towards the members of the LGBT community as to their participation in politics

Participation in Politics (As a voter of Laoag City...)	WM	VI
I welcome the members of the LGBT community in participate in politics.	3.05	Agree
I do not discriminate against the participation of the members of the LGBT Community in politics.	3.00	Agree
I consider the participation of the members of the LGBT as a sign of political maturity.	3.01	Agree
I consider the participation of the members of the LGBT community as a manifestation of equality.	2.94	Agree
I find no issue in the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics.	3.06	Agree
The participation of the members of the LGBT Community gives rise to new breed of leadership.	3.0	Agree
Composite Mean:	3.01	Agree

Legend: 1.00-1.50 – Strongly Disagree, 1.51-2.50 – Disagree, 2.51-3.50 – Agree, 3.51-4.00 – Strongly Agree

Table 2.A shows the level of perception of the respondents towards the members of the LGBT Community as to their participation in politics. With the computed mean of 3.06, the table shows that most the respondents “Agree” that they find no issue in the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. This is a clear indication that the respondent-voters of Laoag City do not create a big deal on the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. This supports the earlier finding that the respondents embrace the participation of the same. From the same table, the computed mean of 2.94 shows that most of the respondents “Agree” that they consider the participation of the members of the LGBT community as a manifestation of equality. This finding supplements the finding that the respondent-voters of Laoag City “Agree” not to discriminate against the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. As such, they profess equality to participate in politics. This manifestation of equality shows the recognition of the respondent-voters of Laoag City of the rights granted to the members of the LGBT community covered under anti-discrimination laws. This is also in line with the call of the United Nations Human Rights Commission urging all countries to enact laws protecting LGBT Rights. This finding is in support with the results of a global survey covering 39 countries where in which the Philippines is ranked as one of the most gay-friendly nations in the world, and the most LGBT friendly in Asia. Titled “The Global divide on Homosexuality,” the survey conducted by the Pe Research Center showed that 73% Of adult Filipinos agreed with the statement that “homosexuality should be accepted by society.

Table 2.B

Level of perception towards the members of the LGBT community as to their qualifications to be in politics

Qualifications to be in Politics	WM	VI
Members of the LGBT community are spiritually qualified to be in politics.	3.03	Agree
Members of the LGBT community are mentally qualified to be in politics.	2.98	Agree
Members of the LGBT community are physically qualified to be in politics.	3.00	Agree
Members of the LGBT community are socially qualified to be in politics.	2.98	Agree
Members of the LGBT community are equipped with the leadership skills to be in politics.	2.93	Agree
Members of the LGBT community are educationally qualified to be in politics.	2.94	Agree
Composite Mean:	2.97	Agree

Legend: 1.00-1.50 – Strongly Disagree, 1.51-2.50 – Disagree, 2.51-3.50 – Agree, 3.51-4.00 – Strongly Agree

Table 2.B. shows the level of perception of the respondents towards the members of the LGBT community

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as to their qualifications to be in politics. The weighted mean computed at 3.03 means that most of the respondents “Agree” that the members of the LGBT community are spiritually qualified to be in politics. This is a manifestation of the voter’s recognition of the spirituality of the members of the LGBT community. Under the same table, the weighted mean computed from the data at 2.93 means that most of the respondents “Agree” that the members of the LGBT community are equipped with the leadership skills to be in politics. From such finding, it shows that the respondent-voters of Laoag City recognize the fact that members of the LGBT community possess the required skills to lead, direct, manage, and control the affairs of the society. This finding is in contrast with the general notion and attitudes toward LGBT community, that rather being evaluated on their skills, qualifications and ability to contribute on the job, gay, transgender workers are all too often not hired, not promoted, or in the worst cases, fired from their jobs based solely on their sexual orientation and gender identity-characteristics completely irrelevant to job performance.

Table 2.C

Level of perception of the respondents towards the members of the LGBT community as to their role in politics

Role in Politics	WM	VI
Once in politics, members of the LGBT community can become effective leaders.	2.99	Agree
Once in politics, members of the LGBT community can cause positive change.	2.94	Agree
Once in politics, members of the LGBT community can inspire others.	2.96	Agree
Once in politics, members of the LGBT community can be peace-makers.	2.96	Agree
Once in politics, members of the LGBT community can be conveyors of the arts and culture.	2.95	Agree
Once in politics, members of the LGBT community can be a source of positivity.	2.91	Agree
Composite Mean:	2.95	Agree

Legend: 1.00-1.50 – Strongly Disagree, 1.51-2.50 – Disagree, 2.51-3.50 – Agree, 3.51-4.00 – Strongly Agree

Table 2.C. shows the level of perception of the respondents towards the members of the LGBT community as to their role in politics. As per the computed weighted mean of 2.99, this posits that most of the respondent-voters of Laoag City “Agree” that once in politics, members of the LGBT community can become effective leaders. This is an affirmation by the respondent-voters of Laoag City of the potential of the members of the LGBT community to be effective leaders in the community. With the computed weighted mean of 2.91, it depicts that most of the respondents “Agree” that once in politics, members of the LGBT community can be a source of positivity. This is a recognition by the respondent-voters of Laoag City of the free-happy-spirited yet meaningful life of the members of the LGBT community. Because of such life, the respondent-voters believe that positivity could emanate from them and consequently influence others. This finding is in contrast with the declaration of the Philippine Electoral Commission that the LGBT group “tolerates immorality which offends religious beliefs” and encourages “an environment that does not conform to the teachings of our faith.... we cannot compromise the well-being of the greater number of our people, especially the youth.”

Table 3.A

Relationship between Age and perception towards the members of the LGBT Community as to Politics

Age	PERCEPTION				Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
18-27	99	60	12	14	185
28-37	40	27	17	15	99
38-47	9	27	12	11	59
48-57	5	6	7	5	23
58-67	7	7	4	11	29
68-77	0	1	0	2	3
Total	160	128	52	58	398

$\chi^2 = 67.12$, $\chi^2_{0.05, 15} = 25.00$, Significant

Considering that the computed value is 67.12, it shows that there is a significant relationship between the age of the respondents and their perception towards the members of the LGBT community as to their participation in politics. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. This signifies therefore, that age affects the perception of the respondent-voters of Laoag City towards the participation of the members of the LGBT

community in politics. Specifically, the table shows that, respondents who are from 18-47 yrs. old have more positive perceptions; most of them strongly agree and agree towards the members of the LGBT community as to their participation in politics. On the other hand, those who are from 48-77 yrs. old dwell more on the negative perceptions as most of them disagree and strongly disagree towards the members of the LGBT community as to their participation in politics. From the results, it can be seen that the younger the respondent-voters, the more favorable their perception is towards the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. Thus, the age of the respondent-voters has a bearing on their perception towards their perception of the members of the LGBT community. This finding supports the results of the survey conducted by the Pew Research Center wherein the Pew study revealed that those younger than 30 are more accepting of homosexuals in society than people who are 30 to 49. Both groups are more likely to express tolerance of gays than people 50 or older.

Table 3.B

Relationship between Sex and their perception towards the members of the LGBT Community as to Politics

Sex	PERCEPTION				Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Male	67	63	35	29	194
Female	93	65	17	29	204
Total	160	128	52	58	398

$\chi^2 = 10.24$, $\chi^2_{0.05, 3} = 7.81$, Significant

Table 3.B. shows that the computed value is 10.24. Thus, there is a significant relationship between the sex of the respondents and their perception towards the participation of members of the LGBT community in politics. As such, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that the sex of the respondent-voters of Laoag City influences their perception towards the participation of members of the LGBT community in politics. From the table, it shows that female respondents are more positive on their perceptions towards the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. Although the male respondents also have positive perceptions, the number of males who disagree on the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics is evidently higher. From such findings, it can be deduced that female-respondent-voters of Laoag city are more open in accepting the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. This could be attributed to the more “soft-hearted” nature of the female sex. This is in line with the results of the survey conducted by the Pew Research Center wherein the Pew poll found that in countries where there is a difference in attitudes held by men and women, women are more accepting of homosexuality than men are. Moreover, this supports the study of E.J. Manalastats regarding attitudes toward lesbians and gay men where he cited statements from Herek, 2000; La Mar & Kite, 1998 saying that heterosexual men tend to be more negative in their attitudes than heterosexual women, especially toward gay males.

Table 3.C

Relationship between civil status and their perception towards LGBT community as to participation in politics

Civil Status	PERCEPTION				Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Single	106	70	23	25	224
Married	52	55	28	30	165
Widowed	2	4	0	3	9
Total	160	129	51	58	398

$\chi^2 = 17.13$, $\chi^2_{0.05, 6} = 12.50$, Significant

For Table 3.C., it presents that the computed value is 17.13. It means that there is a significant relationship between the civil status of the respondents and their perception towards the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. In view of this, the null hypothesis is rejected, and that the alternative hypothesis is now accepted. The respondents who are single are more likely to be positive in their perceptions rather than those who are married and widowed. Although most of the married and widowed respondents also showed positive perceptions, it is evident that there are more respondents who are single who strongly agrees on the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. This indicates that the respondent-voters of

Laoag City who are single are more open in accepting the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. This could be possibly attributed to the “sense of freedom” of the “singles” from the burden or obligation of honing children, who would possibly be members of the LGBT community. Thus, it would be easier and more open for them to perceive favorably the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics.

Table 3.D

Relationship between religion and their perception towards LGBT community as to participation in politics

Religion	PERCEPTION				Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Roman Catholic	58	66	22	21	167
Iglesia ni Cristo	25	29	13	7	74
Baptist	37	13	3	15	68
Muslim	8	14	6	12	30
Independent	15	11	4	2	32
Others	18	4	4	1	27
Total	161	127	51	58	398

$\chi^2 = 34.39$, $p < 0.001$, Significant

Table 3.D. clearly shows that the computed value is 34.39. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between the religion of the respondents and their perception towards the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Most of the Respondents who are Roman Catholics, Iglesia Ni Cristos, Baptists, Independents, and those from other religions showed more positive perceptions. They were most likely to strongly agree or agree to the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. However, respondents who are Muslims rather show a negative perception as it is evident that they are most likely to disagree or strongly disagree for the members of the LGBT community to participate in politics. This clearly manifests that religion is a possible factor that would affect the perception of the respondent-voters of Laoag City towards the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. These findings support the Pew poll conducted by the Pew Research Center conducted in 39 countries where it was found out that there were high levels of tolerance toward gay people in some heavily Catholic countries, including Spain (86%), Italy (74%), Argentina (74%), and the Philippines (73%). Furthermore, in the same poll, it was found out that only 2% of Israeli Muslims agreed that homosexuality should be accepted.

Table 3.E

Relationship between educ. attain. and their perception towards LGBT community as to participation in politics

Educational Attainment	PERCEPTION				Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
College Graduate	89	52	22	23	178
High School Graduate	69	69	23	21	182
Elementary Graduate	25	6	8	13	32
Masters Graduate	3	0	0	1	4
Doctorate Graduate	2	0	0	0	2
Total	160	127	53	58	398

$\chi^2 = 36.63$, $p < 0.001$, Significant

Under Table 3.E., it shows that the computed value is 36.63. It means that the educational attainment of the respondent-voters of Laoag City is significantly related to their perception towards the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. Clearly, the null hypothesis should be rejected. From the said table, the respondents who are at least college and high school graduate are most likely to have positive perceptions towards the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. On the other hand, most of the respondents who are elementary graduates showed a more negative perception, they are more likely to disagree or strongly disagree towards the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. Thus, a respondent-voter of Laoag City who has undergone formal education at least high school to college graduate is deemed more open-minded in their perception towards the participation of the members of the LGBT

community in politics. This evidently shows that the educational attainment of the respondent-voters of Laoag City influences their perception towards the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. This is in line with the results of a research on Filipino attitudes toward lesbians and gay men through the Young Adult Fertility Survey (Silverio, 2004) where it was found out that educational attainment was related to attitudes toward lesbians/gay men, i.e., increasing levels of acceptability were found with increasing levels of education.

Table 3.F

Relationship between residence and their perception towards LGBT community as to participation in politics

Residence	PERCEPTION				Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Within City Proper	72	27	30	30	159
Outside City Proper	82	99	30	28	239
Total	154	126	60	58	398

$\chi^2 = 26.87$, $\chi^2_{(3)} = 7.81$, Significant

With respect to Table 3.F, the computed value of 26.87 means that there is a significant relationship between the residence of the respondents and their perception towards the members of the LGBT community as to their participation in politics. Clearly, the null hypothesis is rejected. From the given table, it shows that respondent-voters of Laoag City who reside from either within or outside city proper both showed that most of them have positive perceptions toward the members of the LGBT community as to their participation in politics. However, based from the data shown above, those who reside outside city proper are more likely to strongly agree and agree to the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics than those who reside within city proper. This implies that the residence of the respondent-voters of Laoag City affects their perception towards the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. This could be attributed to the degree of influence of the external environment that a respondent-voter is exposed to. This is in line with the study of E.J. Manalastas regarding attitudes toward lesbians and gay men citing statements from Herek, 1995 and Yang, 1998 saying that compared to heterosexuals with favorable attitudes gay people, individuals with heterosexist attitudes reside in geographic areas where heterosexism represents the norm.

Table 4.A

Relationship between age and their perception towards LGBT community as to qualifications to be in politics

Age	PERCEPTION				Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
18-27	83	75	11	16	185
28-37	34	33	14	18	99
38-47	16	18	11	14	59
48-57	6	5	7	5	23
58-67	8	6	4	11	29
68-77	0	1	0	2	3
Total	147	138	47	66	398

$\chi^2 = 48.12$, $\chi^2_{(3)} = 26.00$, Significant

The computed value in Table 4.A. is 48.12 and the critical value at 0.05 level of significance is 25.00. It means that there is a significant relationship between the age of the respondents and their perception towards the members of the LGBT community as to their qualifications to be in politics. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is clear from the table that respondents who are from 18-47 yrs. old have a more positive perception; most of them strongly agree and agree towards the members of the LGBT community as to their qualifications to be in politics. On the other hand, those who are from 48-77 yrs. old exhibit a negative perception as most of them disagree and strongly disagree towards the members of the LGBT community as to their qualifications to be in politics. This clearly shows that the age of the respondent-voters of Laoag City affect the way they perceive the qualifications of the members if the LGBT community to be in politics. A young or an old age therefore has an impact on the perception of the respondent-voters of Laoag City. This is in line with the study of E.J. Manalastas regarding attitudes toward lesbians and gay men wherein he cited statements from Herek, 1995 and Yang, 1998

saying that compared to heterosexuals with favorable attitudes gay people, individuals with heterosexist attitudes are more likely to be older.

Table 4.B

Relationship between sex and their perception towards LGBT community as to qualifications in politics

Sex	PERCEPTION				Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Male	67	63	29	35	194
Female	82	77	15	30	204
Total	149	140	44	65	398

$\chi^2 = 7.50$, $\chi^2_{critical} = 7.81$, Not Significant

The computed value in Table 4.B. is 7.50 with a critical value of 7.81 at 0.05 level of significance. It depicts that there is no significant relationship between the sex of the respondents and their perception towards the members of the LGBT community as to their qualifications to be in politics. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. This shows that the sex of the respondents does not have an effect on their perception towards the members of the LGBT community as to their qualifications to be in politics and that it doesn't matter whether a respondent is male or female when they perceive the qualifications of the members of the LGBT community to be in politics. Thus, their perception as to the qualifications of the members of the LGBT community does not depend on the age of the respondent-voters. This could further be implied that the respondent-voters tend to become more objective when it comes to the qualifications of the members of the LGBT community to be in politics. This supports the results of the survey conducted by the Pew Research Center where the Pew poll found generally little difference in attitudes held by men and women in any given country toward homosexuals.

Table 4.C

Relationship between civil status and their perception towards LGBT community as to qualifications in politics

Civil Status	PERCEPTION				Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Single	93	82	19	30	224
Married	52	55	26	32	165
Widowed	3	3	1	2	9
Total	148	140	46	64	398

$\chi^2 = 9.59$, $\chi^2_{critical} = 12.50$, Not Significant

The computed value in Table 4.C. is 9.59 with a critical value of 12.50 at 0.05 level of significance. It signifies that there is no significant relationship between the civil status of the respondent-voters of Laoag City and their perception towards the members of the LGBT community as to their qualifications to be in politics. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected. This signifies that the civil status of the respondents does not have an effect on their perception towards the members of the LGBT community as to their qualifications to be in politics and that whether a respondent is single, married, or widowed, their perception will not be influenced nor affected by such personal profile. This signifies that respondent—voters of Laoag City tend to be objective when it comes to the qualifications of the members of the LGBT community to be in politics. Thus, they are not influenced by their civil status to when they perceive the qualifications of the members of such community to be in politics.

For Table 4.D., the computed value is 43.77 with a critical value of 25.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It shows that there is a significant relationship between the religion of the respondents and their perception towards the members of the LGBT community as to their qualifications to be in politics. Clearly, the null hypothesis should be rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. From the table, most of the respondents who are Roman Catholics, Iglesia Ni Cristos, and those from other religions showed more positive perceptions; most of the respondents from these religions were most likely to strongly agree or agree to the qualifications of the members of the LGBT community to be in politics. However, most of the respondents who are Muslims rather show a negative than a positive perception as it is evident that they are most likely to disagree or strongly

disagree with the qualifications of the members of the LGBT community to be in politics. This is a manifestation that religion is a strong factor that would influence the perception of the respondent-voters of Laoag City regarding the qualifications of the members of the LGBT community to be in politics. Teachings and doctrines of one's faith really affect the perception of the respondent-voters of Laoag City in matters that involve the members of the LGBT community. These findings validate the results of the Pew poll conducted by the Pew Research Center in 39 countries where it was found out that there were high levels of tolerance toward gay people in some heavily Catholic countries, including Spain (86%), Italy (74%), Argentina (74%), and the Philippines (73%). Furthermore, in the same poll, it was found out that only 2% of Israeli Muslims agreed that homosexuality should be accepted.

Table 4.D

Relationship between religion and their perception towards LGBT community as to qualifications in politics

Religion	PERCEPTION				Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Roman Catholic	55	66	18	28	167
Iglesia ni Cristo	27	29	8	10	74
Baptist	36	15	5	11	68
Muslim	5	7	7	12	30
Independent	8	18	5	1	32
Others (Born Again, Jehovah's Witnesses, Orthodox, Atheist)	16	6	4	1	27
Total	147	141	47	63	398

$\chi^2 = 43.77$, $\chi^2_{(4)} = 26.89$, Significant

Table 4.E

Relationship between educ. attainment and perception towards LGBT community as to qualifications in politics

Educational Attainment	PERCEPTION				Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
College Graduate	80	55	17	26	178
High School Graduate	56	82	22	22	182
Elementary Graduate	7	5	5	15	32
Masters Graduate	3	0	0	1	4
Doctorate Graduate	2	0	0	0	2
Total	148	142	44	64	398

$\chi^2 = 45.19$, $\chi^2_{(12)} = 21.03$, Significant

For Table 4.E. the computed value is 45.19 with a critical value of 21.03 at 0.05 level of significance. It signifies that there is a significant relationship between the educational attainment of the respondents and their perception towards the members of the LGBT community as to their qualifications to be in politics. Clearly, the alternative hypothesis is accepted. From the table, the respondents who are college, high school, masters, and doctoral graduates are most likely to have a positive perception towards the qualifications of the members of the LGBT community to be in politics. The respondents who are only elementary graduates showed more negative perceptions and are more likely to disagree or strongly disagree towards the qualifications of the members of the LGBT community to be in politics. This shows that the level of education of the respondent-voters of Laoag City have something to do with their perception towards the qualifications of the members of the LGBT community to be in politics. A high educational level may provide a more opened and positive perception of the respondent-voters towards the LGBT community members' qualifications to be in politics. This supports the study of E.J. Manalastas regarding attitudes toward lesbians and gay men where in which he cited statements from Herek, 1995 and Yang, 1998 saying that compared to heterosexuals with favorable attitudes on gay people, individuals with heterosexist attitudes are more likely to be less well-educated.

Table 4.F

Relationship between Residence and their perception towards LGBT community as to qualifications in politics

Residence	PERCEPTION				Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Within City Proper	76	30	23	30	159
Outside City Proper	74	105	31	29	239
Total	150	135	54	59	398

$\chi^2 = 27.94$, $\chi^2_{(3)} = 7.81$, Significant

From the computed value (27.94) and critical value (7.81) at 0.05 level of significance, it is clear that there is a significant relationship between the residence of the respondents and their perception towards the members of the LGBT community as to their qualifications to be in politics. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. From the table, respondents who reside from either within or outside city proper both showed that most of them have positive perceptions toward the members of the LGBT community as to their qualifications to be in politics. However, based from the same data shown above, those who reside outside city proper are more likely to strongly agree and agree to the qualifications of the members of the LGBT community to be in politics than those who reside within city proper. The residence of the respondent-voters of Laoag City creates an impact on their perception – their exposure to the environment based on their residences affect and influence their perception towards the qualifications of the members of the LGBT community to be in politics. This is in line with the study of E.J. Manalastas regarding attitudes toward lesbians and gay men where he cited statements from Herek, 1995 and Yang, 1998 saying that compared to heterosexuals with favorable attitudes on gay people, individuals with heterosexist attitudes reside in geographic areas where heterosexism represents the norm.

Table 5.A

Relationship between age and their perception towards LGBT community as to their role in politics

Age	PERCEPTION				Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
18-27	89	60	13	23	185
28-37	31	36	14	18	99
38-47	16	22	8	13	59
48-57	6	5	6	6	23
58-67	7	7	5	10	29
68-77	0	1	0	2	3
Total	149	131	46	72	398

$\chi^2 = 36.08$, $\chi^2_{(3)} = 25.00$, Significant

The computed value in Table 5.A. is 36.08 with the critical value of 25.00 at 0.05 level of significance. It means that there is a significant relationship between the age of the respondents and their perception towards the members of the LGBT community as to their role in politics. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected. From the table, respondents who are from 18-47 yrs. old have a more positive perception; most of them strongly agree and agree towards the members of the LGBT community as to their roles in politics. On the other hand, those who are from 48-77 yrs. old stay more on the negative perceptions as most of them disagree and strongly disagree towards the members of the LGBT community as to their roles in politics. This signifies that the age of the respondent-voters of Laoag City create an impact on their perceptions towards the role of the members of the LGBT community in politics. A younger age may be open-minded and have a more positive perception towards the role of the members of the LGBT community in politics. Again, this finding supports the results of the survey conducted by the Pew Research Center wherein the Pew study said those younger than 30 are more accepting of homosexuals in society than people who are 30 to 49. Both groups are more likely to express tolerance of gays than people 50 or older.

Table 5.B

Relationship between sex and their perception towards LGBT community as to their role in politics

Sex	PERCEPTION				Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Male	85	63	30	36	194
Female	64	70	16	34	204
Total	149	133	46	70	398

$\chi^2 = 6.86$, $\chi^2_{0.05, 3} = 7.81$, Not Significant

With the computed value of 6.86 and the critical value of 7.81 at 0.05 level of significance (alpha) and 3 degrees of freedom is 7.81. The sex profile of the respondent-voters has no significant relationship with their perception towards the members of the LGBT community as to their role in politics. This means that sex of the respondents does not have an effect on their perception towards the members of the LGBT community as to their role in politics and that it doesn't matter whether a respondent is male or female when they perceive the role of the members of the LGBT community in politics. The sex profile of the respondent-voters of Laoag City does not in any way influence their perception regarding the role of the members of the LGBT community in politics. This shows that when it comes to the role of the members of the LGBT community in politics, the respondent-voters tend to be more objective. This supports the results of the survey conducted by the Pew Research Center where the Pew poll found generally found little difference in attitudes held by men and women in any given country toward homosexuals.

Table 5.C

Relationship between Civil Status and perception towards LGBT community as to their role in politics

Civil Status	PERCEPTION				Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Single	97	72	21	34	224
Married	49	58	24	34	165
Widowed	3	3	0	3	9
Total	148	133	45	71	398

$\chi^2 = 11.09$, $\chi^2_{0.05, 6} = 12.50$, Not Significant

From the computed value of 11.09 in relation to the critical value at 0.05 level of significance obtained at 12.50, the civil status of the respondent-voters of Laoag City is not significantly related to their perception towards the members of the LGBT community as to their role in politics. Eventually, the null hypothesis is accepted. This means that the civil status of the respondents does not have an effect on their perception towards the members of the LGBT community as to their role in politics. Thus, whether a respondent is single, married, or widowed, such would not make a difference when they perceive the role of the members of the LGBT community to be in politics. This is a manifestation that when it comes to the role of the members of the LGBT community in politics, they perceive them more objectively, that they are not being influenced of other factors.

Table 5.D

Relationship between the religion and perception towards LGBT community as to their role in politics

Religion	PERCEPTION				Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Roman Catholic	58	60	19	30	167
Iglesia ni Cristo	29	24	7	14	74
Baptist	33	18	5	12	68
Muslim	5	8	6	11	30
Independent	7	18	3	14	32
Others	17	5	4	1	27
Total	149	133	44	72	398

$\chi^2 = 34.39$, $\chi^2_{0.05, 16} = 25.00$, Significant

The computed value in Table 5.D. is 34.39 and the critical value at 0.05 level of significance is 25.00. It means that there is a significant relationship between the religion of the respondents and their perception towards

Perceptions of voters toward the members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgenders community in politics

the members of the LGBT community as to their role in politics. From such, the null hypothesis is not accepted. As per the table, most of the respondents who are Roman Catholics, Iglesia Ni Cristos, and those from other religions showed a more positive perception. They were most likely to strongly agree or agree to the roles of the members of the LGBT community in politics. However, most of the respondents who are Muslims rather show a negative than a positive perception as it is evident that they are most likely to disagree or strongly disagree for the members of the LGBT community towards their roles in politics. This shows that one's religion influences the perception of the respondent-voters of Laoag City towards the role of the members of the LGBT community in politics. This is a manifestation that indeed, the teachings, beliefs, and practices of the religion affect the perception of the respondent-voters of Laoag City towards the role of the members of the LGBT community in politics. These findings support once again the Pew poll conducted by the Pew Research Center conducted in 39 countries where it was found out that there were high levels of tolerance toward gay people in some heavily Catholic countries, including Spain (86%), Italy (74%), Argentina (74%), and the Philippines (73%). Furthermore, in the same poll, it was found out that only 2% of Israeli Muslims agreed that homosexuality should be accepted.

Table 5.E

Relationship between educational attainment and perception towards LGBT community as to role in politics

Educational Attainment	PERCEPTION				Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
College Graduate	78	55	19	26	178
High School Graduate	58	75	19	30	182
Elementary Graduate	7	4	5	16	32
Masters Graduate	3	0	0	1	4
Doctorate Graduate	2	0	0	0	2
Total	148	134	43	73	398

$\chi^2 = 39.93$, $\chi^2_{(12)} = 21.08$, Significant

The computed value in Table 5.E. is 39.93 and the critical value at 0.05 level of significance is 21.03. It means that there is a significant relationship between the educational attainment of the respondents and their perception towards the members of the LGBT community as to their role in politics. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. From the table, the respondent-voters who are college, high school, masters, and doctoral graduates generally have positive perception towards the role of the members of the LGBT community in politics. On the other hand, respondents who are elementary graduates showed negative perception and are more likely to disagree or strongly disagree towards the roles of the members of the LGBT community in politics. This shows that exposure to a certain degree of formal education affects the perception of the respondent-voters of Laoag City on the role of the members of the LGBT community in politics. This supports the study of Manalastas, et al (2017) regarding attitudes toward lesbians and gay men wherein he cited statements from Herek (1995) and Yang (1998) saying that compared to heterosexuals with favorable attitudes to gay people, individuals with heterosexist attitudes are more likely to be less well-educated.

Table 5.F

Relationship between Residence and their perception towards LGBT community as to role in politics

Residence	PERCEPTION				Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Within City Proper	77	33	22	27	159
Outside City Proper	78	97	26	38	239
Total	155	130	48	65	398

$\chi^2 = 18.37$, $\chi^2_{(3)} = 7.81$, Significant

With the computed value (18.37) with the critical value (7.81) at 0.05 level of significance. The residence of the respondent-voters of Laoag City is significantly related to their perception towards the role of the members of the LGBT community in politics. The null hypothesis is not accepted. The table shows that the respondent-voters of Laoag City who reside outside city proper are more likely to strongly agree and agree to the

role of the members of the LGBT community in politics than those who reside within city proper. This signifies that the environment to which the respondent-voters of Laoag City live affects their perception towards the role of the members of the LGBT community in politics.

4. Conclusions and Recommendation

From the derived findings, the following are concluded: That majority of the respondent-voters of Laoag City are aged from 18-27 years old; female; single; high school graduate; roman catholic; and reside outside of the city proper. That the respondent-voters of Laoag City as per their perception “Agree” on the participation; qualifications; and role of the members of the LGBT community in politics. That there is a significant relationship between the personal profile of the respondent-voters of Laoag City (age, sex, civil status, religion, educational attainment, and residence) and their perception towards the participation of the members of the LGBT community in politics. That the age; religion; educational attainment; and residence of the respondent-voters of Laoag City are significantly related to their perception towards the qualifications and role of the members of the LGBT community in politics. That the sex and civil status of the respondent-voters of Laoag City are not significantly related to their perception towards the qualifications and role of the members of the LGBT community in politics.

Based on the conclusions made, the researchers suggest the following recommendations: Local COMELEC office shall conduct information dissemination programs to further enhance awareness on the participation, qualifications, and role of the members of the LGBT community in politics to further substantiate the initial favorable perception of the voters of Laoag City toward the members of the LGBT community in politics. Local government unit, specifically Laoag City shall adopt more policies that would enhance fair and equal treatment of the members of the LGBT community that will eventually promote a more positive perception of the voters of Laoag City in the participation, qualifications, and role of the LGBT community in politics. The local government should make more programs or events involving the members of the LGBT community that will further showcase their capabilities to make the people understand better the LGBT community gaining more acceptance and positive perceptions from the public. Researchers should conduct more in-depth studies relating to the LGBT community.

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