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## BELIEFS ABOUT THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY AMONG SOCIAL WORK GRADUATE STUDENTS

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BELIEFS ABOUT THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY  
AMONG SOCIAL WORK GRADUATE STUDENTS

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A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Social Work

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by  
Gina Vennette Florez  
Guillermina Hall  
June 2015

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## ABSTRACT

This research project was a quantitative survey study design to examine the attitudes of 49 Master of Social Work students attending California State University, San Bernardino. Recently, laws regarding same-sex marriage have been rapidly changing. As of this project completion, 37 states have legalized same-sex marriage. Therefore, now more than ever before, it is imperative that social work graduate students feel prepared to adequately provide services to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) populations.

Additionally, and of primary concern to the researchers, this project sought to determine whether graduate students felt that they had received adequate training and education regarding LGBTQ service, health, youth, elderly, support of same-sex families, rights and discriminatory practice issues while in attendance at this college. Gay affirmative practice is something that should be provided the same as heterosexual service practices.

Similar to previous studies, this study concluded that religion, political affiliation, age and sexual orientation contributed to how prepared an individual felt in providing services to the LGBTQ populations.

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Gina Florez: To my children, Megan and Christopher, for the sacrifices that you have had to make in allowing my dream to come to fruition. Thank you both for being supportive, patient and encouraging during my journey, even when I questioned it. We are changing our legacy and with every step we take toward that change, we become the change that the world sees.

Guillermina Hall: To my husband, William, for being patient, supportive, tolerant, understanding, encouraging and who stood by me through it all. What a wonderful husband! Also, I would like to especially acknowledge my two children, Donald, age 14 and Nicholas, age 10, who, had to understand in their own way my commitment to return and stay in school. I hope I am your role model.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### Statement of Problem

Social workers have to deal with different kinds of clients every day. These clients often come from marginalized groups of society, whether they are from a lower socioeconomic background, a minority race or religion, or part of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning/queer (LGBTQ) community. This last group is especially at risk for depression and anxiety, among other negative consequences, such as drug use and suicide. Additionally, the LGBTQ community is usually seen as inferior in comparison to heterosexual groups (Berkman & Zinberg, 1997). Severe homophobia can also “lead to the use of conversion or reparative therapies, treatments aimed at changing sexual orientation of the gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered person, which are explicitly condemned by NASW” (Crisp, 2006, p. 115). For these reasons, it is vital that social workers are prepared to assess the unique challenges and needs of this population.

Although social workers are supposed to set aside personal bias, it is impossible to completely disregard one’s personal frame of reference and existing beliefs when interacting with any other human being. According to Berkman and Zinberg (1997), 90% of social workers were found not to be biased toward sexual preferences. However, the same study also notes that often people have unconscious biases according to cultural norms and religious

values. In the same vein, "attitudes and values affect the ways in which humans interact, and that axiom extends to the interaction between client and therapist as well" (DeCrescenzo, 1984, p. 120). In other words, biases are created through early socialization and continue into adulthood.

Social workers, like most people, have been socialized through social learning in which people get their beliefs from the people they grew up with and through the experiences that they have had (Bandura, 1999). Unless an individual grew up with LGTBQ influence or experiences, they might not have an understanding of this community. People who grew up in environments where there was a negative stereotype associated with the LGBTQ population will have incorporated these beliefs into their own values.

Logie, Bridge and Bridge (2006) found "evidence that suggests there is bias toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) persons by social workers" (p. 202). This highlights the need to study how social work students can be better prepared to work with members of the LGBTQ community. Foreman & Quinlan (2008) conducted a study that paired social work students with members of the LGBTQ community. The goal of this study was to ask questions, discuss issues, explore social workers' attitudes, experiences, needs and fears about the LGBTQ community and clarify myths (Foreman & Quinlan, 2008). This exercise helped the social workers to better understand the LGBTQ community, while at the same time exposing the LGBTQ community to social services.

As supportive as social workers may seem to be, a study by Crisp in 2006, was intended to rate social workers on the Gay Affirmative Practice Scale (GAP). In this research, 3000 surveys were sent out to social workers, but only 488 were returned (Crisp, 2006). Obviously this is a very limited response rate which was determined insufficient for testing the GAP Scale, however, one of the limitations that this study cited was that the lack of interest in the topic may have contributed to low response rates (Crisp, 2006). Additionally, in another study conducted by Martinez, Barsky and Singleton (2011), 500 surveys were mailed to social workers drawn from the National Association of Social Workers' membership list of 145,873. Of the 500 surveyed only 148 were returned. According to Martinez et al. (2011), the findings suggested "the average for this sample expressed a negative attitude" (p. 202).

Many experts agree the first step to educating social work students (or anyone for that matter) about the LGBTQ community is by challenging their existing beliefs and trying to get them to see things from another perspective. Burge (2007), who studied social work and the transgender community concluded, "the transgender community is an at-risk population and ... empowering practice with this population calls on social workers to target society's traditional gender dichotomy for change" (Burdge, 2007, p. 243).

According to Bandura (1999), there are four conditions necessary for observational learning to occur. Bandura describes the following, "attention to the behavior on which the learning might be based, retention of the observed

scene when the opportunity arises later to exploit the learning, motivation to reproduce the observed behavior, and potential reproduction of the behavior” (p. 576). In other words, learning occurs through observation. These conditions emphasize the point that learning about the LGBTQ community requires significant education, understanding and immersion in the culture as part of the social work curriculum. Additionally, Berkman and Zinberg (1997) recommended that future research can be conducted on how LGBTQ education can reduce homophobia as well as how social workers can learn effective communication to use specifically with the LGBTQ population.

#### Purpose of Study

Logie et al. (2007) concluded that enhanced curriculum and training is needed for Master of Social Work (MSW) students to acquire the tools necessary in order to effectively serve the LGBTQ populations. This study sought to determine whether MSW students believe that they are receiving adequate educational training to address the needs of LGBTQ populations. This study is applicable to all agencies because LGBTQ people exist in every segment of society. This study also addresses MSW students who will undoubtedly come into contact with LGBTQ populations to assess their attitudes about the LGBTQ population. Additionally, the question arises, are MSW students graduating with a sufficient amount of knowledge to provide gay affirmative practice to the LGBTQ population?

The major issues that need to be addressed are identifying what concerns the LGBTQ community has that may be specific or unique to them and figuring out how these issues might compound or complicate other existing issues. For example, if an LGBTQ individual is dealing with homelessness, he or she might also be dealing with worrying about not only finding a home, but also facing discrimination wherever he or she finds a place to live. Another issue could be accessing health services. Perhaps a person has a health issue, and they are poor and need to see a doctor. If the person is transgender, for example, he or she may have additional complications and face additional discrimination when accessing care.

According to the Australian government's health department, in their publication *Gay and Lesbian Issues – Discrimination – Better Health Channel*, (2013), "gay men, lesbians and bisexuals experience a range of health problems directly related to their sexuality" (para. 1). In addition, discrimination from health care providers further exacerbates LGBTQ health issues. According to *Gay and Lesbian Issues – Discrimination – Better Health Channel* (2013):

Discrimination and dealing with homophobia can affect a person's health. Research has also shown that gay men and lesbians have reduced access to medical care, wait longer before seeking treatment and are less well screened for health conditions than heterosexual people (para. 1).

Although this study was conducted in Australia, the themes are very much the same in the United States. Some of the issues that they identified were an

increased risk for sexual assault and violence, homophobia and heterosexism, health impacts, rejection or isolation from family and friends, lower quality treatment by health professionals, being bullied and general feelings of guilt or shame about who they are. In addition to psychological issues, the LGBTQ community also has to contend with discrimination through health care providers.

In a recent study conducted by Smith, McCaslin, Chang, Martinez, and McGrew, (2010) in the United States, researchers surveyed 38 LGBT adults that were over the age of 60 to assess how this population viewed services provided to LGBT seniors. The areas that were assessed were, “Unmet needs, perceptions of the GLBT-friendliness of existing services for seniors, and social support and health” (Smith et al., 2010, p. 390). This survey addressed areas such as health care providers and services, legal services, mental health, spiritual venues that are LGBT-friendly, government agencies that provide services to this population and routine senior services such as nursing homes.

Although not ideal, this study concluded that 54.1% of the LGBT senior population surveyed were best getting their needs met within the healthcare system. However, of particular concern was the fact that only 48.6% of the health care providers were aware that LGBT health issues tend to differ from heterosexual populations (Smith et al., 2010). Overall, the results from this study decreased from there.

The fact is that many seniors will find themselves in a nursing home at some point in their life, whether for rehabilitation services or permanent

placement. However, the results on perceived LGBT-friendliness from nursing homes was disheartening. Smith et al. (2010) concluded, “52.6% thought that nursing homes were not GLBT-friendly” (Smith et al., 2010, p. 394). This becomes particularly concerning when nursing home placements are not always on a voluntary basis.

Additionally, Raphael and Cruikshank (2015) studied community, friendships, and well-being among the aging lesbian population. The authors site that older lesbian often find support in “intentional families” made up of friends, peers, and ex-lovers that support them, and often times they are completely separate from the younger generation (Raphael & Cruikshank, 2015, p. 2). Also interesting to note is that lesbians in their 80s and 90s currently are part of the last generation of lesbians who have spent most or all of their lives in the closet. Therefore, social workers would have their own unique challenges in helping this population so used to hiding their true identity (Raphael & Cruikshank, 2015). Finally, Raphael and Cruikshank (2015) conclude that while much progress has been made toward the aging lesbian population, there is still work to be done on the topic. “Despite the progress we celebrate and sometimes marvel at, ignorance and prejudice live on, as the experiences of old lesbians, including those recounted in this special issue, attest. Many more personal histories and scholarly studies are needed to create a substantial record” (Raphael & Cruikshank, 2015, p. 4).



Another major issue right now is that some companies and hospitals in certain states still have the legal right to refuse health information or benefits to legal partners of same-sex partnered individuals. For example, if a same-sex couple got married legally in Massachusetts and went to Arkansas (where same-sex marriage is not recognized), then their marriage might not be recognized as legal and if one partner was in a car accident or in critical health condition, the other partner might be perceived as little more than an acquaintance. Since social workers often help people navigate social services and paperwork, it is essential that they not only understand the laws of their state, but also the concerns of homosexual people who may be in this particular situation.

The research method used was a survey to conduct a study of master of social work (MSW) students that was designed to question them about their knowledge of issues and concerns relevant to the LGBTQ community, identify what level of education and training they had received, and look for a correlation between the two.

#### Significance of the Project for Social Work Practice

This study is very significant because “many times the social worker-client relationship is the only safe haven for a client to explore such issues [homosexuality, gender issues, etc.]” (Morrow, 1993, p 658). There is evidence that LGBTQ individuals are already wary of health professionals and social workers. According to Better Health Channel (2013):

The majority of gay men and lesbians have had experience of homophobic health professionals. This may make them less inclined to seek medical help, or they may wait longer before they seek help. Also, health professionals, particularly in rural areas, may be inadequately informed about gay and lesbian health issues (para. 12).

While this study examined perceptions of healthcare workers, the concerns are very similar towards that of social workers.

If an LGBTQ person does not feel comfortable around a social worker, or is worried that they will not receive quality attention or care from a social worker, he or she is probably going to be less likely to seek out services and that could have horrible negative consequences. For example, the study from Australia found that when homosexuals had negative views about health care workers, they were less likely to seek out treatment, and there were many cases in which this delay in seeking out care led to the advancement of cancer. (Gay and Lesbian Issues-Discrimination, 2013). If LGBTQ people do not seek out the social services they need, then they could end up in bad financial situations, unsafe living situations, and miss out on opportunities to help them improve the quality of their lives. In turn, this could have a negative impact on an entire community. This study predicts that MSW students who believe that they have received adequate educational training on LGBTQ issues are better equipped to work with this population. Social workers are more likely than ever before to find themselves knowingly working with members of this particular demographic.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

This chapter will provide comprehensive definitions that are relevant to the LGBTQ community. This literature review will also look at relevant statistics regarding social work attitudes in graduate programs. Additionally, the beliefs of post graduate student social workers acting in professional capacities will be examined. And finally, contributing factors toward heterosexual bias will be addressed. This project sought to evaluate the attitudes of MSW's in a Southern California state university nearing the end of their education and how social work practitioner attitudes impede access to services that are available to the LGBTQ communities. It is based on these ideas that this literature review was conceptualized.

#### Statistics and Definitions

##### Statistics

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics conducted The National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) in 2013 (Gates, 2014; Ward, Dahlhamer, Galinsky, & Joestl, 2014). For the first time, beginning with the 2013 study, NHIS began collecting data on sexual identity (Ward, et al., 2014). The representative sample of the U.S. population included families and their children in addition to a representative sample of adults 18

years old and older (Gates, 2014; Ward et al., 2014). The results were astounding! This study estimated that 690,000 same-sex couples reside in the U.S. (Gates, 2014; Ward et al., 2014). For the first time, this study analyzed the family make up of same-sex couples. As a result, NHIS concluded that between 1.1 and 2 million children are being raised by an LGB-identified parent (Gates, 2014; Ward et al., 2014). Additional data was collected to determine the health care coverage that this population received. It was estimated that currently 20.7% of the LGBT community was receiving publicly funded assistance (Ward et al., 2014). This is the area of impact for social work professionals.

In addition to the self-identified population, it is important to note that same-sex marriage approval is on the rise in the U. S. Currently, 37 states have approved same-sex marriage (ProCon.org, 2014). How these statistics and recent court rulings impact the social work profession, is that a significant portion of the LGBTQ community will be seeking services through county or government agencies. With this said, for professional social workers, a learning profession, the guide to practice is formulated through the NASW Code of Ethics. The NASW Code of Ethics is clear about how sexual orientation and gender identity should be addressed by social workers in that social workers should educate themselves on topics which they are unfamiliar (National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, 2013). In order to familiarize themselves, the writers sought to define language that is relevant to the LGBTQ population. The writers

purposefully choose to define this language in the hope that this project would provide a learning opportunity for social workers working with this population.

### Definitions

The earliest definition of heterosexual bias was proposed by Morin (1977) and “refers to a belief system that values heterosexuality as superior to and/or more natural than homosexuality” (p. 235). The writers feel that this definition still holds true. In addition, Burdge (2007) defined gender identity as a reference to the “sense of oneself as being either male or female” (p. 244). Burge (2007) also provided the definition for sexual orientation as simply a reference to an individual’s “sexual and emotional attractions” (p. 244). Additionally, Burdge (2007) stated that transgender is the gender that an individual considers his or her self to be when the sex organs that the individual was born with differ. Similar to heterosexual bias, but more deeply ingrained in the fabric of U.S. culture, Herek (2000) defined heterosexism as “societal level ideologies and patterns of institutionalized oppression of non-heterosexual people” (p. 19). And finally, Martinez et al. (2011) defined queer consciousness, the more recent term adopted by the LGBTQ community in order to regain power through a previously negative term, that refers to “A person’s level of awareness of the dignity, value and worth of lesbian and gay individuals and communities” (p. 297). However, the author points out that the idea of queer consciousness points to a level of awareness that encompasses both positive and negative attitudes that are assigned to the LGBTQ population. The relevance of defining language

commonly used and its evolution can be understood through an examination of LGBTQ history.

### History of Heterosexist Attitudes

Tracing the origins of homophobia is beyond the scope of this project. However, it is important to note that homophobic attitudes have been prevalent throughout U.S. history, frequently manifesting in violence. One contributing factor to the problematic labeling of the LGBTQ community can be seen in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM). It was not until 1973 that the American Psychological Association removed homosexuality as a psychopathology (Berkman & Zinberg, 1997). This diagnosis inadvertently served to contribute to the stigmatization of the LGBTQ community. And the stigmatization continues. Currently, the DSM-5 labels the transgender population as a pathology through the disorder gender dysphoria (Gender Dysphoria, 2013). The DSM supports the pathology of the LGBTQ community and contributes to the heterosexist attitudes that have developed throughout history. This is indicative of a lack of cultural understanding which further reinforces the socialization of homophobic attitudes. Professional social workers have a responsibility to maintain a learning attitude and advocate for this discriminated against population. However, in order to further understand history, a model of socialization is presented.

## Theory Guiding Conceptualization

### Social Learning Theory and Moral Development

Rooted in classical conditioning discovered by Pavlov, Social Learning Theory of Moral Development expands on classical conditioning theory through observational learning (Ceci, Fraser, & Pereira, 2002). Social Learning theory postulates that behaviors are learned through reinforcement and punishment and observational learning (Ceci et al., 2002; Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2013). As children grow, good behavior is rewarded, while bad behavior is punished. The application to moral development is no different. When children are raised in environments where gender conformity is imposed into the behavior categories of male or female, this becomes the child's internalized experience. Additionally, children are astute about parental behaviors that are modeled. As a child progresses through the educational system, gender identity is further reinforced by their peers in the form of stereotyping, name calling and even classroom activities. Because of these internalized expectations, as children age, these expectations become externalized; thus when faced with a moral decision, these now adults default to previously internalized expectations (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2013). In other words, learning is a gradual process and rooted in the primary caregiver's modeling as an individual's internalized self-expectations and first source for socialization. Thus, the application of Social Learning theory to gender identity, homosexual bias and homophobia can demonstrate how beliefs

and attitudes are perpetuated and developed. A look at other theories will help to understand our theoretical conceptualization.

Two theories that emerged from the literature were social constructivist theory and queer theory (Burdge, 2007; Martinez et al., 2011) Social Constructivist theory postulates that the meaning we attach to reality creates our formulation of beliefs (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2013). And while the authors believe this to be true, they also believe that Social Learning theory, beginning with interactions from birth, is an integral piece of Social Constructivism. The decision not to adopt Queer theory for the purpose of this project was due to the fact that it was felt the application to development was not there. Thus, Social Learning theory was adopted to determine the attitudes of MSW students.

#### Attitudes of Master of Social Work Students About LGBTQ Populations

The literature is sparse when addressing the attitudes of MSW students regarding beliefs about LGBTQ populations; thus it is the hope of the writers to expand the body of literature with this study.

Black, Oles and Moore (1998) conducted a study of 331 BSW and MSW students attending a southern university and south central university. A t-test analysis comparing gender differences in heterosexist attitudes found that the male undergraduates had significantly higher heterosexist attitudes than did the females. Additionally, in this study it was concluded that in both males and females, heterosexist attitudes decreased with higher educational attainment (Black et al., 1998) However, a detailed analysis of the literature conducted by



Chonody and Smith (2013) concluded that, although minimal in social work students, heterosexual bias still occurs. Logie et al. (2007) sampled 197 students from the MSW program to assess phobias, attitudes and cultural competence toward LGBT populations. Overall, they concluded that MSW students were tolerant of this population. However, higher ratings of phobia in the students occurred when questions were assessing student's feelings toward bisexual and transgendered populations (Logie et al., 2007). The writers have concluded that the primary body of literature addressing social worker attitudes is in assessing post-graduate social workers.

#### Attitudes of Social Workers About LGBTQ Populations

A substantial amount of research has been conducted assessing the attitudes of post-graduate social workers (Berkman & Zinberg, 1997; Crisp, 2006; Anderson & Holliday, 2008; Martinez, et al. 2011). Overall, the results of these studies have been similar. Berkman and Zinberg (1997) sampled 187 NASW members that held MSW degrees; 72.2% were female with a mean age of 46. Using Herek's (1988) Attitudes toward Lesbians and Gay Men Scale (ALGS) (p. 322), this study concluded that close to 90% of the social workers surveyed were not homophobic. However, gender differences were found (Berkman & Zinberg, 1997). This is not surprising because Herek (1988) conducted a study on social workers using the ALGS and clearly saw differences in attitudes toward LGBTQ populations between genders. However, it is suspected that the gap in time

accounted for a trend toward understanding the diversity of the LGBTQ populations.

A correlation between religion and political affiliation was noted in studies and was determined to influence the effects of heterosexual bias (Berkman & Zinberg, 1997; Logie et al., 2007; Martinez et al., 2011). By far, the highest level of heterosexual bias was seen in studies that evaluated professional social workers in the areas of bisexual and transgendered populations (Burdge, 2007; Crisp, 2006). One common theme emerged throughout this literature review, the need to further assess education and training.

### Social Work Education and Training

Universities, by far, are the most influential when addressing diversity issues. The student demographics on campuses alone create a range of diverse experiences. According to the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Educational Policy 2.1.5 (2008) educators are upheld to the advancement of human rights. The CSWE policy states: "Social workers recognize the global interconnections of oppression and are knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights" (p. 5). Similar to the NASW requirements for social workers to maintain a learning role in society, educators have that same responsibility. It is for this reason that the literature reviewed consistently cited the need to educate further social work students on LGBTQ communities, and on the issues that this population is faced with (Black et al.,

1998; Burdge, 2007; Chonody & Smith, 2013; Crisp, 2006; Foreman & Quinlan, 2008; Logie, et al., 2007; Martinez et al., 2011).

Logie et al. (2007) assessed the cultural competence on LGBT populations of MSW students, composing of 27 males and 144 females. Their study concluded that on a scale of 0 to 5 (0= low competence and 5=high competence), the average score of this study was 3.50 (Logie et al., 2007). In addition, Crisp (2006) advocated, through education, to further gay affirmative practice. Further, Burdge (2007) found that social workers lack education in the areas of bisexual and transgendered populations and called for social workers to take the lead in educating the public through community opportunities such as writing public officials or creating open, public lectures or facilitating public discussions. And finally, Martinez et al. (2011) stated that it was imperative for social workers to educate themselves on the idea of queer consciousness. Queer consciousness states that it is important to be aware of both “affirming and disaffirming attitudes” (p. 301). Queer consciousness, rooted in queer theory that states “gender identity pathologizes differences” which embraces diversity and rejects gender stereotyping (p. 301).

Professors are the most likely candidates to have access to the most current research. With that said, a study conducted by Chonody, Woodford, Brennan, Newman and Wang (2014) used a cross-sectional design to survey heterosexual social work faculty in the United States. Included in this study were political affiliation and religiosity (Chonody et al., 2014). Not surprising, the

results concluded that sexual prejudice was low among faculty, however consistent with prior studies, the more liberal the faculty, the less sexual prejudice was reported (Chonody et al., 2014). Interestingly, religion did not play a factor in predicting bias (Chonody et al., 2014). It is this literature review that helped to conceptualize this project.

### Summary

A look at the literature indicates a need to further advance studies on MSW attitudes about the LGBTQ communities. This review is relevant because social work students and social work professionals are demonstrating a lack of cultural competency in working with and addressing the issues that they are being faced with in assessing and intervening with the LGBTQ population. Attitudes of gender bias, heterosexism and homophobia in addition to the impact of religion and political affiliation should be addressed through a curriculum designed to train in these particularly sensitive areas. If not addressed, social workers tend to project their attitudes onto clients or avert serving this population appropriately. In fact, the LGBTQ is averse to seeking services because of these issues. It is the role of the social worker to continue to educate themselves and their communities on these issues of diversity.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODS

#### Introduction

This was an in-depth study to explore the beliefs about the LGBTQ community among social work graduate students. This chapter expounded the cross-sectional and descriptive nature of the research design, which includes the design of this study, sampling methods, data collection, data analysis and the protection of human subjects. Additionally, the survey instrument was introduced and adaptations to the instrument are detailed.

#### Study Design

The purpose of this study was to explore beliefs about the LGBTQ community among MSW graduate students. This study was quantitative in nature and collected information during a single point in time from MSW participants of different ages, ethnicities, genders, and socioeconomic statuses.

The hypothesis of this study sought to find significant beliefs about the LGBTQ community among social work graduate students attending the California State University San Bernardino (CSUSB). This study intent was to determine whether MSW students believe that they are receiving adequate educational training to address the needs of LGBTQ populations. The researchers felt that this study was timely and relevant, as social workers are more likely now than

ever before to find themselves working with members of this particular demographic population.

### Sampling

The sampling method was selected in order to specifically study the student population who were physically in attendance at the CSUSB campus. The surveyed participants were MSW graduate students who competed for entry into the MSW program at CSUSB and are a subset within the larger student body population at CSUSB.

At the time this study was conducted, there were 179 MSW students enrolled in the program. Surveys were distributed to 179 students. MSW students were selected for this study because of their potential direct involvement with and exposure to the LGBTQ populations.

This sample was chosen because social workers are trained to work with diverse populations. Therefore, it is presumed that social workers will have additional knowledge and familiarity with LGBTQ issues and concerns.

This study did not anticipate any problems with data collection as the MSW students were physically located on the campus. There was no requirement to complete the survey, however as MSW students there is an expectation to contribute to the field of social work knowledge in support for the betterment of mankind. According to Grinnell and Unrau (2011), study participants should be knowledgeable about the situation being studied, willing to convey their views, and there should be a gamut of views represented. It was

expected that MSW students will identify that there are limited educational opportunities that explore the beliefs about the LGBTQ community among social work graduate students.

### Data Collection and Instruments

This was a quantitative study that assessed education and training among social work graduate students at CSUSB through a survey instrument (Appendix A). This survey instrument was adapted from the Gay Affirmative Practice (GAP) scale. The GAP was developed by Catherine Crisp in 2006 and was administered to clinicians to determine if practitioners were engaging in affirmative practices with the LGBTQ communities. The GAP survey instrument was concluded to have good reliability and validity because it has consistently measured what it was intended to. The GAP was intended to measure beliefs and behaviors of practitioners.

The researchers' survey instrument included 33 questions to obtain the highest level of measurement outcomes:

Questions 1-7 level of measurement includes nominal and ordinal levels of measurement.

Questions 8-28 level of measurement includes ordinal level scales of measurement.

Questions 29 to 33 level of measurement includes interval, nominal and ordinal levels of measurement.

Questions 1-6 were selected for demographic purposes only. However, in doing so, the writers elected to include a question that addressed religious affiliation and political views to assess the impact that these ideas have on determining openness to LGBTQ populations. Because prior literature (Logie, et al., 2007; Black, et al., 1998) had determined differences in results with regard to religiosity, demographic location, gender, age and political affiliation it was determined that these were important areas to assess for the purpose of this study.

Questions 7-18 addressed the graduate social worker on their views surrounding the professional social worker and, as a learning profession, social workers should acquire knowledge on topics of concern that are to relevant to LGBTQ culture in order to better serve this population.

Questions 19-27 were selected to assess the education that social work graduate students felt that they received as a part of their learning experience while attending the CSUSB master of social work program. Internship placements are part of the integrated educational experience of the MSW program at CSUSB. Because field internships are such an integral piece to the overall learning experience of graduate social work students, the researchers felt it important to include questions to assess the field training conducted by field instructors. Thus, questions 28-30 were adapted from an unpublished dissertation (Ramirez, n.d.) and were included to determine whether field instructors included LGBTQ topics as part of their educational programs.



And finally, questions 31-33 were included in this study to determine the amount of personal contact that MSW students have with the LGBTQ community and the students' level of closeness they feel toward them.

The nine questions in the education and training section (questions 19-27) were developed by the authors of this study and have not been tested for reliability and validity. Since the goal of this study was to assess training surrounding LGBTQ issues and topics, the authors concluded these questions were relevant. It is the hope of this project to evaluate the reliability and validity of these questions.

The researchers took care in producing an instrument that was sensitive to the LGBTQ populations. In doing so, researching terminology and definitions commonly used by this population was central. The GAP had already been determined as culturally sensitive.

The intent of this study was to measure the beliefs about the LGBTQ community among social work graduate students. For example, if a graduated social worker was presented with a young client that was struggling with coming out to his or her parents, would the social worker feel competent to address this issue with the client and their family? The strengths of this instrument were that the authors made every effort to provide a culturally sensitive instrument. Much of the wording in the questions has demonstrated this. These questions were selected and designed to assess age, gender, prior education, political affiliation, religion, beliefs, behaviors, education, training, and personal contact. Limitations

of this instrument may be that reliability and validity may not be found in some of the questions. Population limitations are varied. First, California is primarily a democratic state that tends toward being more liberal. However, the predominant religion is Christian, which is also a limitation and may yield conflicting results.

After concluding a detailed literature review it was determined that the questions were relevant to this study because of their ability to measure what this study sought to measure. It was believed that various items listed in the survey would contribute to the ability to assess graduate students beliefs about the LGBTQ community.

#### Procedures

To reach the MSW population, this study gathered data from 47 MSW students currently enrolled at CSUSB. The researchers obtained written authorization from the school of social work administrator in order to survey the students. The survey was then distributed into the mailboxes of the MSW students that were located in the social work resource lounge. The survey was self-administered. Informed consent was attached to the instrument that was distributed (Appendix B). Once the students completed the survey, the researchers had a securely locked box placed in the social work resource lounge that was clearly be labeled, "Beliefs About the LGBTQ Community Among Social Work Graduate Students" for collection of the completed surveys. The completed surveys were retrieved by the researchers during a two and a half month time frame beginning January 13, 2015 and ending data collection on March, 27,

2015. The surveys were collected two times per week and stored in a locked cabinet.

### Protection of Human Subjects

Protection of the human subjects was ensured throughout this research project and was designed to protect its participants. There were no names or personal information that could potentially identify students to the school administrators in order to provide an ethical study that allows participants to feel safe from perceived school consequences for participation (Grinnell & Unrau, 2014). Anonymity was protected because this study did not collect any personally identifiable information on its student participants. Participants were given the research goals and procedure through informed consent prior to participating in this study. Confidentiality was protected through the researchers providing a locked box in the social work resource lounge that only the researchers of this project had access to.

### Data Analysis

Surveys that were collected from Master of Social Work graduate students attending CSUSB were analyzed. The surveys were then coded and entered into the Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS) database for analysis.

## Summary

This quantitative study found significant beliefs about the LGBTQ community among social work graduate students attending the CSUSB. A major question that was studied was whether MSW students believe that they are receiving adequate educational training to address the needs of the LGBTQ populations. In this study, 179 MSW students were asked to complete questionnaires with questions adapted from the Gay Affirmative Practice (GAP) scale. Additional questions were added to address training on the LGBTQ population at internship placements.

The purpose of this study was to explore the beliefs about the LGBTQ community among social work graduate students. After the survey questionnaire submission, results were analyzed. The goal of this study was to inform future curriculum that will be provided through CSUSB to future social work students to increase competency in service to the LGBTQ communities.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

#### Demographics

One hundred and seventy-nine surveys were distributed to MSW students in their first, second or third year in attendance at CSUSB. The total valid surveys that were returned was 49. Most of the respondents were female (87.2%), and six were male (12.8%). The distribution in the age of participants ranged from 22-51. The mean age of the participants was 30.68 with a standard deviation of 8.411. See Table 1 for age mean and standard deviation.

The participants were asked to identify their sexual orientation through the use of the following categories: Heterosexual, gay male, lesbian and bisexual. Of these participants, 42 identified as heterosexual (85.2%) and seven (14.3%) identified as bisexual. None of the participants identified as either gay male or lesbian.

Participants were also asked to identify their political affiliation. The political parties were categorized by the following: Republican, Democrat, Libertarian and Green Party. For statistical purposes, scores were created for two categories. The liberal category included Democrat and Green Party and the category labeled conservative included Republican and Libertarian. Of the 49 surveys collected, 46 reported political affiliation. 37 of the participants (80.4%) reported liberal political affiliations and nine participants (19.6%) reported conservative political affiliations. See Table 2 for participant demographics.

In order to better assess the large amount of data collected, the researchers concluded a course of action that included creating data scores to better manage the results. This included adding items to create scores related to social worker beliefs. The identified questions on the survey that were related to social worker beliefs were questions seven through 18.

Additionally, a large amount of data was collected concerning education and training that the MSW students felt that they had obtained through their graduate program at CSUSB. The results of these scores were also added to form a score. These identified questions regarding education and training were question numbers 19 through 27. Once these two scores were created, the researchers ran a correlation matrix to determine further areas for analysis.

A chi-square test of independence was used to examine the relationship between political affiliation (conservative, liberal) and sexual orientation (heterosexual, bisexual). The relationship between these variables is statistically significant ( $X^2=2.008$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $N = 46$ ,  $.156$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The results of this study show that the participants that identified as bisexual were more likely to be of liberal political affiliation (15.2%) and heterosexuals were also more likely to be of liberal political affiliation (65.2%). See Table 3 for the relationship variables.

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare personal contact with family members that openly identify as LGBTQ with the gender of the participants. When comparing the means, this study found that men on

average have significantly less LGBTQ personal contact ( $M = 9.83$ ,  $SD = 5.19$ ) than do women ( $M = 4.76$ ,  $SD = 4.18$ ); ( $t = 2.29$ ,  $df = 5.96$ ,  $p = .062$ ).

One of the major goals of this study was to determine whether MSW students felt prepared to working with LGBTQ populations given their current training through the social work graduate program at CSUSB. The only associations that were significantly noted on the correlation matrix concerning preparedness were responses to question number 30 (I feel prepared to provide social work services to LGBTQ populations). A cursory examination revealed a correlation between religion and question 30; the researchers sought to further examine the relationship. The researchers created two scores for religious affiliation: Religious affiliation and no religious affiliation. The religious affiliation scores included the following: (1) Atheist, (2) Muslim, (3) Buddhist, (4) Protestant, (5) Catholic and (6) Jewish. The no religious affiliation category consisted only of those who reported (7) none on the survey.

An independent samples t-test was conducted to evaluate the how prepared a graduate student felt working with LGBTQ populations with religious affiliation and no religious affiliation. When comparing the means, this study found that those with religious affiliation ( $M = 3.48$ ,  $SD = .949$ ) on average felt significantly less prepared in working with LGBTQ populations than did those with no religious affiliation ( $M = 2.42$ ,  $SD = 1.24$ ); ( $t = 2.67$ ,  $df = 16.6$ ,  $p = .016$ ).

Additionally, the correlation matrix revealed a relationship between question 30 (I feel prepared to provide social work services to LGBTQ populations) and political affiliation. To analyze further the researchers created two scores for political affiliation: Conservative and liberal. The conservative scores included the following from the survey instrument: (1) Republican and (3) Libertarian. The liberal scores included from the survey instrument: (2) Democrat and (4) Green Party.

An independent samples t-test was conducted to evaluate the how prepared a graduate student felt working with LGBTQ populations with conservatives and liberals. When comparing the means, this study found that conservatives ( $M = 4.0$ ,  $SD = 1.07$ ) on average felt significantly less prepared in working with LGBTQ populations than did liberals ( $M = 3.03$ ,  $SD = 1.03$ ); ( $t = 2.31$ ,  $df = 10.5$ ,  $p = .042$ ).

### Summary

The results section of this thesis project consisted of the most relevant data found in this study. The research utilized descriptive statistics to present the demographic information. Additionally, the researchers utilized chi square tests to determine the relationship of variables. Finally, t-tests were conducted to compare variables within the survey.



Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation of Participant Age

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Age	47	30.68	8.411

Table 2. Participant Demographics

	n	%
Gender		
Female	43	87.8
Male	6	12.2
Sexual orientation		
Heterosexual	42	85.7
Bisexual	7	14.3
Political Party		
Liberal	37	80.4
Conservative	9	19.6
Religiosity		
Religion	35	74.5
No Religion	12	25.5

Table 3. Chi-Square Test for Independence on the Relationship  
Between Political Affiliation and Sexual Orientation

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	<u>Liberal</u>	<u>Conservative</u>
Heterosexual	30	9
Bisexual	7	0

---

Chi-square test results ( $X^2=2.008$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $N = 46$ ,  $.156$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

#### Introduction

This study explored the effect of social workers' personal beliefs on working with the LGBTQ community. While this study did not obtain the supporting information from the surveys as was initially suspected and could not support the research question, the data collected led to several conclusions: Females feel more comfortable than males in working with the LGBTQ population, MSW students with no religious affiliation feel more comfortable than MSW students with religious affiliation working with LGBTQ populations and liberals feels more comfortable than conservatives working with LGBTQ populations.

This study's findings were similar to other studies. The research supported previous studies that found that one's individual political, religious, and cultural beliefs tend to influence their level of comfort in working with LGBTQ individuals. Historically, there had been research examining attitudes of MSW graduates (Berkman & Zinberg, 1997; Crisp, 2006; Anderson & Holliday, 2008; Martinez, et al. 2011) and the overall results of the studies had been analogous.

Recommendations include larger studies and further research on the perceptions of social workers regarding the special needs of the LGBTQ population as well as additional cultural competency training supported by social work education. Additionally, it would be worthwhile to study what factors would

help social workers who were previously uncomfortable working with the LGBTQ to become more comfortable. Perhaps having same-sex marriage legal in more states would lead to a greater acceptance of this community. Laws are changing everyday regarding the LGBTQ community, and it would be beneficial to study the effects the changing laws have on social work attitudes.

### Discussion

This study found that most social workers were willing to provide services LGBTQ individuals, but it was very difficult to assess the participants' comfort level based on the results of the study and the answers that they provided. The researchers speculated that this could be due to a lack of understanding about the special needs of the LGBTQ population. The majority of participants that were surveyed (34 participants) were between the ages of 22 and 33. This may be contribute to the unclear responses on level of comfort when working with the LGBTQ populations. Inexperience with this population is likely. These findings were consistent with previous research conducted on social workers' personal belief systems regarding working with LGBTQ clients (Logie et al., 2007). Previous studies found that the more educated a social worker was, the more comfortable they were when providing services (Mcfarland & Sanders, 2003). The results of this study found that while most participants empathized with the plight of the LGBTQ population, few understood their unique set of needs.

Furthermore, the results of this survey suggest that it is possible that the participants have not reconciled their personal feelings about working with

LGBTQ populations. They may have all of the intellectual tools to work with and service the LGBTQ population, but it is possible they would rather not use or obtain additional educational training than to risk making a mistake while working with the LGBTQ population. Additionally, the survey results suggest that some participants were not even comfortable with the idea about serving the LGBTQ population due to religious or political affiliation. Some MSW students who felt they had been provided adequate training still felt uncomfortable working with this population because the population has traditionally been a high-risk population for suicide and self-destructive behavior. The risk is great, and the potential in doing more harm than good is there. Additionally, some well-known factors are participants who felt more comfortable working with LGBTQ individuals tended to be female, less religious, and self-reported identifying as liberal.

Despite having been given all of the educational tools and facts and adequate training, it is possible that some social workers still don't feel comfortable working with this population because they feel that they would directly or indirectly impose their own value system on the clients. The solution, in the minds of these participants, may be to avoid LGBTQ clients rather than risking imposing their values and beliefs and subsequently doing more harm than good.

## Limitations

Limitations for this study included a small sample size and data collected. One hundred and seventy-nine (179) surveys were distributed to the MSW students attending CSUSB and only 49 out of the 179 returned the survey, equally 27%. As a result, the small number returns weakens the generalizability of the survey findings. Possibly expanding the research distribution to the Pathway Distance Education Program, and Bachelors of Social Work students would have provided a more representative sample.

Another limitation was the questionnaire items came from an unpublished dissertation that had not been determined as reliable or valid. This was compounded by the fact that the researchers had created scores of the 33 original survey questionnaire data items and consolidated into 9 items for statistical purposes, thus resulting in further questioning in the validity and reliability of the survey instrument.

## Implications for Future Research and Social Work Practice

From the results of this study, the researchers recommend that social work training and curriculum educates future social workers about the reality of working with LGBTQ clients. Most social workers entered the field because they wanted to help others. The key is for training programs to emphasize that helping these individuals isn't as difficult as one might think. With proper education and training, even if one has different beliefs, it is better than these individuals receiving no help at all. Curriculum for students in the social work practices

should include courses in LGBTQ special needs and highlight this group as an opportunity to assist, rather than a group to fear. Current social worker training should include more trainings, webinars, and seminars regarding providing services to this group. This will benefit in decreasing the stigma and improve the delivery of service.

To be an effective social worker, it is imperative that they stay abreast of the changing attitudes toward the LGBTQ population. Attitudes toward the LGBTQ population are changing, and this would support the need to provide social workers with the tools necessary so that they would feel comfortable in working with the LGBTQ population. According to Baunach (2012), most people were resistant to same-sex marriages in 1988. However, when attitudes were studied again in 2010, “support for same-sex marriage was much more broad-based, and opposition to same-sex marriage became more localized to specific subgroups-older American, southerners, African Americans, evangelical Protestants, and Republicans” (Banuach, 2012, p. 364). Clearly the temperature has changed greatly since 1988, and it is important to see how much has changed since 2010. Banuach (2012) claims that the change in attitudes was not due to demographic changes but was actually due to a greater social shift in attitudes toward the LGBTQ population.

Another idea for future research could include analyzing how mentorships between seasoned and new social workers could positively affect one’s work with, or desire to work with, LGBTQ individuals. Collins et al. (1997) stated that



“Mentorship is thought to facilitate professional development by promoting the capacity to cope with difficulties and develop new competencies at the personal, interpersonal, and institutional levels” (p. 148). Another way that social workers could improve their level of comfort is by participating in professional networking groups that deal with the LGBTQ population such as the National Association of Social Workers’ (NASW) National Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues. According to their website, the association is “to promote the development of knowledge, theory and practice as related to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender issues” (NASW, 2013).

### Conclusion

This study found that personal bias concerning the LGBTQ community is still a serious issue facing social workers and social services programs even to this day. While there was not enough data to come to many significant conclusions, the overarching theme of the study seems to be that some people are unsure about working with LGBTQ individuals as they are afraid that their personal values and beliefs might directly or inadvertently affect the client or clients in one manner or another. The researchers recommend that social workers engage in activities that will help increase their personal comfort level with working with the LGBTQ population.

APPENDIX A  
SURVEY INSTRUMENT

## LGBTQ Attitudes Survey

Please circle one item or fill in the blank for the following questions:

1. Gender:
  1. Male
  2. Female
  3. Transgender
  
2. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Sexual Orientation:
  1. Heterosexual
  2. Gay Male
  3. Lesbian
  4. Bisexual
  
4. Bachelor's degree:  
What school did you obtain it from: \_\_\_\_\_  
What was your major: \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Which political party do you **most** align with:
  1. Republican
  2. Democratic
  3. Libertarian
  4. Green Party
  
6. Which religion/denomination/group, if any, do you **most** align with:
  1. Atheist
  2. Muslim
  3. Buddhist
  4. Protestant
  5. Catholic
  6. Jewish
  7. I do not belong to any religious denomination/group

**Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements:**

7. In working with LGBTQ populations, social workers should support the diverse makeup of their families.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

8. Social workers should be knowledgeable about LGBTQ resources.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

9. Social workers should educate themselves about LGBTQ lifestyles.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

10. Social workers should help LGBTQ clients to develop a positive identity as LGBTQ as gay or lesbian individuals.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

11. Social workers should challenge misinformation about LGBTQ populations.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

12. Social workers should be knowledgeable about issues unique to LGBTQ communities.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

13. Social workers should acquire the knowledge necessary for effective practice with LGBTQ clients.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

14. Social workers should work to develop skills necessary for effective practice with LGBTQ clients.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

1. Social workers should develop attitudes necessary for effective practice with LGBTQ clients.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

16. Social workers should verbalize that a gay/lesbian orientation is as healthy as heterosexual orientation.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

17. Social workers should demonstrate comfort about gay/lesbian issues to gay/lesbian clients.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

18. Social workers should educate themselves about gay/lesbian concerns.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

To what extent do you feel that you have been given instruction in the following areas?

19. LGBTQ discriminatory practice in healthcare

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

20. LGBTQ individuals in the workplace

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

21. Hate crimes

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

22. The right to same-sex marriage

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

23. Helping LGBTQ youth with the coming out process

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

24. Supporting gay and lesbian elders

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

25. Helping families support their LGBTQ children

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

26. Homophobia

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

27. Heterosexism

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

**Please skip questions 28-30 if you are a first year, part-time student. If you fall into any other enrollment category, please answer questions 28-30.**

28. Approximately how many hours has (to date) your field supervisor discussed LGBTQ issues or concerns with you during supervision

0	1	2	3	4	5
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29. Approximately how many hours (to date) of training has your internship placement sites provided training for you on LGBTQ issues or concerns

0	1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---	---

30. I feel prepared to provide social work services to LGBTQ populations

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

**PERSONAL CONTACT**

31. In your family, friend or work circle, how many (total) LGBTQ individuals do you know? \_\_\_\_\_

32. Based on the number of LGBTQ individual(s) that you know in your circle, which of these do you consider the “closest” to you?

- 1. Friend
- 2. Co-worker
- 3. Family member
- 4. None

33. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “very close” and 5 being “not close at all” please rate the level of closeness that you have to the person that you identified in the above question.

Very close	Close	Neither close or not close at all	Not close	Not close at all
1	2	3	4	5

Adaptation from Crisp, C. (2006). The Gay Affirmative Practice Scale (GAP): A new measure for assessing cultural competence with gay and lesbian clients. *Social Work*,51(2), 115-126. doi:10.1093/sw/51.2.115



APPENDIX B  
INFORMED CONSENT

## INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Student Colleagues:

We, Gina Florez and Guillermina Hall are graduate students in the MSW program at CSUSB. Our research “Beliefs About the LGBTQ Community Among Social Work Graduate Students” has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of California State University, San Bernardino.

We are inviting you to participate in our thesis study on MSW student’s beliefs about the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) community among social work graduate students. If you choose to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete the attached questionnaire.

Although there are no distinct benefits from participating in this study, it is hoped that the results will provide valuable information to future Social Workers, as well as to the field of social work to assist educators and professionals. We anticipate no foreseeable risk.

Your decision to participate is entirely voluntary and completely anonymous. This survey should take no more than 15 minutes to complete. Refusal to participate, either at the beginning of the study, or at any time during the study, is possible with no negative consequences. Some questions are sensitive and personal. Participation or non-participation will not affect your grade. Subjects may leave any question(s) unanswered, for any reason, without consequences. No information will be shared with any of your instructors.

Please feel free to contact us or our thesis advisor, Dr. Rosemary McCaslin at 909-537-5507, if you have any questions about this study. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, you are asked to call the Social Work Department at 909-537-5501.

Thank you for considering participation in this study. Submission of the consent form is not required and strictly voluntary. Please place the voluntary signed consent forms and survey/questionnaire in the locked box labeled– Beliefs About the LGBTQ Community Among Social Work Graduate Students. The box is located on top of the counter near the social work student’s mailboxes in the Social Work Resource room.

I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. Please mark an X in the box labeled I give my consent to participate in the “Beliefs About LGBTQ Community Among Social Work Graduate Students” survey below.

Please do not provide any identifying information. Your X in the box is considered your consent.

I give my consent to participate in the Beliefs About the LGBTQ Community  
Among Social Work Graduate Students survey      Date \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your participation.

APPENDIX C  
DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

## **Study of Beliefs About the LGBTQ Community Among Social Work Graduate Students**

### **Debriefing Statement**

This study you have just completed was designed to investigate the beliefs about the LGBTQ community among social work graduate students to inform education. This study hypothesizes that the beliefs of the social work students who receive adequate educational training on LGBTQ issues and language are better equipped than social work students who do not receive adequate educational training in LGBTQ issues and language. The beliefs were measured on five criteria: political affiliation, religiosity, gay affirmative practice, education and training and personal contact.

Thank you for your participation and for not discussing the contents of the hypothesis with other students. If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact Researchers Gina Florez or Guillermina Hall or Professor Dr. Rosemary McCaslin, 909-537-5507. If you would like to obtain a copy of the group results of this study, please contact Professor Dr. Rosemary McCaslin at SB 409 at the end of Spring Quarter of 2015.

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## ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES PAGE

This was a two person project where authors collaborated throughout. However, for each phase of the project, certain authors took primary responsibility. These responsibilities were assigned in the manner listed below.

1. Data Collection:

Team Effort: Gina Florez and Guillermina Hall

2. Data Entry and Analysis:

Team Effort: Gina Florez and Guillermina Hall

3. Writing Report and Presentation of Findings:

- a. Introduction and Literature

Team Effort: Gina Florez and Guillermina Hall

- b. Methods

Team Effort: Gina Florez and Guillermina Hall

- c. Results

Team Effort: Gina Florez and Guillermina Hall

- d. Discussion

Team Effort: Gina Florez and Guillermina Hall