

## HAPPINESS, FAMILIAL, SOCIAL FACTORS AND PATTERNS OF ASSOCIATION AMONG COLLEGE MALE STUDENTS AND THEIR GENDER IDENTITY

GLORIA S. SANTOS

Polytechnic University of the Philippines Bataan Branch, Mariveles, Bataan, Philippines

### ABSTRACT

The study of Michael Bailey and Allan Sanders of Northwestern University, Illinois was focused on the position of the X chromosomes, particularly on the Xq28 region, explained the relationship of sexual orientation of men to their genetic traits. However, Qazi Rahman of King College, London established in a parallel study, that only 30%-40% of a person's psychological traits are heritable, therefore there are other factors.

Hence, this study was made to determine other factors that influenced male sexual orientation; it investigated the extrinsic variables that have significant influenced on the male college students' gay behaviors.

This is of a descriptive-status research defined by Scates as a study that presents factual situations. It utilized a self-structured questionnaire to gather data.

Results showed that of the different factors, (age, peers/friends, siblings, birth order, parent's nature and status, and media) it is the peer or friends with a WM of 4.615 to have the greatest influenced on the sexual orientation of the gay respondents. This was followed by the family (WM of 4.000) particularly; siblings and parents' acceptance of their orientation, the least to influence their orientation is the media, with a WM of 2.111.

The gay respondents particularly those in the higher year levels in college were showier of their sexual orientation and those them enjoy being gays.

**KEYWORDS:** Sexual Orientation, External Factors, Peer, Acceptance, Media

### INTRODUCTION

Male college students whose effeminate manners are highly evident are growing in number. A phenomenon, the researcher has thought of to be caused of some factors. Hard sciences like Biology explains the concept of heredity, genes and chromosomes and their role in the dominant and recessive characteristics of an individual (Crandell et al, 2009, p.83). In the study made by Qazi Rahman of King College London, heritability of sex orientation is only 30 to 40%, although, Dingfelder in his research suggested that genes and prenatal hormones, in his own words:"could have more sway in gender identity than previously thought."Other researchers supportive of the genes and chromosome influenced on the sexual identity are Michael Bailey and Allan Sanders of the Northwestern University of Illinois.

However, this study would not explain further the genetic or the sharing of alleles at position Xq28 as significant factors in the development of gender but rather, it looked into the external factors that have led to the preferred sexual identity among the respondents. It followed the line of thought of the Phenomenological Psychology of Heidegge in the sense that it delved in the lived experiences of the college gay students. It is also in line with several studies cited by

Richard P. Fitzgibbons (www. Narth.com) in the article, Gender Identity Disorder where he mentioned the studies of Zucher and Bradley et al (2003), dealing with the psychopathology in parents of boys with gender identity disorder. According to this research, cross-gender behaviors were attributable to the fathers of the segender-disturbed boys who did not stopped, though they were uncomfortable, their wives' tolerance of their children's cross-dressing, who rationalized, a boy with female clothing is "cute." Parental ambivalence, they further stated, particularly the mother, is part of the problem.

On the other hand, Dr. George Rekers of the University of South Carolina Medical School in the same article published by Fitzgibbons, studied 70 boys, he found out that there were no chromosomal abnormalities among his subject, but they also displayed gay behaviors. Other researchers who also studied other factors on the development of sexual identity were Gearheart, Reiner and Williams of Hopkins University. They explained the role of socialization in the development of homosexuality

Therefore, the current study was conducted to prove that in the Philippine setting there are factors external to the individual that can be identified to have caused homosexuality among college students. Specifically, it is anchored on Sherree Barenbaum's (2003) Social Influence Theory that social factors affect gender identity. The researcher will prove towards the end of the research that from among the societal circle respondents' lived with are the dominant factors that have contributed to their sexual identity.

## METHODS

The research method adopted was the descriptive status-phenomenological approach which answers the question, "what is?" from the point of view of respondents themselves. This is a replication of an unpublished study made in 2009 by Nin gala and the researcher which was purposely done to compare data to enhance liability of findings on which of the factors external to respondents thematically grouped as family, friends, environment, social media and experiences have a significant extent of influence on their sexual identity. The end result of the current study was geared towards a better understanding of the phenomenological psychology of male homosexuality. The 'snow ball' technique of sampling was used. The sampling started with the identified cross-dressed male student who provided the list of the others. There were 46 respondents in 2009 and when the list had already 40 names for the 2015 study, questionnaires were administered and collected. This validated questionnaire was the instrument that enabled the researcher obtain the necessary data, statistically treated using the Percentage and the Weighted Mean formula.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The age of the respondents both from the 2009 and 2015 studies are presented below

**Table 1: Age Distribution of Respondents**

Age	2009		2015	
16-17	11	23.90	14	35.00
18-19	27	56.70	18	45.00
20-21	7	15.20	8	20.00
22 and above	1	2.17	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Both researches proved that the greater number of homosexual male students came from the age bracket, 18-19 years old, implying that they were already in their higher years (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year) in college. This further implies that first year students who have effeminate manners strengthened their inclination to becoming gays as they were already gaining confidence as college students moving towards higher years and moving away from being neophytes and enjoying mobility in the university. This enabled them to be associated with peer groups. Furthermore, implied by the data, during their first year level in college they were in the stage of “testing the water,” determining whether classmates will accept them.

In support, Russel and Joyner (2001) stated that there is a body of evidence suggesting that growing up lesbian or gay was often a difficult journey toward self-acceptance. On the other hand, Crandell et al. (2009) wrote that especially troubling was the adolescent’s fear of disclosing his or her sexual orientation to his/her family. An eighteen or nineteen male college student had already identified what sexual orientation he would live with though, Crandell had also written that the image that adolescents have of themselves is particularly susceptible to peer influences.

However, adult homosexuals typically report that their homosexual orientation had already been established before they reach puberty (Mallet, Apostolidis, and Party, 1997).

In the Philippines, it took a previously married Filipino actor to admit his being a homosexual in a Reality Show (Big Brother) where he was one of the participants which showed that there were some Filipino males who accepted their being gays later in the their lives.

**Family**

The family background of the respondents shows their number of brothers and sisters and their birth order.

**Table 2: Number of Brothers and Sisters of Respondents**

Number of Brothers	2009		2015		Number of Sisters	2009		2015	
	F	%	F	%		F	%	F	%
None	7	15.20	7	17.50	None	5	10.90	11	27.50
1	14	30.40	16	40.00	1	10	21.70	5	12.50
2	17	36.90	17	42.50	2	16	34.80	10	25.00
3	3	6.52	0	0.00	3	9	19.60	12	30.00
4 and more	5	10.87	0	0.00	4 and more	6	13.04	2	5.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Gleaned from Table 2, 2009 and 2015 studies confirmed that most numbered respondents have two brothers 36.90 per cent and 42.50 per cent respectively, while for the number of sisters in the 2015 data, 30.00 per cent of respondents have three (3) sisters while in 2009, 34.80 per cent of the homosexual college students have two (2) sisters.

Blanchard (2001) pointed out in his study that the number of older sister had no effect on the sexual orientation while each older brother increases a man’s odds of developing a homosexual orientation by 28 to 48 per cent.

**Table 3: Birth Order of Respondents**

Birth Order	2009		2015	
	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent
Eldest	6	13.00	8	20.00
Middle	26	56.50	20	50.00
Youngest	14	30.40	12	30.00

<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>
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Shown above both in 2009 and 2015, more than the majority and 50 per cent respectively of the subject are middle born. This implies that most of the respondents being middle borns, have tried to get the attention of parents this could be by being different from what is expected from their sex roles.

Based on actual observation, in typical Filipino families particularly in rural or not so urbanized communities, the eldest being the first born, often times, enjoyed the attention of both mother and father, there is no rivalry yet for attention being alone at first. He would be enjoying new clothes, or new toys but the second would most likely enjoy “hand-me down clothes and toys,” implying that clothes or toys used by the elder brother or sister will be used by the next sibling even if they are of different sexes. Mentioned earlier were Zucher and Bradley et. al. (2003) in the article of Fitzgibbons, told readers that their study proved that male children found to be cute by mothers wearing female clothes became one of the reasons for the development of their homosexuality.

The pattern changes with the youngest, among observed typical Filipino Families, new baby clothes or toys could be enjoyed by him or her, this could be attributed to the distance of birth between the eldest and the youngest, the principle of wear and tear could have been the cause from the “hand me down” practices earlier mentioned, clothes worn by the first born will be worn by the second baby and by the third or by the fourth and so on. Again in most Filipino families, youngest expected to be the last is born, he becomes the “apple of the eyes” of the parents and even siblings, he becomes the favorite.

However, in a study conducted by Bogaert (2006) where he determined the effect of birth order on male sexual orientation, he involved a sample where biological and adopted siblings were studied. He found out that only older biological brothers influenced sexual orientation; there was no effect on the adopted siblings, which manifested genetic influences. This study did not include determining whether respondent was adopted or not.

However, McConaghy (2006) pointed out that the degree of homosexuality was not due to birth order but a social process, exactly the thesis of the current study.

### **Friends**

Outside the home, the child seeks belongingness from friends. Table below identified the favorite buddy of respondents.

**Table 4: Preferred Peer Group of Respondents**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>2009</b>		<b>2015</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Per cent</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
Girls	32	69.60	30	75.00
Boys	10	21.70	7	17.50
Girls and Boys	4	8.70	3	7.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

The table above clearly presents that most of the respondents from the two period researches denoted that girls were their preferred friends. This implies that respondents have been playing roles typically for girls. Ruble, Martin, and Barenbaum, (2006) as cited by Crandell et al., in their meta-study concluded that “boys and girls engaged in such different

play behaviors and that they are almost separate culture, girls most often play dress-up and choose dolls and kitchen sets, and their fantasy play involves home life and glamour. No wonder, these homosexual college students are used to wearing make-up and fancy clothing, this can be inferred from having girls their playmates during their childhood.

**Table 5: Respondents’ Number of Gay Friend**

Number of Gay Friends	2009		2015	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	3	6.52	0	0
2	10	21.70	8	20.00
3	10	21.70	5	12.50
4	5	10.90	8	20.00
5	5	10.90	7	17.50
6	1	2.17	10	25.00
More than 6	8	17.40	2	5.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The gay friends of the 2009 respondents ranged from two (2), three (3) and eight (8) but the 2015 group of respondents had shown that more of them, 10 or 25 per cent, have six(6) gay friends and not even one from them had confirmed that he had no homosexual friends. Considering the thought of the Social Influence theory of Barembaum, it can be decided that the respondents homosexual identity have been further heightened by their gay friends.

When the respondents were asked of their perception about the factors that actually shaped their homosexual behaviors, their responses were summarized in the table below.

**Table 6: Respondents’ Perceived Factors**

Perceived Factors	2009		2015	
Environment	2.69	ME	3.74	HE
Experiences	2.85	ME	1.54	LE
Family	4.00	HE	2.27	LE
Friends	4.62	VHE	4.22	HE
Social Media	2.56	ME	2.29	LE

**Legend:** VHE-Very High Extent; HE-High Extent; ME-Moderate Extent; Low Extent

Since this study is of a phenomenological nature, the respondents themselves were the authority to answer the questions raised, the weighted mean formula is sufficient to determine the answers to the main objective of this research. It appeared that the 2015 respondents identified their environment, with a Weighted Mean of 3.74 verbally interpreted as “High Extent” and friends with a Weighted Mean of 4.22 to have high extent of influence on their sexual identities. Similarly, the 2009 subjects have also identified their friends to have a very high extent of influence on their becoming gays followed by their families and that they have considered their environment to have posted a moderate extend of influence on the development of their homosexual behaviors.

The findings above affirmed the established fact in 2009 that for these respondent-college male students who became gays, it was their friends who have unearthed their effeminate behaviors.

It can be inferred that the association of the respondents in 2015 with gay friends identified in Table 5 and their environment have significantly contributed to their homosexual behaviors. Contrary to the findings of 2009, although friends got the highest computed Weighted Mean, second were their families, which implied that at home, their effeminate

behaviors were tolerated.

Exactly from the 2015 respondents' own experiences, the socialization theory had been affirmed. Extrinsic factors such as friends and environment played vital roles in the development of the homosexual identities among these college gay students.

### Effects of Homosexuality

As to the question on the effects of their homosexuality to them as individuals, both groups have answered that they were happy being gays as clearly illustrated in Table 7.

**Table 7: Effects of Homosexuality to the Respondents**

Perceived Effects	2009		2015	
	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent
Crowds' favorite	14	30.43	12	30.00
Happiness	26	56.52	19	47.50
Discrimination	6	13.04	9	22.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Both periods showed that 56.52 per cent and 47.50 per cent respectively of respondents found happiness in their being gay and very few (13.04 per cent and 22.50 per cent ) from them have experienced discrimination. This happiness can be drawn from their being the favorite of their social circles as revealed by 1/3 of respondents from the two studies. Being the crowd's favorite implies a convergent perspective, as explained by San Juan (2007) convergent perspective refers to a collective behavior motivated by common forces within the individual such as commonality of aspirations, characteristics ... interest and needs.

School children in the Philippines are protected against any form of violence, abuse and exploitation regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity as provided by Department of Education (Dep Ed) Order No. 40, s. 2012 entitled Child Protection Policy. This can be the reason for a few discrimination instances as revealed by respondents in Table 7.

Further, data on the happiness and crowd's favorite experiences of respondents insinuates that the homosexuals are gaining recognition. This is further amplified by Schaefer (2005) who wrote that the International Lesbian and Gay Association has about 300 member organizations in 70 countries. Further, he wrote that in 1995, Japan had its second annual gay pride march. Furthermore, he mentioned in the book he authored that gay groups have been founded in Bolivia, Kenya, Pakistan, South Korea and Sri Lanka, with more than 50 gay and lesbian groups in South Africa, more than a dozen in Mexico and seven in Brazil.

Written in "Being LGBT in Asia: The Philippine Country Report, Tan (2014) emphasized that in the Philippines there are efforts that examined the lived experience of the LGBT community. Referring to the same report, he wrote that a dialogue held in the University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City Philippines, in June 29-30, 2013, learning efforts were undertaken. To his own words, "this dialogue was a first of its kind in Asia-wide." The dialogue Tan wrote, provided an opportunity to discuss and evaluate the context, situation and responses of human rights related to sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) in the Philippines, including enabling and hindering factors and the legal and social environments in which the LGBT persons and rights advocates operates. Further, according to him, participants in the dialogue were Asian ( focused in Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines Thailand and Vietnam) grassroots LGBT

organizations and community leaders alongside the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

However, a bill has yet to be passed in the Philippine Congress which is the Akbayan Anti-discrimination Act introduced by Hon. Arlene Bag-ao, the lone District Representative of Dinagat Islands. It seeks for equal treatment for every one regardless of sex or sexual orientation. Nevertheless, a Political Party, *Ang LADLAD* founded by Danton Remotoin 2003 and another advocacy group, Lesbian and Gay Legislative Advocacy Network (LAGABLAB) exist which are among the popular groups working hard to support anti-discrimination against the LGBT communities.

If focused is to be turned to educational institutions, it was observed by the researcher that in Philippine schools, colleges and universities, Lesbian, Gay, and Bi-sexual individuals are being voted in student councils, or they are the organizers of different school activities or the competitive participants in academic, cultural or sports competitions. This can be attributed to their being the co-equal of straight male or female in terms of academic performance, creativity and commitment to assigned tasks. No wonder, they are the crowds' favorite implying they are gaining acceptance, one of the many reasons for the revealed happiness of these gay-respondents.

Indeed, the gay, or homo sexual students are enjoying happiness as members of the society.

## CONCLUSIONS

- Respondents from 2009 and 2015 surveys were mostly in the age bracket, 18-19, almost half have one (1) or two (2) brothers, more than 1/3 from the 2009 group have two sisters but in 2015 almost ¾ have no sister; and majority were middle borns. As to preference for friends, most of the two groups preferred girls, majority have more than two (2) gay friends.
- Friends remained to be a very high to high extent influenced in the sexual identity of Filipino Gay Students.
- Both surveys proved that the sexual identity of respondents provided them happiness, they enjoyed being the crowd's favorite while a few have experienced discriminations

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Most manifested homosexuality as they advanced in year levels in the college department, therefore, School Guidance Counselors must implement programs to help male or female students experiencing gender confusions deal with it professionally. The intervention may be in the form of proper counseling to address this phenomenon, so that their sexual identity will not simply be a social influence.
- Next to friends, identified factor to have higher extent of influence to sexual identity of respondents is the family, therefore, Parent Teachers Associations in the Basic Education level should initiate seminars focus on parents' role in their children's development of acceptance and appreciation of their born sexes. Parents of children who manifest behaviors not natural to their sexes should also form a group so they may seek help from licensed Psychologists to professionally handle their children's sexual identities.
- An in-depth research should be conducted to include parents as respondents to determine significant factors at home that have contributed to the development of homosexuality among male.



- A follow-up study on the respondents' lives after college should be undertaken to determine what had happened to them in terms of career, physical and health status.
- Medical Associations in the Philippines, particularly the Pediatric and Psychiatric Department may consider the findings of the APA that Gender Identity is a treatable disorder.

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