

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Issues and Diversity in Community Colleges

Research Proposal

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## **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Issues and Diversity in Community Colleges**

### **Qualitative Research Proposal**

#### **Section 1: Research Problem, Significance, Question**

##### **1.1. Proposed Dissertation Title**

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) Issues and Diversity in Community Colleges

##### **1.2. Research Topic**

The research addresses the experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) students towards the issues they face in the communities. The research adheres to both positive and negative experience of LGBT students in non-profit, two year, community college campuses that have an active Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) or Safe Zone Program versus those LGBT students who do not have an active GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance) or Safe Zone Program.

##### **1.3. Research Problem**

The research examines the academic experiences for students who openly identify themselves as LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students of a two year, community college campus. The purpose is to help those students not to hide from the community or those students who feel they need to hide on a community college campus but they do not have a visible support. In fact, not many research studies of today examine the experiences of LGBT students on their community college campus.

##### **1.4. Research Purpose**

The purpose of this research study is to determine the academic experiences between students who can be openly LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) on their two

year, community college campus that has an active GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance) or Safe Zone Program versus the students who believe they cannot be open on a college campus due to no GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance) or Safe Zone Program.

### **1.5. Research Question**

#### **Central Research Question**

What has been the experience of self-identified, LGBT students at a two-year, community college campus?

#### **Sub-Question**

What was the experience with a GSA (or Safe Zone) versus without a GSA (or Safe Zone) on campus?

### **1.6. Literature Review Section**

#### **1.6.1. Brief Overview of the Conceptual Framework of the Study**

The literature review addresses the aspects of experiences that the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) students face in their communities. The idea is to emphasize the importance of positive outcomes and avoidance of negative experience of LGBT students in non-profit, two year, community college campuses.

It is important to focus on the creation of the policies in the universities that will provide the rights and freedoms to the LGBT students while they face the issues of discrimination and harassment. In addition, the target groups are the colleges and universities that meet the diversity standards and have an active Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) or Safe Zone Programs for the LGBT students.

#### **1.6.2. Seminal Research**

The research emphasizes the academic experiences of the students who tend to identify themselves as LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students openly within their community college campus for the two-year program of student education. The importance of the study is to provide the implications of the existing situations at colleges that can help future students to have a choice whether the LGBT students prefer to hide from the community or study openly on the community college campus.

Therefore, it is significant to provide the basis for the future development of the visible support of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students as well as the enhancements of the existing support at colleges and universities that strongly adhere to the diversity aspects.

### **1.6.3. Theories for the Research Study**

The core studies for the research are those that uncover the data about the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students. The purpose is to make it possible for these students to educate on the same level as other students do concerning the LGBT community support.

As well, the universities should mind the factors that have a strong impact on the availability of all the resources and their provision for the LGBT students. In particular, the top management of the universities and colleges should take care of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students from the position of their personal growth and professional development.

Hence, it is important to address the needs of examination on the theories that support the issues and diversity of LGBT students within the community colleges such as the following:

- Stage Models of Gay and Lesbian Identity Development;
- Adolescence and Sexual Orientation Identity Development;
- LGBT Identities in Bisexuals, People of Color, and Women Theory;
- A Life Span Approach to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Development Theory;
- Transgender Identities Theory;
- Psychiatric and Medical Transgender Identities Theory;
- Feminist, Postmodern, and Queer Theory Perspectives on Gender Identity;
- Human Development and Transgender Identities: A Call for New Theoretical Models;
- Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Theories.

#### **1.6.4. The Topics and Themes to Organize the Literature Review**

The goal of the literature review is to provide the information on the aspects of sexual orientation, the choice of homosexuality and heterosexuality, mental and emotional background, relations of the LGBT students with their parents, coming out issues of gays and lesbians, the factors that have a strong impact on the discrimination and harassments, possible therapies and education specifics.

The other themes for the literature review are the culture of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students, managing the safety aspects of the LGBT students and creating the environment that will help the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Students to get ready for their personal life and professional employment.

In addition, it is important for the literature review to address the topics of HIV/AIDS along with the sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) among the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students. Besides, it is significant to provide the insights on the homophobia

and heterosexism, including the aspects of violence, harassment, vandalism, assault, and discrimination.

The literature review should also address the campus issues of the LGBT students in terms of the following aspects of concern:

1. Devastated loss of involvement of the LGBT students in the dominant culture and the possibilities of entry into the enduring interaction of the diversity groups;
2. The invisible minority experiences of being the LGBT students and the subsequent impact on one's life;
3. Lack of family support and / or solid LGBT role-models who would be able to help the LGBT students in coping with their search for the status and identity;
4. The future shortage of the peer support and personal isolation due to the issues that the LGBT students face within their communities and colleges.

Finally, it would have a strong contribution to the life of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students if they could have the acknowledgement of the community colleges in terms of the following:

- queers of color,
- civil union, marriage, family issues of the LGBT students;
- the ability to create LGBT Youth Organizations, build Health and Wellness Centers;
- solve the issues of workplace, social connections, religious and spirituality issues.



### **1.6.5. Research Plan**

Abstract

#### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

1.1. Problem Statement

1.2. Purpose and Scope of the Research

1.3. Research Hypothesis, Questions and Objectives

1.4. Importance of the Research

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#### **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

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2.4. Theoretical Implications

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3.2. Research Sampling Procedures

3.3. Data Organization

3.4. Research Design

3.5. Projected Data Analysis

3.6. Research Ethics and Trustworthiness

3.7. Research Limitation

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4.1. Primary Data Examination

4.2. Statistical and Graphical Analysis of the Survey

4.3. Analysis of the Research Findings

## **Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations**

5.1. Research Conclusions

5.2. Recommendations for the Future Research

5.3. Research Limitations

Reference List

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### **1.6.6. List of References**

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### **1.7. Need for the Study**

The vast majority of community colleges have open enrollment, which means the learners do not need to meet any requirements to enroll and attend the classes in a wide variety of

the classroom sessions and a number of education backgrounds. For example, the two-year, community college is transitional and students could be unwilling to open their sexual orientation or gender identity.

At present, there are many studies on the diversity and the challenging experiences of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students in terms of campus housing on four-year universities. There were no studies conducted at the community college level regarding the LGBT students and their academic experience on the community college campus.

Therefore, the research will provide an opportunity to investigate the issues that the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students face in their community colleges and thus emphasize the importance of acceptance of the LGBT students along with the diversity groups such as Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) and / or Safe Zone at the two-year community college level.

### **1.8. Methodology**

The research will take advantage of the Merriam's Qualitative Research methodology that will use a basic qualitative approach. The idea is to make the most of the research study with the help of an online / electronic questionnaire survey that has an option for the respondents to answer open-ended questions privately for the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students.

In addition, the research will include the interviews with several people from each campus using questions from Sonja J. Ellis. The permission to use this resource is currently in the process along with how the questions should be constructed; how the questions were proved

for their reliability; and how the questions were proven to have validity for the research study (Ellis, 2008).

The qualitative methodology is based on two separate studies that have been conducted for the last decade:

- Ellis, S. J. (2008). Diversity and inclusivity at university: A survey of the experiences of LGBT students in the UK. Diversity and equal opportunities, inclusivity, higher education, homophobia, lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans students. Psychology Research Group. *Higher Education Journal*, 57(6), 723-739.
- D'Augelli, A. R. (2001). *The experiences of LGBT youths in university communities in the US. Lesbian, gay, and bisexual identities and youth: Psychological perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 181 - 198.

In all, the research studies above emphasize the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students and their lives in the communities on the four-year campuses. The inclination for the research is that there are not that many studies that provide enough information about the LGBT learners that transit from high schools into colleges.

It is also important to cover the core elements of the community experience of the LGBT students as they go to a community college for the reason that the detailed findings of such aspects of LGBT issues are missing. Therefore, the LGBT students do not have enough information to support their experience, and understand the factors that have a strong impact on whether the community college experience of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students would be positive or negative.



The methodology process for the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students is divided into two following parts.

### **1.8.1. Part One**

The part one uses the states such as Missouri, Illinois and Iowa in the following way:

- Missouri does not offer any kind of protections for the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students. Besides, there is also no legal permission for the gay marriage or same sex marriage. In the state of Missouri, the students are protected from harassment and discrimination of the LGBT students based on their race, sex, religion, disabilities and national origin, but not sexual orientation or gender identity;
- Illinois offers protections for the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students and it recognizes the civil unions between same sex partners. In fact, Illinois has written the laws stating that “The following groups – actual or perceived...” and includes sexual orientation and gender-related identity or expression;
- Iowa offers protections for LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students and recognizes the marriages with same sex (gay and lesbians).

### **1.8.2. Part Two**

The methodology for the part two is to choose several schools from each state to address the experience of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students. In particular, both schools should be defined as two-year community colleges that offer two-year Associate Degree Programs.

For example, one school from each state should be considered as urban or having the full time student enrollment of at least three thousand students. The second school from each state

should be considered as rural or offering an Associate Degree in terms of farming, farm, equipment, and agriculture specialties.

The data collection would be in Missouri (St. Louis), Illinois (Springfield), and Iowa (Des Moines). In case the response from these community colleges will be low, the second option for the methodology research is to address the following cities such as Missouri (Kansas City), Illinois (Chicago) and Iowa (Ames).

In case the response rate from the above cities is still low, the research study will concentrate on the direct contacts with the LGBT Community Centers in St. Louis Missouri, Columbia Missouri and / or Kansas City Missouri, the LGBT Community Centers in Springfield Illinois and / or Chicago Illinois and the LGBT Community Centers in Des Moines Iowa and / or Iowa City, Iowa.

The approach of direct contacting of the LGBT Community Centers in the three listed states will help to locate the additional community colleges and self-identified LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students who fit into the parameters of this research study. Consequently, the research will be based on the data retrieved from these groups of LGBT students and the research will analyze their community college experiences.

### **1.8.3. Data Collection Methods**

The first method of collecting the data would be the online / electronic questionnaire with pre-printed questions for the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students in order to utilize the data as well as assist them to expand their responses on their LGBT experiences.

Such kind of methodology will offer the opportunities to contact the Activity Directors of the community colleges to help receive the message towards the LGBT issues. In fact, it would be important to emphasize the research awareness among the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students that will encourage their participation in the research.

The findings and overall outcomes of the online / electronic survey on the experiences of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students will help to promote the importance of the LGBT culture and their issues. As a result, the research will collect the information that could be used to help improve the LGBT experience in community college campuses.

The second method of collecting the data would be the semi-structured and face-to-face interviews with the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students about their experiences in the community colleges. In order to manage the data collection methodology, the interviews will be based on the pre-determined questions and consequent recording of the responses from the LGBT students on the subjects of their life in the community colleges.

The third method of collecting the data will be the open-ended conversational questions. In order to improve the validity of such a methodology, the research approach will be based on the questions such as “Tell me about a time ...” and other similar questions. The subject of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students and their community college experience will be collected with the help of recordings on the tapes, video tape and / or digital camera recordings. The following procedure would be to transcribe their answers into the accurate word for word notes that will answer the questions regarding the LGBT community life.

## **Section 2: Advancing Scientific Knowledge**

Every single research is conducted to improve the area of knowledge and understand the specific knowledge base. The same is with the research on the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students' issues and diversity in community colleges. Hence, the given research addresses the advancements in terms of the criteria below:

- Today, there are not many research studies that deeply examine the experiences of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students regarding the aspects of support during the formation of their sexual orientation and gender identity in their community college campus;
- The research implications that make the given research study new or different from other research studies is that it offers to conduct the evaluation of the LGBT students' issues and the ways to protect these students from the existing humiliation, discrimination and / or harassment of any kind;
- The research study aims to extend the researches on the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students' life that were conducted in the past towards the possible solutions that could help such students cope with the existing environmental difficulties and social relations with the other heterosexual students on their community college campus;
- The research study intends to fill in the gap in the existing literature on the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students by concentrating on the current issues and diversity problems that the LGBT students face today during the period of their education in the community colleges.

### **2.1. Advancing Scientific Knowledge**

In numerous research studies conducted by different researchers, the information on the existing issues of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students is not provided in detail. Hence, current research aims to improve the awareness of both the LGBT students and the community college campuses by another research that will include both personal and online interviews with such students asking them to provide the focus areas where they need more help and support from the educational institutions, teaching methodologies, university policies and government as a whole.

In particular, the research is going to concentrate on the studies about such aspects as the formation of the sexual orientation and gender identity of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students on their community college campus. In other words, the research is going to look for the solutions that the community colleges can offer to the LGBT students while they are in the formation process of their sexual orientation and gender identity.

The difference of the given research will be addressed through the additional evaluation of the lives of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students in terms of the diversity issues they face on a regular basis. The focus of the research will go towards the inclination to find the ways to protect the student minorities and help them to avoid humiliation, discrimination and / or harassment while they study at the community college campuses. The solution is to contact the LGBT students directly and ask them which areas of the college life they feel need to be improved the most.

The research study aims to extend the scientific knowledge on the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students' life by means of reviews of the peer literature in regards

to the college life and the community issues that these LGBT students face during the period of their education. It is also important to address the needs of such students in their existing environments, which could be done with the help of online questionnaires to guarantee the privacy and ethical concerns. The emphasis is going to be placed on the existing environmental difficulties and social relations with the heterosexual students while educating in the community college campuses.

Current research study will also focus on the existing literature that adheres to the interactions of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students with other heterosexual students in the same college communities. Since there is not much information covered in the previous research records and works on the LGBT student diversity issues, the research will support the information through the approval of the data with true LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students. In addition, the findings will be supported by means of personal interactions and face-to-face communication with the LGBT students that would be openly recorded for the future reference and input to the life of the LGBT minorities in the community college campuses.

Thus, the research claims to fill the gap in the existing literature on the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students and especially regarding their lives in the community colleges. As a result, the existing literature will add the scientific knowledge on the real life case scenarios based on the stories of the true LGBT students and the details of the current issues and diversity problems they face today in the community colleges.

## **2.2. Theoretical Implications**

The research will describe the theoretical implications that were addressed in the past as well as it will adhere to the details of understanding the lives of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual

and Transgendered) students. In particular, the research will demonstrate the true understanding of existing issues by offering true examples of direct interactions with the LGBT students.

At the same time, the research will investigate the phenomena on the community college environments and its impact on the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students. For example, the research study will provide a description of the lived experiences of the LGBT student participants, including the research assumptions and proven practical examples.

In other words, the research will demonstrate the theoretical implications combined with the process of obtaining the practical solutions for the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students. Moreover, the research will cover the areas of cultural phenomenon by illustrating the diversity concerns and solutions towards issues of LGBT students.

### **2.3. Practical Implications**

The practical implications that may result from the research study address the means of understanding the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students' phenomena. A particular attention will be given to the practical solutions that will be valuable for the LGBT populations and their lives in the community colleges.

In addition, the research will describe the implications connected with the practitioners and the aspects of support of the LGBT students on the community college campuses. Moreover, the research will reveal the ways that the LGBT students can engage into the university communities.

The research findings will also include the practical implications for the particular type of work and future employment perspectives, improvement of the existing educational implications, interactions of the LGBT students with the heterosexual communities and future challenges that

LGBT students might face when dealing with the stakeholders in the companies of employment and / or other diversity issues and environmental settings.

### **Section 3: Contributions to the Field**

The research findings will serve as a contribution to the field of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students and their life experiences as well as educational processes or practices within the community colleges. Therefore, the contribution will be based on the research approach, which will offer the solutions to the LGBT students and their social implications.

#### **3.1. Basic Qualitative Research**

In particular, the research will take advantage of the basic qualitative research, case study on the community life of the LGBT students, grounded theory or the proposed implications of the study that could serve as the theory of support and assistance for the LGBT students in the communities.

#### **3.2. Case Study**

The case study on the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students, their cultural and ethical implications will help to develop an educational lesson to be learned by both the LGBT students and educators within the community colleges. The purpose is to provide the key facts and explain the factors that define the successful adaptation of the LGBT students in the colleges.

#### **3.3. Grounded Theory**

Simultaneously, the grounded theory could be based on the findings of the interviews that would be held both through the online / electronic questionnaires and by means of the face-



to-face interviews. As a result, the research could generate a new educational theory that would provide the fundamental understanding of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students' issues as well as the ways to solve the diversity problems that the LGBT students face today.

In particular, the research study aims to provide the answers received from the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students based on the survey and interviews and offer it to the public awareness. The purpose is to yield a description of the lived experience of the LGBT student participants.

### **3.4. Ethnography**

At the same time, the research offers to provide the ethnography study towards the description of the educational dimensions of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students through the conversations with the educators of the community college campuses. In addition, the research struggles to reveal the cultural dimensions of the LGBT students and the overall experiences of these students in the community college campuses.

### **3.5. Other Fields**

Other fields of research are aimed to provide a narrative analysis of the research findings, in particular the face-to-face interviews and the answers from the online questionnaires. Besides, the research also strives to analyze the secondary qualitative data within the sphere of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students' issues.

As a result, the research will provide a critical research and data evaluation based on the outcomes of the direct contacts with the LGBT students that will share the implications of their experiences in the community colleges. Thus, the research would demonstrate the application of

the qualitative research methods in order to describe the diversity issues grounded on the obtained knowledge regarding the LGBT student minorities in the community colleges.

#### **Section 4: Methodology Details**

The methodology for the research aims to provide the solutions to the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered) students' issues as well as the diversity in the community colleges. The methodology will address the purpose of the study, overall research methodology, population and sample to selection of the research site, sampling procedures to selection of participants, data collection procedures, guiding interview questions, other data procedures, proposed data analyses, information on the role of the researcher and finally the aspects of the research credibility, dependability and transferability.

##### **4.1. Purpose of the Research Study**

The purpose of the research is to address the community issues of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered) students as well as to understand the means of diversity in the community colleges. The research study will be grounded on the literature review of the past researches that have a close relation to the lives of the LGBT students at colleges.

At the same time, the research will be based on the works that were conducted in relation to the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered) students' issues regarding the aspects of a community life of these students. Hence, the research methods would be the online / electronic questionnaire and face-to-face interviews with the LGBT students.

A special attention is paid to finding the colleges that have an active GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance) or Safe Zone Programs. The idea is to compare the students who take an active role in the development of their communities with the students who believe that they cannot live an

open life as the LGBT students on a college campus for the reason that they do not have an internal GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance) or Safe Zone Program.

Therefore, the overall purpose for the research is to regulate the academic experiences of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students. The research is focused at the fact of open and free recognition of LGBT students in the two-year community college campuses with no implications for the harassment or discrimination of any kind.

Thus, the methods of direct contacts with the LGBT students would provide the rationale for the solutions to the issues of such students. In fact, the research outcomes will serve as the answer to the research question for the reason that the LGBT students will share their thoughts and suggestions on how to solve their problems regarding the ways that would better fit them in coping with the diversity issues of their community life at college campuses.

#### **4.2. Research Methodology**

The qualitative methodologies are the basic qualitative research, case study, grounded theory, ethnography, and other fields. The research methods will address the aspects of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students and their community experiences through the personal interactions with these students on and off the campus.

The research intends to cover the educational implications based on the words of the LGBT students who will also provide their views and opinions regarding the process of education in the community colleges. The purpose of such methodology is to retrieve the details that could be helpful for the LGBT students based on their own experiences and suggestions.

In particular, the basic qualitative research will be grounded on the personal interviews with the LGBT students regarding their community lives, including the aspects of culture and

overall approach to the educations of these students in the community colleges. Hence, the research will address the information based on the answers of the LGBT students that can be reviewed as the case studies for the research.

The case study of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students will collect the data on both the cultural and ethical implications of these students with the purpose to help the educators in their teaching experiences and overall educational practice. For example, the case study could collect the information based on the answers from the LGBT students with the help of open-ended conversational interviews.

The next aspect of the research is the grounded theory that adheres to the data collection through the proper examination of the existing literature on the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students' issues as well as the observations on the diversity implications within the community college campuses.

At the same time, the grounded theory addresses the personal interviews with the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students via the online / electronic questionnaires and face-to-face interviews. Therefore, the findings will support the research with the knowledge that could help better understand the issues of LGBT students in the communities.

The idea is to find the ways to solve the problems of the LGBT students regarding the diversity issues and challenges. Consequently, the research study will offer the findings of the survey for the public awareness and thus help to solve the problems that the LGBT students face today.

At the same time, the means of ethnography would generate the solutions for the improvements of the educational dimensions of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and

Transgendered) students through the conversations with the instructors of the community college campuses.

Hence, the research will struggle to clear out the cultural implications through the focus of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students in the community college campuses. The goal is to deliver the fundamental proofs that explain the factors that define successful adaptation of the LGBT students in their colleges.

Other fields of research are aimed at journaling, letters, pictures, and field notes that will help to analyze the qualitative data within the sphere of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students' issues. Thus, the research findings will guarantee the evidence of the the improvements in the diversity issues of the LGBT students and their experiences in the community colleges.

#### **4.3. Population and Sample to Selection of the Research Site**

The characteristics of the target population for the research study are the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students who are the study participants. The ideal implications are that the research provides the purposive sampling by addressing the LGBT participants based on the specific reasons.

For example, the environmental setting adheres to the problem for research study. In particular, the academic experiences of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students who can either identify themselves openly or hide from the two-year community college campus for the reason that they have negative experiences of dealing with the other heterosexual students.

The idea is to locate those LGBT students who have a negative experience within their communities and need help to adapt to the college life. The LGBT students will be selected randomly to address the phenomenon of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) issues that these students emerge. The purpose is to address the participants who will perfectly fit to purposive sampling in the qualitative research.

#### **4.4. Sampling Procedures to Selection of Participants**

The sample intends to cover the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students who have both positive and negative experience of life in non-profit, two-year community college campuses. A specific sampling strategy addresses the diversity issues of the LGBT students who have an ability to become active participants in the Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) or Safe Zone Programs as well as those LGBT students who are not able to participate in the GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance) or Safe Zone Programs.

Therefore, the steps from recruitment through contact and screening to consenting to participate in the study will adhere to the procedure of offering information about the improvements of the community life, including the cultural, educational and ethical issues for the LGBT student minorities.

The following steps are to accept the LGBT students under the criteria of willingness to participate in the survey and go through the personalized private interviews in order to provide the details for the further improvements of the LGBT life as well as to offer the solutions for the diversity issues that these students face on the regular basis.

The overall process is to conduct both online and personal selection of the LGBT students on and off the community college campus. Finally, in order for the research to be

valuable for the LGBT community life, the focus group should consist of about a hundred of LGBT students in one sample population.

#### **4.5. Data Collection Procedures**

The data will be collected both on and off the community college campus through the online / electronic questionnaire survey that has an option for the respondents to answer fifteen open-ended questions privately for the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students.

In addition, the research will include the interviews with several people from each campus that will have ten questions more in order to make the research more reliable for the general LGBT college communities. Finally, the obtained data will be analyzed using the statistical methods and offer a graphical representation of the findings in order to make it comprehensible for the target audience.

#### **4.6. Guiding Interview Questions**

The methods for the interview are different and will be used based on the target audience of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students. For example, the behavioral-based interviews will emphasize the previous experiences of the LGBT students. The case interviews will be used to address the recommendations of the LGBT students towards the improvements of the diversity issues in the community colleges.

In addition, the informational interviews will adhere to the performance of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students and their expectations of the research for the future college experiences. Personalized interviews will adhere to retrieve the information about the suggestions and recommendations of the LGBT students on the perspectives and

opportunities of the college life experiences. Finally, the group interviews will be conducted to find out the challenging questions that the LGBT students have the most concerns about.

The interview questions will address the aspects of age, culture, community issues, sexual orientation and gender identity. In addition, the questions will address the aspects of homosexuality choices, safety and environmental issues. The idea is to cover the semi-structured qualitative interviews based on the willingness to cooperate with the LGBT student participants.

These types of interviews are important for the reason that they can provide the LGBT communities with the complete data and information regarding the diversity issues of the LGBT students. Overall, the research questions will be acknowledged with the LGBT students in terms of whether they address all the aspects of the LGBT issues so that the outcomes of the research could be valuable for the LGBT public.

#### **4.7. Other Data Collection Procedures**

For those research studies that will take advantage of the alternative data, the collection procedure will adhere to the information such as the archival data, pre-recorded data, sent or unsent letters, journaling, poems, passages from literature, descriptive essences, objects or images, etc. in the following way.

The idea is to differentiate the most important topics to find the evidence of the findings in terms of the primary data. In other words, the alternative data will try to find the proof of the primary data by means of analyzing the information from various sources and comparing it with the data that was already obtained from other sources.

The alternative data will be used to provide the target audience with the most recent updates on the issues of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students and support



the findings from one resource with the other ones. The purpose is to provide the most contemporary information that will guarantee the solvation of issues that the LGBT students face.

It is important to help these students adapt in their environments in the best possible way. At the same time, it is significant to empower the college personnel on the way to treat the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students and help them to communicate within the community college campuses more effectively compared to the previous years of education experience.

The role of the data collector is important as he / she intends to find the ways of helping to solve the existing issues with the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students. The data will be recorded in the way to follow the observations one after another with the agreed plan of writing provided in the beginning of the research proposal.

The research seeks to observe other studies on the same topic of helping the LGBT students to overcome their diversity issues and at the same time, it intends to reflect the findings according to the behaviors of the LGBT students so that to help them position themselves within the community college campuses.

#### **4.8. Proposed Data Analyses**

The proposed step-by-step analysis of the data could be described in a simple but manageable way of finding the information that already exists in the community colleges for the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students. At the same time, the next steps are to find the alternative information based on the evidence of the existing students of these community colleges.

The procedure is rather simple and it is planned to be more valuable for the LGBT community due to its support and relation of inter-connected information as well as the evidence of the LGBT students that would be retrieved through the direct contacting such as face-to-face interviews and the answers from the online questionnaires.

The research will reference the process of gathering the information and data on the LGBT issues based on the literature review. The primary descriptive sources will also be included and cited based on the information obtained from the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students. In addition, the only software that can be used to analyze the data is the Microsoft Office Excel. It will help to create the tables and graphs in order to present the analyzed data in a more comprehensible way for the target audience, including the LGBT students, educators and third parties that are connected to the community college campuses, the educational process and the issues of the LGBT in particular.

#### **4.9. Role of the Researcher**

The understanding of a researcher is quite mixed. On the one hand, the issues of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students are difficult to imagine from the position of a person with a different sexual orientation. However, it can be assumed that the community circumstances are not favorable in relation to the LGBT students.

Indeed, it is hard to imagine the community concerns and diversity issues without being a part of it and only the research in this area will provide an outline of what the diversity issues are as well as how to solve the problems that the LGBT students face every day in the community college campuses.

In other words, there should be a reason for the existence of previous researches as well as why some colleges and universities provide support and guidance for the LGBT students and others fail to even think about managing it. At the same time, there is a reason why some LGBT students can easily open up their LGBT nature and others have problems with entering a new community in a college setting.

Therefore, the research intends to come up with the understanding of the core issues that the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) students face today while being educated in the community colleges. Hence, the research will offer the solutions that could help the LGBT students based on their words that address the needs of the vast majority of the survey LGBT respondents.

Thus, in case the outcomes of the research turn out to be different from the pre-understandings, preconceptions and biases about the LGBT diversity issues, they will be rejected in the favor of the findings both the literature review and individual conversations with the LGBT students through the online questionnaires and interviews.

In other words, the role of the researcher could be considered as the role of an observer who is trying to help those LGBT students in managing their diversity issues and offering the solutions that can make a great contribution to the community lives of the future generations, including the existing LGBT populations.

#### **4.10. Credibility, Dependability and Transferability**

The strategy of the research study addressed the implications of credibility, dependability, and transferability in the offered research proposal. It is important to mention that

the researcher serves as the primary instrument for the whole research findings in terms of the qualitative research studies.

#### **4.10.1. Credibility**

The credibility for the research will be established through the following facts and characteristics. First, there is a substantial personal experience in conducting a number of researches, including both qualitative and quantitative ones. In addition, there were many training sessions in the research methodology and data analytics. As a result, there is a confidence in conducting this particular research on the issues of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered) students and diversity implications in the community colleges.

Consequently, the research will demonstrate the expertise in regards to your research design. In particular, the researcher will pay a close attention to the means of data accuracy along with the guarantee of the proper interpretation of the retrieved information obtained both from the primary and secondary research findings.

Thus, the research study will be carried out in the way to enhance the credibility of the findings of the data with the perspective of time and circumstances. In fact, the credibility will be illustrated in view of the deep understanding of the research methodology, data collection and data analysis that highlight the research problem and objectives in a way to contribute to the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered) society.

#### **4.10.2. Dependability**

The means of dependability will be demonstrated by providing clear, detailed, and sequential descriptions of all procedures and methods of the research. The purpose is to help the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered) community solve their problems by

repeating the research step by step and emphasizing those aspects that are more crucial for the future references as well as the applications of the research findings.

#### **4.10.3. Transferability**

The means of transferability will be demonstrated by addressing the sample LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered) community in the way to objectively denote the target LGBT students. In addition, the research will illustrate the sample in the way to add to the advancing scientific knowledge and offer high quality information. The purpose is to provide a valuable research to improve the experiences of the lecturers in the community college campuses and help them solve the diversity issues of the LGBT students and their global community.

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