# LGBT Allies: A Social Movement Analysis

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**Abstract**

A clear gap exists in the availability of quantitative data regarding characteristics for determining the likelihood that individuals will self-identify as allies to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community. Many studies have provided valuable qualitative information as far as what defines allyhood, the participants in the social movement aimed at LGBT equality, and the developmental processes involved in forming an identity, comparing that identity to the goals of the social movement, and autonomously participating in providing a support structure for oppressed minority populations, in this case those with a sexuality considered out of the societal norm. Seventy students at California State University participated in a survey to measure the various attitudes, beliefs, and perspectives they hold towards LGBTs, as well as the different interpersonal experiences that influence an individual's decision to be an ally. Of the 12 variables selected for analysis, having heterosexual friends that identify as allies, the degree of agreement that homosexuality is a sin, and having parents that are supportive of LGBT equality all can provide means by which the likelihood that an individual will self-identify as an LGBT ally can be determined.

**Key Words:** social movements, LGBT allies, identity, conscience adherents, conscience constituents, intrapersonal development, interpersonal development

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**Chapter I INTRODUCTION**

The Williams Institute at the University of California Los Angeles continues to be one of the leading research institutions focusing attention on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) studies. The institute's current estimate for the number of Americans that self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender stands at approximately 4%. In 2014, the American population is approximately 314 million equating to approximately 9 million individuals that identify themselves as LGBT (Gates, 2011). In 2011, Gallup polled over 1,000 people to determine their best estimate of what percentage of the American population identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT). On average, respondents estimated that 25% of Americans identify as LGBT (Morales, 2011). If the average estimate is correct, the approximate number of American individuals that identify as LGBT would be around 79 million Americans. Based on the Williams Institute's estimation, there are approximately 305 million Americans that identify as heterosexual.

As such, it is clear that the average American knows very little about the reality of the LGBT experience. This small population and lack of understanding can easily trigger alienation and other forms of psychological distress, especially considering that the LGBT population is not evenly distributed across the country. There are going to be areas with greater concentrations as well as areas with scarce numbers of similar others. That leaves LGBTs with fewer options for dating and making friends that share common experiences and emotions. These social processes are especially important for adolescents, a portion of the population that struggles with personal identity and finding their place in the world. Although little can be done about increasing the potential number of romantic partners for LGBT individuals, it is possible to increase the number of *allies*, or empathetic heterosexuals interested in humanist approaches to improving society at

large and the well-being of LGBTs in particular. Empathy results in a network of support and understanding imperative to successful integration of any minority population into an effective democratic society that affords citizens constitutionally granted rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Given the low number of LGBT individuals, allies play a central role in shifting the perspectives of society towards equality.

The social movement driven towards equality for individuals that identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender has been described by some as the epitome of identity movements (Bernstein, 2010). Not only does it require that LGBTs accept their own sexual identity, but it requires that they depend on the acceptance of their identity from people whose sexuality is considered the norm. This inevitably requires a struggle to change cultural perceptions that have formed the barriers to acceptance (Bernstein, 2010). In just a few decades, attitudes towards the LGBT community have shifted to the extent that around half of the American population now approves of equal civil rights regardless of sexuality or gender identification. This is confirmed by several large-scale public polling organizations including Gallup.com with 55%, Yougov.com with 49%, and Pew with 45% (Barone, 2011). So the key to successful acceptance and integration into society requires the implementation of various plans of action to increase the quantity as well as the quality of *heterosexual allies*.

The first step in ally development is to delineate exactly what it means to identify as an ally. There must also be a method for delivering the necessary information to those that identify as heterosexual. It is a learning process as there may be terms and concepts that are not familiar to people that do not experience life with a minority sexuality. The purpose of this research project is to explore the experiences, beliefs, and perspectives of a sample of college students in order to determine the characteristics most likely to result in heterosexuals identifying

themselves as LGBT allies. It is important to understand the processes that create those characteristics in order to understand ally identification at the individual level. Only then can strategies be implemented that focus on identity building that results in more participation in the movement for LGBT equality. Compiling this information provides a general framework which can then be used to create or improve existing methods of educating heterosexuals, especially the ones that want to contribute to the success of LGBT equality.

The limited availability of current research on allies, particularly LGBT allies, underlines the importance of this study. While other studies provide empirical qualitative information regarding the ways to characterize LGBT allies, few actually provide empirical quantitative data that measures the perspectives and opinions of individuals that self-identify as allies. Additionally, this research provides comparison data from individuals that either do not identify as allies, or that oppose LGBT equality. Accordingly, for this study an online survey was used to measure the attitudes, perspectives, and experiences of college students at California State University Bakersfield. Professors in several sociology and psychology courses allowed a few minutes at the beginning of class to administer a consent form containing the web link to the survey. Students were asked to complete the survey in their own time by honestly answering questions designed to measure various attitudes, experiences, and opinions about topics related to the LGBT community.

The focus of this paper will now switch to a review of the available literature about LGBT allies and their contribution to the LGBT social movement. Topics of exploration will include the delineation of social movements in general, definitions associated with allyhood, the common characteristics of heterosexual allies, and finally, a look at the developmental processes that result in heterosexuals identifying themselves as allies to the LGBT community.

# Chapter II LITERATURE REVIEW

When analyzing the evolution of social movements, especially with regards to changing trends in controversial areas such as human sexuality, there must first be an understanding of the conflict connected with the issues people find important. Increased visibility and mass media coverage show that there has been a lot of work involved with the movement towards LGBT equality and that has resulted in huge amounts of progress. But LGBTs did not make this progress by themselves. As with social movements in general, the LGBT movement requires assistance from the members of the majority population that actively work to disintegrate the societal barriers placed on LGBTs. As such, it is imperative to find ways to encourage commitment to protecting the rights of those in the minority. The only way to accomplish this goal is for researchers to study allies.

This literature review is divided into three sections. The first section will consist of a brief discussion about the philosophy behind social movements and how it can be applied to the LGBT movement. It will attempt to create an operational conceptualization, explain key components, and identify the characteristics of individuals and groups involved with this precise form of collective action. Next, the focus will shift to an in depth discussion about the formation of identity with attention to both individual level and collective level identification, in particular identification as an ally. Finally, the focus will shift to the specifics of LGBT allyhood and the strategies available to advance LGBT equality.

*Social Movements*

The first task for analysis of social movements involves the creation of an operational definition that is thorough yet uncomplicated. Many different definitions exist, but the simplicity

of the one presented by Doug McAdam and David Snow makes it a good choice for this research. They define social movements as a "loose collectivity acting with organization, continuity over time, change-oriented goals, and extrainstitutional action" (2010, p. 1). Other forms of collective action may contain various combinations of these elements, but all must be present to be considered a social movement. They note that these characteristics result from the various events that disrupt the taken-for-granted routines and attitudes of daily life, or *quotidian* (Snow, Cress, Downey, & Jones, 2010)*.* In order to fight for and protect their rights, victims of injustice depend on sympathetic others (also known as *allies)* to collectively use their privileged status to assure maintenance of the quotidian.

*Movements as collectives*

The first requirement of social movements is that they are collectives. This means they are "group(s) of interrelated persons engaged in joint action" (McAdam & Snow, 2010, p. 3). There is a difference, however, between collective action (or joint action) and general social behavior. This distinction is important for understanding the dynamics of social movement. General social behavior encompasses a great variety of actions. A clothing store, for example, requires a great deal of social activity. Sales clerks must communicate with customers. Managers must assign tasks and handle store operations. All of the employees must engage in group action in order for the store to remain operational. However in general each individual has their own motivations. Some employees might focus on increasing their income. Some might truly enjoy that line of work. Others might have the responsibility to inherit and maintain the family business. Their behaviors parallel one another, but there is still disconnect in the outcome of the action. Conversely, collective action requires a more connected goal as an end result. Any of the civil rights movements present in American history provide good examples. The Civil Rights

movement of the 1950s and 1960s joined together people from all walks of life with the common goal of fighting injustice and discrimination of people based on their ethnic background. Even people that weren't directly affected by integration shared the goals of those that were. The same can be said about the LGBT movement currently underway. Even though allowing same-sex marriage has no direct benefit for heterosexuals, some still choose to participate in the fight against discrimination. Their reasons for participation vary. Some might join because they have friends or family that they want to help. Others might be more interested in the social justice aspect. The difference between this and the previous store example is that even though members of a movement might have different reasons for joining, they still all share the desire for common outcomes, in this case LGBT equality.

*Movements as organizations*

The second requirement of social movements is some level of organization. The point of a social movement is to bring people together that have the same beliefs and values in order to fight discrimination of a segment of the population. The only way an activist will commit to a social movement is when it is organized enough to allow participants to easily get behind the goals and ideas that closely match their own. (Nepstad, 2010). Since most social movements have ramifications for all of society, they require political change, and therefore specific strategies to increase active participation and confidence in individuals in order to effectively impact the success of the movement. Bernstein finds that movements organized around strategies that function democratically and without hierarchy attract and retain more activists than those with a more narrow focus on policy change (2010). Einwohner adds that participants must also have a strong sense of autonomy, especially with regards to their decision to participate in a movement fighting extreme repression (2010).

Identifying with a movement also requires that an individual compare the overarching beliefs of the collective identity to their own. The more similar a movement's ideology is to the belief system of the individual the greater the likelihood that the person will identify with the movement. Bernstein divides identity into three specific analytic dimensions that all contribute to the organization of a social movement; identity for empowerment, identity as goal, and identity as strategy (2010). Each dimension's use depends on the intention behind identifying with a movement. In the case of *identity for empowerment* an individual aligns with a movement with the thought that successful political action is possible. Activists either use pre-existing characteristics of identity or contribute to a new collective identity as an organized group that shares similar beliefs and a common goal to progress the movement they are identifying with. People involved with a social movement need to feel that the work they are contributing to the movement is beneficial.

Another analytic dimension is *identity as goal* of the social movement (Bernstein, 2010). This usually results in one of several outcomes.  Activists may show dissatisfaction with the existence of stigma attached to certain identities. They may challenge these ideas potentially resulting in collective action. If an identity is not yet recognized as viable, activists with identity as a goal of their participation with a social movement seek out changes that allow whoever identifies with that particular identity to do so without criticism or fear of rejection. Social movements with identity as a goal also criticize social categories that are too restrictive and seek to either improve existing categories, or to completely redefine and recreate categories that are more beneficial to acceptable social life.

*Identity as strategy* focuses on the external strategic development of identity (Bernstein, 2010). *Identity deployment*, a concept developed by Bernstein, is an activist's method of

strategically using their own identity as a way to debate values, categories, and practices of certain individuals. For example, Jews living in Nazi Germany did not have citizenship rights, nor the support of the general public (Einwohner, 2010). They understood that marches and protests were more likely to end with more oppression than with equal protections. They instead chose tactics more relevant to their situation, such as armed resistance or secret networks of support and shelter.

There are two types of identity deployment which can be used to examine occurrences at both the individual and collective levels. *Identity for critique* challenges specific values, practices, and categories created and maintained by the dominant culture (Bernstein, 2010, p. 503). *Identity for education* aims to change perceptions that the majority has about a minority population. They accomplish this by focusing on education about non-controversial themes relevant to all members of the society, such as public safety and opportunities for employment. Figure 2.3 shows a third, mixed-method identity deployment which uses strategies from both identity for education and identity for critique. The main goal of identity deployment is challenging mainstream culture's ideas about any categories, values, policies, and structures that disrupt the quotidian. This is often accomplished by offering a variety of organizational forms, and educating movement participants, lawmakers, and the general public.

*Temporal continuity*

The element of time creates a unique distinction between social movements and other forms of collective behavior. The more specific goals of collective action can normally be accomplished relatively quickly. Social movements, however, can continue for years and even decades. The unfortunate ramification for that is that as time goes by, and as the end goals of the

movement become less clear, the movement inevitably loses active membership and participation (Nepstad, 2010). They may lose their conviction, change their opinions, or become involved in something more relevant that requires more of their attention. Therefore, ally development must focus on ways to efficiently use the time a movement progresses to inform, develop, and maintain allies. Allyhood as a developmental process suggests the existence of more than one type of ally. Accordingly, the topic of discussion for the next section of this literature review looks at some of the differing levels of involvement and allyhood.

*Movement participants*

In their 1977 examination of the theory of resource mobilization within social movements, McCarthy and Zald stress the importance of allies to the success of a movement. They recognize that society consists of multidimensional individuals and organizations with characteristics that develop on a spectrum. The massive variety of personalities, perspectives, and opinions results in varying levels of allyhood. Therefore, McCarthy and Zald distinguish two types of social movement players; adherents and constituents (1977). *Adherents* share common goals with a social movement, but may not necessarily actively participate in activism. Furthermore, *conscience adherents* are adherents that do not receive any direct benefits as a result of their participation in a social movement (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). *Constituents*, on the other hand, provide resources for the movement and its participants. They may donate money, participate in protests and rallies, or seek out opportunities to learn more about a minority population. Moreover, *conscience constituents* are constituents that actively participate in activism despite not receiving any direct benefit for doing so (McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Goldberg, 2006; Mirola, 2003). Distinction between these types of social movement members creates a variety of options for allies to participate in activism in a manner that suits their

abilities and commitment level (Barkan, Cohn, & Whittaker, 1995). With regards to the successful attainment of movement goals, these definitions show that conscience constituents are the level of allyhood that social movement organizations should focus on in order to increase their chances for success. However, Goldberg also notes how important it is for conscience constituents to encourage less active constituents to take on more leadership roles in decisions which affect the outcome of a social movement (2006). Failure to do so could result in insufficient material and organizational resources imperative to the successful attainment of movement objectives. The next section of this thesis focuses on the development of allies in order to determine how to maximize the quality of material and the availability of organizational resources.

*Ally Development*

There are numerous ways to define allyhood. At the most basic level, an ally is defined as an individual that "consciously commits to disrupting and ending cycles of injustice" (Waters, 2010, p. 2) against oppressed portions of a population. This is an acceptable definition which emphasizes a conscious choice and decision-making process. While still highlighting the importance of individual choice, Goldstein and Davis (2010) and Fingerhut (2011) expand the definition to recognize these individuals as members of a dominant or majority population. Beyond consciously acting in favor of equality and the protection of equal rights (Russell, 2011), allies also provide a support structure and advocacy where necessary, thus leading to both personal and institutional changes (Henquinet, Phibbs, & Skogland, 2000) that are part of ally goals for equality.

When characterizing allyhood it is imperative to consider that the decision to identify oneself as an ally is a developmental process. It requires critical evaluation of the issue at hand in comparison to one's personal experiences, beliefs, and values. Allyhood as a social construction is not an inherent characteristic and therefore must be learned. Educational programs focused on ally-related issues, attitudes, behaviors should therefore address this process in order to minimize the discomfort some students may feel when they begin to question their own identities in comparison to those that they learn about in the program (Waters, 2010). They will also help reduce the pressure student's might feel to identify as an ally quickly. Allowing allies to progress autonomously assures a deeper connection to the goals of the movement as they develop the thought processes necessary to comfortably express their opinion about the movement.

Waters identifies the characteristics displayed by students in the initial stage of ally development as "essentialist" (2010, p. 4), referring to certain fundamental concepts, ideas, and abilities imperative for functional society. People in this initial stage of development have limited knowledge about, or exposure to diverse peers and the realities of social difference. What information they do have primarily comes from textbooks, the media, and through interactions with authority figures. Therefore, it is important for ally development programs to explore both intrapersonal and interpersonal development (Waters, 2010, p. 4). Intrapersonal development is necessary to give participants the confidence to pursue change-oriented goals, but it is limited to individual experiences and perspectives. Adding interpersonal development to the educational programs provides participants with the exposure necessary to create and maintain norms of behavior. Interpersonal development allows participants the opportunity to practice applying what they learned during their intrapersonal development. This could mean applying a greater understanding and empathy to a conversation with someone from a

stigmatized group. Or it could mean sharing their newly realized identity in order to compare their experiences with others.

*Intrapersonal development*

Developing intrapersonal skills enables individuals to apply their social norms and ideas to situations they may encounter. They require a strong sense of self as well as the capacity to learn and adapt to experience. Waters likens the initial stage of intrapersonal development to the initial stage of cognitive development (2010, p. 4). It consists of a period of time during which the individual acts according to the norms they have been socialized with. Since their learned behaviors are naturalized, they don't question the impact socialization has had on their everyday lives. As is the case with increased cognitive development, more frequent intrapersonal development helps students understand that their experience only accounts for a small part of a much larger system. As such, this research seeks to examine the intrapersonal development of allies that results from personal work on their identity.

The concept of *identity work*, introduced by Snow and McAdam  (McAdam & Snow, 2010), refers to the "range of activities in which movement actors engage to construct, promote, and maintain their identities both as individuals and as members of a collective" (Einwohner, 2010, p. 431). Identity work has two main purposes. First, it creates a specific awareness within the activist about the many different aspects that constitute their identity. Through identity work individuals can make sense of the multiple identities and group memberships that they display to external audiences. It enables intragroup discussion about the change-oriented goals of the movement allowing the individual to merge their personal sense of self with the 'collective self' of the group. Second, identity work provides individuals with the means to consciously choose to

identify with a group that has an obvious collective identity consisting of diverse adherents. Once an identity is formed, the development of the ally can progress "from a state where allyhood is unknown, selfish, or impersonal to a worldview in which (they have) an internal sense of agency regarding ally identity and action" (Waters, 2010, p. 4). This newfound confidence can open the individual up to more sympathetic attitudes that can eventually result in a willingness to participate in "low-risk forms of protest" (Nepstad, 2010, p. 443). These are actions that take a stand with minimal risk to participants and their daily life. For an early activist this could mean anything from signing a petition to attending a meeting. It is also important to note that individuals that have with fewer life responsibilities are more likely to develop into more active participants and possibly contributing to higher-risk actions, such as rallies and protests. These and many other strategies for development are influenced by three components; affectivity, continuance, and normalization.

The *affective* component of commitment refers to an individual's level of emotional attachment to a movement (Nepstad, 2010). Constructive interactions with other activists positively affect the feelings one has about their involvement. Higher levels of attachment correlate positively with an individual's commitment. The *continuance* component of commitment consists of any consequences that would result from leaving a movement, thus inspiring activists to remain involved (Nepstad, 2010). Identifying with a movement and commitment to pursuing change-oriented goals can at times require a great deal of sacrifice. In extreme cases activists risk their personal safety, loss of employment, or even loss of friends and family. With so much on the line, activists will want to commit to a movement so that their sacrifices would not be in vain. Finally, the *normative* component of commitment describes an individual's moral obligation to continue identifying with the movement and pursuing its

change-oriented goals (Nepstad, 2010). Long-term socialization processes develop this dimension as beliefs consistent with the movement's goals create a moral imperative to commit to ending injustice, discrimination, or other such goals. Affective and continuance commitment can both be influenced by outside forces, but normative commitment is highly dependent on whether the individual has pre-existing sympathy for the movement or not. Any attempt at influencing the normative commitment requires action focused on improving the similarity between the goals of the movement and the values important to the individual. A problem with normative commitment is its dependence on recurrent reinforcement of an individual's convictions. Without that reinforcement the participant might lose interest or drive to continue. Therefore, it is important for movement organizations to focus their attention on discovering ways to maintain affective, continuance, and especially normative commitment.

*Interpersonal development*

Whereas intrapersonal skills rely on identity development at the individual level, interpersonal development focuses on skills necessary for group cohesion in a social movement. In cases where there are numerous interactions between groups of people, communication is imperative for accomplishing change-oriented goals and building relationships conducive to advancement of the movement. Interpersonal development explores the various ways to attract and retain members to a movement. Nepstad attributes the lack of research on activism retention to the false assumption that identification with a movement's goals is enough to ensure the participants continue to identify and engage with the movement until it has successfully completed its goals (2010). Therefore, the primary goal of interpersonal development is to discover and implement strategies for keeping participants interested in the movement until the goals are achieved.

There are several social-psychological concepts that advance the development of interpersonal relationships once an individual commits to allyhood. Individuals with close friends involved in a movement are more likely to participate and remain in the movement. Trust in interactions also impacts ally commitment. Individuals that trust movement leaders, fellow allies, and the effectiveness of the movement overall, tend to remain committed. Related to trust, allies must feel protected and supported. Addressing the dissonance that often occurs when learning about the presence of inequality can leave the student feeling vulnerable, at which point Waters  feels they should have access to programs to learn about the nature of inequality, as well as practice ways to handle various situations pertaining to the movement (2010). Armed with a new understanding about dominant group privilege, safe and supported individuals comfortably develop into allies more likely to commit and for longer periods of time. Individuals that have previously experienced negative interactions with minority group members can create negative expectations about subsequent interactions. This can lead to anxiety and possibly even hostility to the point that they would rather avoid interactions altogether (Goldstein & Davis, 2010). Safe and supportive environments allow individuals the liberty to reconstruct their identity at their own pace but without feeling alone in doing so (Einwohner, 2010). Allies then become more open to intergroup interactions with diverse individuals of both majority and minority populations. Interacting in this way exposes allies to others that have managed to integrate multiple collective identities, even when they initially seem contradictory. For example, most interpretations of Biblical ideology forbid homosexuality. Yet many Christians identify as allies to the LGBT community, which will be the final area of discussion for this literature review.

In the traditional sense of the word, allies are "external resources that can be mobilized in support of a group" (Stotzer, 2009, p. 68). In other words they are available to support a group whenever they are called upon, but the definition does not suggest continual support. The word 'mobilized' suggests action and battle, much like mobilizing troops for war. However, individuals that identify as allies to specific groups of people (such as individuals that identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender) are unique in that to identify as an ally does not necessarily require any action beyond a show of one of the many levels of support. In fact, many definitions used to explain allyhood to the LGBT community include language that highlights a much more intimate relationship between the ally and the oppressed, one of a certain degree of emotional attachment and empathy. The emphasis on personal connections reinforces that empathy is an other-focused emotion that explains behaviors such as altruism, wherein the individual suppresses their own emotions in order to temporarily place the experience of the oppressed above their own. Fingerhut notes that actions that generate empathy and similar affective responses are likely to result in increased frequency of helping behaviors (2011). Individuals with higher levels of dispositional empathy help more, volunteer more, and identify more with social movements aimed at assisting minority populations escape institutional discrimination.

Heterosexual allies exhibit a wide variety of helping behaviors (Fingerhut, 2011). Many actively participate in protests, rallies, and marches. Even more sign petitions and vote on legislation guaranteeing equal protections for LGBTs. There are those that volunteer their time, donate their money, and join advocacy organizations with goals similar to their own. Allies early in development, as well as those that prefer a less political level of involvement, instead focus on

smaller scale environments. They may correct offensive language, challenge stereotypes and assumptions, and discourage jokes about individuals that identify as LGBT. Some allies participate in gay rights events, such as Pride festivals. Many attend support group meetings, such as Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, while others are satisfied with initiating and participating in general discussions about LGBT rights. Stotzer (2009, p. 68) further distinguishes between heterosexual allies that actively display ally behaviors, such as participation in events or groups that advance LGBT equality, and those that may not actively belong to a specific group or organization but that favor a system of equality for all. This goes back to the earlier discussion about adherents and constituents (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). The amount of involvement with the movement determines which category they belong to, suggesting a developmental process. It is important to note, however that "the absence of a negative is not the same thing as the presence of a positive" (Fingerhut, 2011, p. 2235). In other words, lack of prejudice does not necessarily equate to acceptance and positivity, but rather tolerance for any number of reasons. Even though a non-discriminatory individual chooses not to exhibit discriminatory behavior, it does not guarantee they will assist with progressing the movement, nor does it guarantee that they will personally identify themselves as an ally.

There are two main pathways associated with the development of allies. *Parental loyalty* (Fingerhut, 2011; Russell, 2011) refers to ally development as a result of parents finding out their child is LGBT. Their identification as an ally serves to offer their child support and acceptance "to make the child's coming out process and the experience of being gay easier" (Fingerhut, 2011, p. 2232). Alternatively, the *social justice activist* pathway (Fingerhut, 2011; Russell, 2011) occurs when individuals identify as an ally not because of specific circumstances with their child, but because they perceive a need to advocate for and help others. There are several reasons

this activism occurs including relationships with LGBT friends and family, personality, morality and social responsibility, as well as personal experiences with discrimination. Though not mentioned specifically as a path of its own, loyalty to friends that identify as either LGBT, or ally to the LGBT community, also plays a major role in ally development. Stotzer emphasizes that "personally knowing a homosexual was one of the most meaningful experiences toward generating positive attitudes" (2009, p. 68). In fact, the correlation between loyalty to friends and ally development is significantly more than that of parental loyalty. This is reasonable considering there is a greater chance of meeting unlimited numbers of LGBT friends but are very limited with how many family members identify as such.

Before methods for improving ally-building strategies can be developed, there must be an understanding of characteristics and experiences that predict the potential for a person to identify as an LGBT ally. To begin with, ally development can be divided into several domains (Russell, 2011). The presence of an early role model provides individuals with exposure to behaviors conducive to perpetuation of allyhood. The role model's influence does not necessarily mean they have to identify as an ally to the LGBT community, only as a model for social justice and equality. Role models participate in discussions, answer questions, emphasize sameness instead of difference, and demonstrate respectful ways to celebrate people for who they are. Interpersonal relationships with LGBTs constitute another domain of ally development (Nepstad, 2010). Out-group contact negatively correlates with levels of prejudice, meaning more contact equates to lower levels. Learning about out-group members provides in-group members with ways to improve their own identity based on the emotional ties they form through intergroup development. These ties "inspire [allies] to become activists in order to protect those who are close to them" (Fingerhut, 2011, p. 2234). The resulting effect is a normalization of gayness that

renders myths and stereotypes offensive and worthy of attention in order to eradicate them. The third domain of ally development requires an adaptive understanding about the relationships between privilege and oppression (Russell, 2011). It is important for majority group members to realize their privilege as such, as well as the ways that privilege creates and maintains oppression, even if the oppression is not intentional. The final domain of ally development occurs when allies feel conflicted between the presence of homophobia in relation to the value they personally place on justice and equality.

There are many characteristics of LGBT allies commonly ascribed by researchers interested in LGBT allyhood and the LGBT movement. Gender contributes to the prediction of allyhood (Russell, 2011), with heterosexual females more likely than heterosexual males to identify as allies (Fingerhut, 2011). One of the greatest ways to predict who will identify as an ally is to examine the attitudes and behaviors an individual learned from their parents. Stotzer presents that the attitudes parents display have a strong positive correlation (.37) to the eventual attitudes of their children (2009). This means that if the parents have a favorable impression of LGBTs, or at the very least their rights to justice and equality, the children are more likely to also show favorable opinions. Likewise, parents with unfavorable attitudes towards individuals that identify as LGBT will likely pass those attitudes and any related behaviors to their children (Russell, 2011). Goldstein and Davis further emphasize this by pointing out that people they interviewed "attributed their social justice attitudes and actions to childhood experiences in which lgbt-affirmative attitudes and behaviors were normalized, to parents who modeled open-mindedness or conveyed egalitarian values, and to personal experiences with oppression, and/or direct or indirect exposure to the oppression of others, including lgbt peers and adults" (2010, p. 479). Education level also predicts ally identification (Russell, 2011; Fingerhut, 2011) with

higher levels more apt to identify as social justice activists and allies. Religion and spirituality also plays an interesting role in ally development (Goldstein & Davis, 2010). Even though there are religions that forbid homosexuality, some adherents still identify themselves as allies, reasoning that the underlying principles of their religion hold greater importance, namely non-judgmental love for all, as in the case of Christianity. One final characteristic conducive to ally development is the tendency for allies to lack "sensitivity to stigma by association" (Goldstein & Davis, 2010). In other words allies are generally not bothered by perceptions that they might be LGBT for identifying as an ally, or even for simply befriending individuals that identify as LGBT.

There is a strong association between low levels of prejudice towards LGBTs and the belief that sexual orientation is at least primarily a function of biology, not of choice (Goldstein & Davis, 2010). As this belief has gained more adherents, the LGBT movement has switched from a focus on differences between heterosexuals and LGBT to emphasis on similarities to the heterosexual population (Bernstein, 2010). For this reason, it is important that ally development also switch focus from asking "Who are allies?" to asking "How do I become an ally?" (Waters, 2010, p. 2). This shift results in the creation of allies focused on social justice and the improvement of ally behaviors and perspectives instead of on the ally identity. This approach reduces the contingency on social identity status and instead allows any individual to participate in allyhood.

The research described in this literature addresses a wide variety of concepts related to the development of allies supportive of the LGBT equal rights movement. Though there is wide availability of this qualitative data, this study hopes to address a portion of the gap in the literature by providing quantitative data necessary for a complete empirical understanding of

allies. Each of the variables chosen for analysis can be divided into one of three categories; exposure variables, engagement variables, and belief variables. There are two main research problems guiding the analysis of the data collected. First, when controlling for belief variables, can exposure variables help determine the likelihood that an individual will self-identify as an ally? It is hypothesized that both friend variables (LGBT friends and heterosexual ally friends) in particular will show to be excellent predictors of allyhood. As such, the greater the existence of exposure variables, the more likely an individual will be to self-identify as an ally. Similarly, when controlling for belief variables, can engagement variables also be used to determine the odds that an individual will self-identify as an ally? All three engagement variables have several options for respondents to choose from. It is hypothesized that the more engaged an individual is with LGBT groups, activities, and terms, the more likely they are to self-identify as allies.

## Chapter III METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive quantitative study that uses a 45 question survey to determine characteristic patterns associated with one's identification as an LGBT ally. The purpose of this research is to contribute to the limited information about LGBT allies by exploring two main areas for the theoretical development of allies; (1) defining characteristics, and (2) the development of LGBT allies. People that identify as LGBT allies likely share common characteristics that influence their attitudes for or against the LGBT community. Those that had positive experiences through their lives likely have positive attitudes towards those that identify as LGBT. People that do not identify as LGBT allies might indicate having negative or lack of experiences as possible explanations for why they do not consider themselves allies.

Conducting research such as this provides direct and indirect benefits at the both the collective and individual levels. Students can directly benefit from LGBT ally studies by gaining a better understanding of the term 'ally'. Those that want to participate in bringing about equality for the LGBT community can become aware of what exactly it means to be an ally, and what kinds of behaviors should be encouraged to result in higher prevalence of quality allies. Indirectly, ally studies provide information about how to increase the quality of educational programs to build better allies. This not only creates a more diverse and accepting campus, but it creates a better learning environment for everyone, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. This can lead to a more active student body, increased solidarity among students, and increased school spirit.

Ally programs also provide direct and indirect benefits to the field of sociology. This study will provide a previously unavailable data set measuring characteristics of LGBT allies, an

extremely understudied segment of the population. These characteristics can then be used to design programs aimed at educating the public about ways they can contribute to assuring the protection of rights for individuals that identify as LGBT. The potential for this study is limitless. The survey can continue to improve as more research expands the definition and development of the heterosexual ally. This study is not area specific and can easily be given in any part of the country, in secondary level schools and above.

The dependent variable used for this study, labeled "Ally", measures how many respondents self-identified as allies to the LGBT community. If respondents answered with "no" or "I do not know", a follow-up question defined an ally as "a member of the majority heterosexual population that works to improve the standards of life for those minority individuals that identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or any of the other classifications represented by the LGBT acronym. They are supportive of equal rights", after which respondents were again asked if they self-identified as an LGBT ally. Independent variables (IVs) chosen for analysis can be categorized into three areas of exploration; exposure, engagement, and beliefs. The four IVs located in the exposure category are *Family* (whether or not they have family that identifies as LGBT), *Friends* (whether or not they have friends that identify as LGBT), *Exposure* (whether or not they grew up with any exposure to individuals that identified as LGBT), and *Ally friends* (whether or not they had heterosexual friends that self-identified as LGBT allies). The engagement category also has four variables; *Organizations* (how many LGBT focused national and international organizations have they heard of), *Activities* (how frequently they participate in actions or events that raise awareness about LGBT inequality), *HS GSA* (whether or not they were a member of their high school's gay straight alliance), and *Terms* (how many of a given number of LGBT related terms did they understand). The beliefs category contains the remaining

four variables of interest; *Questions* (whether they have someone they feel comfortable discussing topics relevant to LGBT experiences), *Sin* (whether or not they believe that homosexuality is a sin), *Choice* (whether the respondent believes homosexuality is a choice) and *Parental attitudes* (whether or not their parents were supportive of LGBTs). Demographics will be used for general discussion, but will not be used in the regression analysis. These are age, race/ethnicity, religion, income, education level, gender, and political affiliation. Respondents were also asked their sexual orientation so that there can be a comparison between the experiences of LGBTs, allies, and non-allies.

The number of studies related to the development of LGBT allies is limited. Of the ones available for study, very few provide quantitative data necessary for predictive analysis. The method for the current study was chosen specifically to provide some of the data missing from previously available studies which might be helpful for future studies requiring quantitative data sets. The researcher chose to do a survey for multiple reasons. First, California State University offers its students the opportunity to use high quality data collection (Qualtrics) that is easy to setup, easy for respondents to use, and quickly transformable to the statistics package for the social sciences (SPSS). Another reason for this particular method is that surveys provide information that is relevant to the study, as well as data that might not be important at the moment, but which can be used for future research and analysis without needing to repeat an entirely different survey. Time was also taken in to consideration when choosing the appropriate method for this study. The use of a survey allowed for relatively quick data collection.

*Pilot study*

A pilot study was administered via Survey Monkey (a free online service) to the researcher's personal friends, as well as to various groups on Facebook that address life from the LGBT perspective, including school clubs, community organizations, and others. Data collection for the pilot took place over the course of three weeks. The data comes primarily from California and Georgia. After the initial pilot, twenty of the participants gave more in-depth interviews, discussed the questions on the survey, and provided feedback on how to improve the questions. These interviews were designed to test the clarity, quality, and average time it took to complete the survey.

Results from both parts of the pilot study provided valuable information for improving the survey for this study. In particular, respondents pointed out a bias towards LGBTs and their allies. That is appropriate with regards to the subject matter, but the analysis for this paper required comparison data. In other words, the opinions and perspectives of heterosexuals that did not self-identify as allies were also important for a full understanding of allyhood. The language of some questions required rewording in order to accommodate for non-allies. Another suggestion from interviewees was to add more questions that addressed specific situations. While there were a few additions for this study, there is still plenty of room to add more questions for future studies.

*Participants*

The California State University Mentor site (CSU Bakersfield campus facts, 2014) provides recent statistics for colleges and universities all across America. As of the winter quarter 2014, California State University Bakersfield consisted of approximately 2849

undergraduate students and 573 graduate students. Fifty-eight percent of the student body identified as female, but it is important to note that this statistic is using a binary gender identification that does not take in to consideration the multitude of alternate gender identifications. The majority of students identify as Hispanic (48.5%), followed by white (25.3%), black (7.4%), Asian (6.6%), and other (12.2%). The average age for undergraduate students at CSUB is 23 years, with 22% of undergraduates aged 25 or older. Sixty percent of the student body qualifies as low income students.

Samples contained responses from both graduate and undergraduate students. Completing the survey took an average of ten to fifteen minutes. One psychology and five sociology professors allowed the researcher to come in at the beginning of the classes they taught to try to recruit participants. The researcher informed the class that she was interested in determining what characteristics, experiences, and behaviors increase the likelihood that a heterosexual will identify as an all to the LGBT community. She then explained that the survey was designed to measure different opinions, even the ones that do not agree with the subject matter of this thesis. She then informed them that the survey is completely anonymous, and that none of the results will be identifiable by any means; no email addresses, names, numbers, or other identifiers would be required. She passed out the consent form, which contained a link to the survey. For three weeks, the researcher administered approximately 300 consent forms (with links to the online survey) to sociology and psychology students at California State University in Bakersfield (CSUB). Seventy-two students started the survey, but seventy completed it, resulting in a 24% response rate.

*Ally Survey*

After the pilot study, a finalized survey was created using Qualtrics online survey software ([www.qualtrics.com](www.qualtrics.com)). This version of the survey contains forty-five questions of varying types, including multiple choice and Likert scales. Some respondents might answer fewer questions, as some of them were designed as follow up questions. The first five questions of the survey ask if the respondent has family or friends that identify as LGBT. Positive responses directed the survey to questions asking them how their family or friends identified. Some of the questions ask respondents about their familiarity with various organizations, LGBT related terms, and the definition of ally. Other questions address past experiences as well as opinions on controversial issues facing the community, such as marriage equality. The survey also asks about the connection between beliefs about LGBTs and a person's spirituality. Since family is the first socialization agent, the survey also asks about how the respondent's parents viewed LGBTs, if respondents had exposure to them as they grew up, and whether they discussed lgbt issues with their parents.

The factors associated with allyhood will be examined using Table 3.1 provides univariate analysis statistics for each of the twelve variables (1 dependent variable and 11 independent variables). The next step in this analysis is to determine the bivariate correlations between each of the independent variables and whether a person identifies as an ally to the LGBT community. Finally, binary logistic regression will be used to determine which independent variables contribute to the development of heterosexual allies. Binary logistic regression makes sense because the dependent variable 'Ally' is binary, meaning with either a yes or no answer.

Table 3.1 **Descriptive table of variables used in this analysis** n=70

|  | Mean | SD | Min | Max | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Dependent Variable** | | | | | |
| Ally | .6714 | .4731 | 0 | 1 | % that self-identified as allies |
| **Independent Variables** | | | | | |
| *'Exposure' variables* | | | | | |
| 1. Family | .3143 | .4676 | 0 | 1 | Has LGBT family |
| 2. Friends | .7143 | .4550 | 0 | 1 | Has LGBT friends |
| 3. Exposure | .3857 | .4903 | 0 | 1 | Knew LGBTs while growing up |
| 4. Hetero Friends | .5714 | .4984 | 0 | 1 | Has heterosexual friends that are allies |
| *'Engagement' variables* | | | | | |
| 5. Organizations | 1.271 | 1.284 | 0 | 6 | # of known LGBT organizations |
| 6. Activities | 7.754 | 2.778 | 6 | 21 | # of LGBT activities participated |
| 7. Terms | 2.971 | 2.193 | 0 | 10 | # known LGBT terms |
| *'Beliefs' variable* | | | | | |
| *8.* Questions | .6429 | .4826 | 0 | 1 | Has someone to answer questions |
| 9. Sin | .2000 | .4029 | 0 | 1 | Belief that homosexuality is a sin |
| 10. Choice | .2000 | .4029 | 0 | 1 | Belief that sexuality is a choice |
| 11. Parental attitudes | .3857 | .4903 | 0 | 1 | Parental beliefs about LGBT equality |

**Chapter IV RESULTS**

The goal of this study is to determine a list of characteristics common among individuals that self-identify as allies to the LGBT community. The variables chosen for analysis have been divided into three types. Exposure variables measure the amount of exposure respondents have to people that identify as LGBT and to other allies. Engagement variables measure the knowledge and participation in activities related to LGBTs. Belief variables measure the respondents' views on different aspects of LGBT lives. Before examining the specific associations between these variables and an individual's decision to identify as an ally, descriptive statistics about key variables will be discussed.

In order to gain a better understanding about the sample of respondents, descriptive statistics for some of the demographic questions will first be examined. Of the seventy respondents, 67% self-identified as allies to the LGBT community. Females accounted for 67% of all responses and males 30%. The final 3% resulted from two missing responses. The bulk of respondents (46%) belonged to the 20-29 age group. Only eight respondents were older the age of 30. A broad range of religions were represented by this particular sample, but the top three most reported were Catholic (47%), Protestant (23%), and not religious (19%). The 'not religious' category consisted of athiests, agnostics, and those that identified specifically as 'not religious'. Though all other sexualities were excluded from the analysis, it is important to point out that 61% of the respondents identified themselves as heterosexuals, while 5.7% identified as homosexual. Note that this is very close to the Williams Institute's estimate of 4%. One respondent chose other and wrote in that they were unsure of their sexuality. As for ethnic background, 62.9% of respondents were Hispanic, 25.7% were European, 11.4% were African, 5.7% were Asian, and 8.6% identified as other ethnic background. Due to the fact that the survey

allowed respondents to choose more than one ethnic background, the percentage adds up to over 100%. Although these statistics are interesting and they provide relevant information for future studies, including them in this analysis would result in too broad a discussion for the scope of this study.

*Correlations*

The next step in analyzing the results of this survey was to examine correlations between the chosen variables and whether or not a respondent identifies as an ally. Table 4.1 shows the correlations grouped into three categories. *Exposure variables* measure whether or not respondents have family members that identify as LGBT, whether they have friends that identify as LGBT, if they had exposure to LGBTs as a child, and whether or not they had heterosexual friends that identified as LGBT allies. *Engagement variables* measure the number of LGBT related organizations the respondents are familiar with, how many LGBT related activities they participate in, and the number of LGBT related terms they are familiar with. The final category, *belief variables,* measure whether respondents have a person in their lives that can answer any questions they might have about LGBTs, the degree to which religious respondents agree that homosexuality is a sin, and the attitudes their parents hold about LGBTs.

*Exposure variables*

Table 4.1 shows that having LGBT friends ($r = .433$, $p < .001$) and having heterosexual friends that identified as allies ($r = .439$, $p < .001$) both had a moderately strong positive correlation to self-identification as an ally. Having family that identifies as LGBT and exposure to LGBTs throughout childhood had weak correlations to identification as an ally, but neither were statistically significant.

*Engagement variables*

For the engagement variables, knowing LGBT organizations (r = .268, p <.05) and
knowing LGBT-related terms (r = .256, p <.001) had positive correlations to ally identification.
Participating in LGBT-related activities (r = .334, p < .001) had a moderately strong correlation
to identification as an ally. The variable that measured whether respondents were part of their
high school's gay-straight alliance was removed from the analysis since the very low number of
responses did not show enough variability.

**Table 4.1** Correlation between independent variables and whether or not the respondent self-identifies as an ally. n=70

| Exposure Variables | Pearson Correlation |
|---|---|
| Family | .015 |
| Friends | .433** |
| Exposure | .117 |
| Hetero Friends | .439** |
| **Engagement Variables** | |
| Organizations | .268* |
| Activities | .334** |
| Terms | .256* |
| **Belief Variables** | |
| Questions | .367** |
| Sin | -.411** |
| Choice | -.259* |
| Parental Attitudes | -.258* |

**. P < .001 (2-tailed). *p <.05

*Belief variables*

Individuals who had someone to answer any LGBT-related questions (r = .367, p < .001)
they might have, and those whose parents were LGBT supportive (r = .343, p < .001) showed
strong positive correlation to their identification as an LGBT ally. The degree to which religious

respondents agree that homosexuality is a sin (r = -.396, p < .001) had a strong negative

correlation to ally identification. This means that the more respondents agree that homosexuality

is a sin, the less likely they will be to identify as an LGBT ally. The nature/nurture variable was

removed from the analysis due to difficulty in differentiating coding between those that indicated

it was a choice, those that indicated it was not a choice, and those that indicated it was a mixture

of biology and choice.

**Table 4.2** Logistic Regression with constant = Ally, *p < .05, n=70

| Exposure Variables | Exp(B) |
| --- | --- |
| Family | .807 |
| Friends | .893 |
| Exposure | 2.028 |
| Hetero Friends | 11.816* |
| **Engagement Variables** | |
| Organizations | 1.017 |
| Activities | 2.696 |
| Terms | 1.154 |
| **Belief Variables** | |
| Questions | 1.119 |
| Sin | .082* |
| Choice | .606 |
| Parental Attitudes | .080* |

*Binary Logistic Regression*

Now that the significance of the correlations between the independent variables and an

individual's decision to identify as an ally to the LGBT community have been determined, the

analysis will next explore the regression model. The first step of analyzing regression is to

determine how good of a fit this model has in order to explain the variation in the dependent

variable. Nagelkerke's $R^2$ = .630. Because this is a pseudo R-squared value, it cannot be interpreted directly as the proportion of variance explained by the model. However, the number is still large suggesting that the variables explain substantial variance in allyhood and that the model has strong fit. Of the ten independent variables in the regression equation, only three showed statistical significance; hetero friends ($e^b$ = 11.816), sin ($e^b$ = .082), and parental attitudes ($e^b$ = .080). This means that controlling for other variables, if the respondent has heterosexual friends that identify as allies, the odds that an individual identifies are multiplied by 11.816, indicating a substantial increase in the odds a person will identify as an LGBT ally.

Both sin and parental attitudes have negative correlations. If the respondent agrees that homosexuality is a sin, their odds of identifying as an ally decrease by 91.8%. Similarly, if the respondent's parents were not LGBT supportive, it would reduce the odds that the respondent identifies as an ally by 92%. Much of the research discussed in the literature review shows that how parents feel about LGBT equality matters a lot. Therefore, it is important to remember that the estimate for the parental attitudes variable is probably exaggerated based on the small sample size and lack of variation due to the fact that nineteen of the twenty respondents that had supportive parents also identified themselves as allies.

## Chapter V CONCLUSION

Although the body of literature on the LGBT social movement has grown dramatically, there is still a severe lack of empirical quantitative studies aimed at understanding allies. The purpose of this study was to determine some of the characteristics common to individuals that self-identify as allies to LGBT individuals. A survey to measure the experiences, beliefs, attitudes, and perspectives of college students at California State University Bakersfield was designed with the intent to fill in some of the gaps in the literature. Bivariate analysis showed correlations between many of the independent variables and an individual's self-identification as an LGBT ally. Once variables were added to a regression analysis, the effects of many of the variables lessened, however three of the variables remained significant predictors of allyhood after the model was applied; heterosexual friends that identify as allies, the degree to which religious people agree that homosexuality is a sin, and parental attitudes towards LGBT equality.

It should come as no surprise that having heterosexual friends that identify as LGBT allies would remain one of the most significant ways to predict allyhood. In fact, all of the variables related to friendship had significance when looked at separately. On one hand the potential number of friends is infinite, while the potential number of family members is limited by procreation. Having exposure to so many more friends opens the door for learning about unfamiliar situations, alternative ways of living, and one's own identity. On the other hand, knowing someone that identifies as an LGBT ally provides the individual with a level of support that shows that it is ok to be supportive without being LGBT. Allies have the potential to serve as role models. They model appropriate behaviors and language to others that might not otherwise learn about them.

Religious beliefs should also be expected to have a significant effect on ally identification. As mentioned before, this sample comes from a largely Hispanic population, most of who adhere to Catholicism. Most Christians have interpreted the Bible to exclude homosexuality from normal behavior, and therefore do not condone sexual behavior outside of the range of 'normal'. Consequently, it is logical to predict that the more likely someone is to believe that homosexuality is a sin, the less likely they are to identify as an LGBT ally. This also applies to other religions, but Catholics and Protestant Christians account for approximately 57% of the responses for this particular survey.

The final significant variable in the regression model is parental attitudes. This also makes a great deal of sense because children learn from their parents. Just as parents that support equality teach their children to support equality, parents that do not support LGBT equality most assuredly teach their children the same. Whether the child chooses to keep the same beliefs as their parents is up to them. But until they reach the adult level of critical thinking, children often model what they have been taught.

It is important to note at this time that the odds ratios for both the parental attitudes (Exp(B) = 15.845) and heterosexual friends (Exp(B) = 32.893) variables are unusually high compared to the other independent variables. This has been attributed in part to the small sample size and the resultant lack of variability. Sample size also had possible negative effects on the high school gsa variable, hence why it was removed from the analysis. Another limitation to this study is that it was conducted in social science classrooms. This could add bias in several categories including gender and political affiliation, since social science majors more commonly female and on the liberal side of the political spectrum. One final limitation of note is a matter of

adding more questions to the survey. In particular, asking about political party might have been a more interesting statistic if a follow-up question asked the respondent if they voted.

In addition to providing a foundation for future studies on LGBT allies, results from this study have implications for many applications, as they reveal factors that are associated

with majority group activism on behalf of minority populations. Therefore, they can help individuals who are interested in developing educational programs intending to strengthen both intragroup and intergroup development. Responses gathered in this study highlight a great need to expand and improve methods for the development of LGBT allies. The best example of this is with the terms variable. The mean number of terms known by respondents was 2.97 out of 11 terms. Predictably, more mainstream terms were recognized by most, such as bisexual and transgender. But this study highlights the fact that many of the basic LGBT-related terms describing identification of gender or sexual orientation are unknown by most, including many allies. As such, educational programs are imperative to increase the understanding that eventually results in acceptance as society's norms continue to change and evolve with more advanced critical thinking.

Despite the small sample size for this particular study, results were significant enough to warrant further development of the survey. Using the results of this study, questions should be amended to more precisely measure specific independent variables. Ideally the next time should contain responses from multiple schools in multiple states. A larger sample size would almost certainly guarantee more significance from the variables used in this study. This survey can also further develop the three sets of variables contained in this analysis; exposure, engagement, and belief variables. Each group has the potential for its own separate study.

Social movements exist in all forms, some worse than others. Some result in death and bloodshed. All depend on the presence of sympathetic others to provide a network of support to stand a fighting chance against those that wish to oppress others. Obtaining the data for this study has provided empirical data necessary to inform other studies, as well as motivate others in the field of sociology to pay more attention to one of the largest (and definitely most important) segment of the LGBT community. The key to a successful LGBT social movement is the development of quality allies that can educate others on what constitutes an ally, what they do, and why they are so important. By focusing on the significant variables found in this and other studies, allies can gain the confidence and knowledge they need to keep the movement's momentum going.

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Appendix 1 *Consent Form*

I would appreciate your assistance with this research project examining attitudes towards individuals that identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Transgender (LGBT). The survey located at the link below is completely anonymous and voluntary. There are demographic questions for the purpose of analysis, but the answers to these questions will not be linked to any name. The results of this study will only be used for statistical analysis of the attitudes that people form with regards to LGBT individuals. Although responses may be discussed further in the results and discussion section of the thesis, the information gathered with this survey will remain anonymous. This research will help me assess predictive characteristics that affect the development of attitudes towards LGBT individuals.

https://csub.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_6sdgIbBNK6vrHh3

The address above connects you to my survey. The survey should take no longer than 15 minutes. If you do not wish to participate, simply discard this invitation. Responses will be completely anonymous; your name will not appear anywhere on the survey, or in the electronic data provided by this website. Completing the survey at the provided link constitutes your consent to participate.

If you have any questions regarding the research, please contact Amanda Studebaker, CSUB department of Sociology, at amanda.studebaker.7@gmail.com. Alternatively, you can contact Dr. Kebede, the committee chair for this research project at akebede@csub.edu. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the Institutional Review Board office at California State University Bakersfield. Thank you again for your help with this important study.

Appendix 2 *Ally Survey*

1. Does anyone in your family identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender?

    a. Yes

    b. No

    c. I do not know

2. How does this member of your family identify? If there is more than one member of your family that identifies as LGBT please select all that apply.

    a. Lesbian                                        d. Transgender

    b. Gay                                            e. Other

    c. Bisexual                                       f. I do not know

3. Do any of your friends identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender?

    a. Yes

    b. No

    c. I do not know

4. Approximately how many friends identify as LGBT? (write in)

5. How do these friends identify? Please select all that apply.

    a. Lesbian                                        c. Bisexual

    b. Gay                                            d. Transgender

6. Have you ever heard of any of these groups and organizations? Please select all that apply.

    a. The Human Rights Campaign                      c. The Trevor Project
       (HRC)                                          d. Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA)

    b. The Point Foundation

e. Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG)

g. National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF)

f. The Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN)

h. None of the above

7. Is there an LGBT resource center in your area? A resource center is a specific location for LGBT events, meetings, support groups, etc.

   a. Yes

   b. No

   c. I do not know

8. Have you ever…

   a. Been to a drag show?

      i. Never

      ii. Once

      iii. Sometimes

      iv. Often

   b. Been to a 'gay bar'?

      i. Never

      ii. Once

      iii. Sometimes

      iv. Often

   c. Attended a gay pride event?

      i. Never

      ii. Once

      iii. Sometimes

      iv. Often

   d. Attended a Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) meeting?

      i. Never

      ii. Once

      iii. Sometimes

      iv. Often

   e. Signed a petition in favor of LGBT equality?

      i. Never

      ii. Once

      iii. Sometimes                     iv. Often

    f. Voted in favor of LGBT related legislation?
        i. Never                       iii. Sometimes

        ii. Once                       iv. Often

    g. Donated money to an LGBT related organization?
        i. Never                       iii. Sometimes

        ii. Once                       iv. Often

9. Do you identify yourself as an ally to the LGBT community?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I do not know what an ally is

10. An LGBT ally is a member of the majority heterosexual population that works to improve the standards of life for those minority individuals that identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or any of the other classifications represented by the LGBT acronym. They are supportive of equal rights. After reading the above description do you identify yourself as an LGBT ally?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I do not know

11. What prompted you to identify as an ally? Please select all that apply.
    a. I have a family member that identifies as LGBT.
    b. I have a child that identifies as LGBT.
    c. I have a friend that identifies as LGBT.
    d. I believe that LGBT people deserve the same civil rights as non-LGBT members of society.
    e. Other
    f. None of these apply to me

12. Do you know someone that you feel comfortable approaching with questions you might have about LGBTs?
    a. Yes, there is one person I feel comfortable talking to.
    b. Yes, there are several people that I feel comfortable talking to.
    c. No, there is no one I feel comfortable talking to.
    d. I do not know

13. How do they identify themselves?
    a. Heterosexual
    b. LGBT
    c. Other

d. I do not know

14. How do you receive your news?
    a. Fox news (TV)
    b. CNN (TV)
    c. MSNBC (TV)
    d. Some other cable news network
    e. Local news network
    f. Foxnews.com
    g. CNN.com
    h. MSNBC.com
    i. Some other news website
    j. Facebook
    k. Newspaper
    l. Other
    m. I do not read the news

15. Have you ever witnessed someone being bullied because of their identification as LGBT?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I do not know

16. What type of bullying did you witness?
    a. Physical violence
    b. Verbal abuse
    c. Other
    d. None of the above

17. Did your high school have a GSA?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I do not know

18. Were you a part of your high school's GSA?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I do not know

19. Are you supportive of LGBT equality (marriage, benefits, adoption, etc)?
    a. Yes, in all areas.
    b. Yes, but only in some areas
    c. No
    d. I do not know

20. Have you always supported LGBT equality?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I do not know
    d. I do not support LGBT equality

21. What prompted you to change your mind? (write in)

22. Which of the following terms have you heard before? Please note that this is not asking if you know what the terms mean, just if you have heard of it. Please select all that apply.
    a. Genderqueer
    b. Transgender

c. Heterosexual privilege
d. Intersex
e. Androgynous
f. Female to male, F to M, or FTM
g. Male to female, M to F, or MTF

h. Pansexual
i. Cisgender
j. Bisexual
k. Transphobia
l. None of the above

23. Do you know what any of these words mean? Please select all that apply.
    a. Genderqueer
    b. Transgender
    c. Heterosexual privilege
    d. Intersex
    e. Androgynous
    f. Female to male, F to M, or FTM
    g. Male to female, M to F, or MTF
    h. Pansexual
    i. Cisgender
    j. Bisexual
    k. Transphobia
    l. None of the above

24. Think back to before you were in high school. As a child, did you ever have any contact with people that identified as LGBT?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I do not know

25. Do your parents support LGBT equality?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I do not know
    d. One does, one does not
    e. Other

26. Which parent supports and which opposes?
    a. Mom supports, dad does not
    b. Dad does, mom does not
    c. Neither do
    d. Something else (write in)

27. Have they always supported LGBT equality?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I do not know

28. Have you ever had a conversation with your parents about LGBT topics, events, rights, etc?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I do not know

29. According to your religious beliefs, is homosexuality a sin?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I do not know
30. To what extent do you agree or disagree with your religion's stance that homosexuality is a sin?
    a. Strongly agree
    b. Agree
    c. Neither agree nor disagree
    d. Disagree
    e. Strongly disagree
31. Do you believe that a person's sexuality is…
    a. Genetic, meaning a person has no choice in whether they are LGBT or straight
    b. Environmental, meaning a person has a choice about whther or not they are LGBT or straight
    c. Both genetic and environmental
    d. Neither genetic nor environmental
    e. I do not know
32. Choose the response that most closely matches you thoughts.
    a. I feel comfortable discussing LGBT issues with people I know
        i. Strongly agree
        ii. Agree
        iii. Neither agree nor disagree
        iv. Disagree
        v. Strongly disagree

    b. I feel comfortable discussing LGBT issues with people I *do not* know
        i. Strongly agree
        ii. Agree
        iii. Neither agree nor disagree
        iv. Disagree
        v. Strongly disagree

    c. I fear that people will think negatively if I speak out for LGBT equality
        i. Strongly agree
        ii. Agree
        iii. Neither agree nor disagree
        iv. Disagree

     v. Strongly disagree

d. I fear that people will think I am LGBT if I identify as an ally.
     i. Strongly agree                   iv. Disagree

     ii. Agree                          v. Strongly disagree

     iii. Neither agree nor

        disagree

e. I am uncomfortable around people that identify as LGBT.
     i. Strongly agree                   iv. Disagree

     ii. Agree                          v. Strongly disagree

     iii. Neither agree nor

        disagree

f. In general, things are improving for the LGBT community
     i. Strongly agree                   iv. Disagree

     ii. Agree                          v. Strongly disagree

     iii. Neither agree nor

        disagree

g. Marriage is a civil right that should be granted to everyone, including same-sex couples.
     i. Strongly agree                   iv. Disagree

     ii. Agree                          v. Strongly disagree

     iii. Neither agree nor

        disagree

h. Same-sex couples should be allowed to adopt children.
     i. Strongly agree                   iii. Neither agree nor

     ii. Agree                          disagree

                                         iv. Disagree

v. Strongly disagree

i. There are stores and restaurants I *avoid* because of their stance on LGBT equality.
   i. Strongly agree                                      iv. Disagree

   ii. Agree                                              v. Strongly disagree

   iii. Neither agree nor

        disagree

j. There are stores and restaurants that I *frequent* because of their stance on LGBT
   equality.
   i. Strongly agree                                      iv. Disagree

   ii. Agree                                              v. Strongly disagree

   iii. Neither agree nor

        disagree

k. Same-sex partners should receive the same federal benefits as opposite sex
   couples.
   i. Strongly agree                                      iv. Disagree

   ii. Agree                                              v. Strongly disagree

   iii. Neither agree nor

        disagree

l. Do you actively engage your children in conversation about LGBT issues?
   i. Yes
   ii. No
   iii. I do not have children, but I *would* talk to them about LGBT issues.
   iv. I do not have children, but I *would not* talk to them about LGBT issues.
m. How frequently do you engage your children in LGBT discussion?

   i. Daily                                               iv. Rarely

   ii. Often                                              v. Never

   iii. Occasionally                                      vi. I do not know

n. Do you have heterosexual friends that identify themselves as LGBT allies?

      i.  Yes

     ii.  No

    iii.  I do not know

o.  What is your age group?

| | |
|---|---|
| i.  Under 20 | v.  50-59 |
| ii.  29-29 | vi.  60-69 |
| iii.  30-39 | vii.  70+ |
| iv.  40-49 | |

p.  What is your racial/ethnic background?

| | |
|---|---|
| i.  African | vi.  Native American |
| ii.  Asian | (including Alaskan |
| iii.  European | and Hawaiian natives) |
| iv.  Hispanic | vii.  Other |
| v.  Mid-Eastern | |

q.  What is your gender identification?

| | |
|---|---|
| i.  Female | iii.  None |
| ii.  Male | iv.  Other |

r.  What is your religious affiliation?

| | |
|---|---|
| i.  Agnostic | vi.  Muslim |
| ii.  Atheist | vii.  Protestant |
| iii.  Catholic | viii.  Other |
| iv.  Jewish | ix.  Not religious |
| v.  Mormon | |

s. How often do you attend religious services outside of your home?

<table>
<tr><td>i.</td><td>More than once a week</td><td>iv.</td><td>A few times a month</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>v.</td><td>Holidays only</td></tr>
<tr><td>ii.</td><td>Once a week</td><td>vi.</td><td>Other</td></tr>
<tr><td>iii.</td><td>Once a month</td><td>vii.</td><td>Never</td></tr>
</table>

t. Is your place of worship openly supportive of the LGBT community?

  i. Yes

  ii. No

  iii. I do not know

u. Which of the following best describes your stance on economic issues (ie. Government spending, taxes)

<table>
<tr><td>i.</td><td>Liberal</td><td>iv.</td><td>Conservative</td></tr>
<tr><td>ii.</td><td>Very liberal</td><td>v.</td><td>Very conservative</td></tr>
<tr><td>iii.</td><td>Moderate</td><td>vi.</td><td>Other</td></tr>
</table>

v. Which of the following describes your political stance on social issues (ie. Same sex marriage?

<table>
<tr><td>i.</td><td>Liberal</td><td>iv.</td><td>Conservative</td></tr>
<tr><td>ii.</td><td>Very liberal</td><td>v.</td><td>Very conservative</td></tr>
<tr><td>iii.</td><td>Moderate</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

w. Are you affiliated with a political party?

  i. Democrat

  ii. Libertarian

  iii. Republican

    iv. Other (write in)

x. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

    i. GED

    ii. High school diploma

    iii. Associate's degree

    iv. Bachelor's degree

    v. Master's degree

    vi. PhD

    vii. Other

y. What is your personal combined income before taxes?

    i. Less than $20,000

    ii. $20,000-$39,000

    iii. $40,000-$59,000

    iv. $60,000-$79.000

    v. $80,000-$99,000

    vi. Over $100,000

z. What is your sexual orientation?

    i. Heterosexual (straight)

    ii. Homosexual (lesbian or gay)

    iii. Bisexual

    iv. Other

    v. Prefer not to answer

aa. What is your marital status?

    i. Single (living alone)

    ii. Domestic partnership

    iii. Married (opposite sex)

    iv. Civil union

    v. other