

The Jamaican LGBT Community Experience and Needs Assessment Survey Results



Research Findings

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Table of Contents

Figures 3

Acronyms and Abbreviations 5

Executive Summary 5

Methodology 7

Demographics 7

Limitations 14

Research Findings 15

Life Satisfaction 15

Safety 18

Openness being LGBT 25

Education and Training 30

Health 36

Mental Health 39

Workplace 41

Relationships 44

Homelessness and Displacement 46

Interest in Leaving Jamaica 49

Experiences within the Community 50

Service to Community and Political Priorities 53

Skillset 56

Independence 57

Faith Based Organizations 58

Recommendations 60

Figures

- Figure 1:** Age of Respondents 8
- Figure 2:** Parish of Residence 8
- Figure 3:** Highest Level of Education 9
- Figure 4:** Type of Area of Residence 10
- Figure 5:** Employment Status 10
- Figure 6:** Monthly Income 11
- Figure 7:** Sexual Orientation 12
- Figure 8:** Gender Identity 12
- Figure 9:** Relationship Status 13
- Figure 10:** Living Situation 13
- Figure 11:** Disability Status 14
- Figure 12:** Level of Satisfaction with Life in Jamaica 15
- Figure 13:** Ability to Meet Life Goals while Living in Jamaica 16
- Figure 14:** Ability to Demonstrate Full Potential while Living in Jamaica 16
- Figure 15:** Level of Comfort Being Openly LGBT in Jamaica 17
- Figure 16:** Perception that Other People were More Comfortable Being LGBT than the Respondent 17
- Figure 17:** Perception of Being Safe Living In Jamaica 18
- Figure 18:** Feeling of Safety in Specific Spaces 19
- Figure 19:** Lifetime Experiences of Violence 20
- Figure 20:** Experience of Violence in the Last 12 Months 20
- Figure 21:** Type of Violence Experienced 21
- Figure 22:** Link Between Violence and LGBT Identity 22
- Figure 23:** Perpetrators of Violence 23
- Figure 24:** Reporting Incidents of Violence 23
- Figure 25:** Who Would Support You if were Attacked 24
- Figure 26:** Level of Comfort Being Openly LGBT in Specific Spaces 25
- Figure 27:** Level of Comfort Showing Partner Affection in Public 26
- Figure 28:** Level of Comfort Wearing Gender-Affirming Clothes in Public 27
- Figure 29:** Disclosure of LGBT Identity to Specific Persons 28
- Figure 30:** Impact of Being Openly LGBT on Ability to Get Jobs 29
- Figure 31:** Impact of Being Openly LGBT on Access to Living Spaces 29
- Figure 32:** Experiences of Bullying Based on Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity 30
- Figure 33:** Type of Bullying Experienced in School 31
- Figure 34:** Persons Responsible for Bullying in Schools 31
- Figure 35:** Level of Schooling at which Bullying Occurred 32
- Figure 36:** Who Knew About School Bullying and if they Tried to Help 33
- Figure 37a:** Reporting of Bullying Incidents 33
- Figure 37b:** Outcomes of Reported Bullying Incidents 34
- Figure 38:** Type of School Where Bullying Occurred 34
- Figure 39:** Adequacy of School Curriculum in Addressing Needs of LGBT Students 35
- Figure 40:** Perception of School Rules as Discriminatory to LGBT Students 35

- Figure 41:** Frequency of Accessing Medical Care 36
- Figure 42:** Where Persons are Accessing Healthcare 36
- Figure 43:** Level of Comfort Discussing Gender Identity in Specific Healthcare Settings 37
- Figure 44:** Level of Comfort Discussing Sexual Orientation in Specific Healthcare Settings 37
- Figure 45:** Ease of Access to Trans-Specific Medical Care in Jamaica 38
- Figure 46:** Changes to Gender Expression when Accessing Medical Care 38
- Figure 47:** Uptake of Mental Health Services in the Past Month 39
- Figure 48:** Experience of Barriers when Accessing Mental Health Services 39
- Figure 49:** Self-Perception of Mental Health 40
- Figure 50:** Formal Diagnoses of Mental Health Disorders 40
- Figure 51:** Self-Perception of Specific Mental Health Issues 41
- Figure 52:** Experiences of Employment within the Last 12 Months 41
- Figure 53:** Experiences of Unemployment within the Last 12 Months 42
- Figure 54:** Negative Workplace Experiences due to LGBT Identity 42
- Figure 55:** Type of Workplace Violence and Perpetrator 43
- Figure 56:** Ease of Forming Healthy Romantic Relationships 44
- Figure 57:** Ease of Forming Healthy Friendships 45
- Figure 58:** Interest in Being Able to Marry 45
- Figure 59:** Level of Comfort Living and Raising Children with a Partner 46
- Figure 60:** Lifetime Experiences of Homelessness 46
- Figure 61:** Longest Period of Homelessness or Displacement 47
- Figure 62:** Perception of Safety in Non-LGBT Social Support Spaces 48
- Figure 63:** Perceived Usefulness of an LGBT Shelter 48
- Figure 64:** Interest in Leaving Jamaica 49
- Figure 65:** Link Between LGBT Identity and Desire to Leave Jamaica 49
- Figure 66:** Experiences of Discrimination within the LGBT Community 50
- Figure 67:** Feeling of Belonging to the LGBT Community 52
- Figure 68:** Accessibility of LGBT Spaces for PLWD 52
- Figure 69:** Level of Satisfaction with LGBT Organizations 53
- Figure 70:** Likelihood of Jamaicans Becoming More Accepting of LGBT Persons in the Future 54
- Figure 71a:** Willingness to Run for Political Office 54
- Figure 71b:** Importance of Specific Political Issues 55
- Figure 72:** Skillsets within the Community 56
- Figure 73:** Ability to Meet Basic Needs Without External Support 57
- Figure 74:** Inability to Feed Oneself Without External Support in the Past Year 57
- Figure 75:** Source of Financial Support 58
- Figure 76:** Participation in Church and Other Faith Based Spaces 58
- Figure 77:** Experiences of Discrimination in Faith Based Spaces 59
- Figure 78:** Perception of Spirituality as Lacking in Personal Life 59

Acronyms and Abbreviations

BPO	Business Process Outsourcing
CaPRI	Caribbean Policy Research Institute
Cis	Cisgender
CSO	Civil Society Organization
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
JASL	Jamaica AIDS Support for Life
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PLWD	Persons Living With Disability
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
Trans	Transgender

Executive Summary

This survey aimed to gather information about LGBT Jamaicans: their experiences, goals, dreams, hopes, aspirations and how belonging to the LGBT community affects their quality of life. The information gathered in this survey is intended to provide evidence around the lived experiences of LGBT Jamaicans and guide Equality for All Foundation (EFAF), its affiliates, partners and other stakeholders.

This research utilized an intersectional qualitative and quantitative methodology that centred the inclusion of LGBT persons from diverse income, education and geographic backgrounds as well as disability status. Special emphasis was placed on the inclusion of LGBT persons residing in rural Jamaica.

The tool was created in conjunction with J-FLAG, Equality Youth JA, TransWave Jamaica and WE-Change Jamaica. Their leaders shared the priorities of their organizations which was used to develop the first draft of the instrument. Draft one was tested with LGBT persons in rural and urban Jamaica before settling on the final design. The survey was available in paper format but completed almost exclusively online.

The survey tool utilized a combination of closed and open-ended questions along with scales to capture the information about respondents' lived experiences. Respondents were also given ample space to expand their responses. The survey was administered anonymously. However, a small cash incentive was available and those who wished to qualify were asked to submit a phone number or e-mail address. All information was only accessible to the primary investigator.

Very few questions were mandatory, and participants were allowed to withdraw from the survey at any time. A total of 301 persons participated in the survey with 287 completing it. The survey was administered between July and November 2019.

In keeping with national demographics, the majority of respondents were from Kingston and St. Andrew (48%). The sexual orientation of the respondents were as follows: 59% identified as homosexual, 27% identified as bisexual and 9% identified as pansexual. Another 10% preferred to self-describe and responses included 'homoromantic demisexual', 'queer asexual', and 'vibes person'.

The gender identities of the respondents were as follow: 37% identified as cisgender women, 23% cisgender men, 8% gender fluid, 7% non-binary, 3% trans men, 3% trans women and 10% preferred to self-describe. Self-descriptions included 'a loving and caring person', 'woman but my style is non-binary', and 'I am me'. There was representation of all gender identities and sexual orientations in the survey's respondents, as well as ability status, income and education level.

Most persons felt neutral about their life satisfaction in Jamaica (39%) and the majority of persons (76%) were interested in leaving Jamaica. Of those persons interested in leaving 76% wished to do so because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Jamaica's poor economy and general lack of opportunities were the most often cited reasons for not being able to demonstrate one's full potential while living in the country. 44% of respondents had experienced discrimination in a church or faith-based space. Persons reported feeling uncomfortable being openly LGBT in all spaces except homes that they rented or owned and social and entertainment spaces such as parties and restaurants.

While most persons felt neutral or somewhat safe living in Jamaica (40%), those who reported feeling unsafe perceived public and faith-based spaces as especially unsafe. Additionally, experiences of violence, especially verbal assault and harassment were high with about 73% of persons experiencing some kind of violence in their lifetime.

Being openly LGBT is perceived to impact both job and housing opportunities and the absence of comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation pertaining to sexual orientation and gender identity remains a significant gap. About 20% of respondents had been homeless or displaced at some point in their life and of that number, 48% had been put out by their family because of their LGBT identity.

LGBT persons are accessing health care fairly regularly (60% every few months), primarily at private healthcare facilities. Cost and readiness of providers were the primary barriers to accessing mental health services. There is a relative lack of knowledge within the community pertaining to transgender specific services, however, community members are aware of the gap.

There were some issues in forming romantic relationships as 43% of persons said they could not. This was mostly linked to external pressures caused by phobias as well as general distrust of other community members and an unwillingness to commit when in relationships. Not knowing who to date was also an issue. Forming friendships was much easier with 45% of persons saying they could.

Experiences of discrimination within the community were not rare. Classism, colourism and body shaming were the ones most mentioned.

Data in graph form is accurate to one decimal place whereas data expressed in the text has been rounded up for ease of reading.

Methodology

This research utilized an intersectional qualitative and quantitative methodology that centred the inclusion of LGBT persons from diverse income, education and geographic backgrounds as well as disability status. Special emphasis was placed on the inclusion of LGBT persons residing in rural Jamaica.

The tool was created in conjunction with J-FLAG, Equality Youth JA, TransWave Jamaica and WE-Change Jamaica. Their leaders shared the priorities of their respective organizations which was used to develop the first draft of the instrument which was then tested with LGBT persons in rural and urban Jamaica before settling on the final design. The survey was available in paper format but completed almost exclusively online.

An initial group of respondents was identified by J-FLAG and partner organizations and snowballing was used to gather more respondents. People who had completed the survey were encouraged to share it with their friends and provided with graphics that they could use to promote participation. The survey was also promoted online through J-FLAG's social media pages.

The tool assessed LGBT people's experiences in Jamaica, including their perceptions of safety, life satisfaction, desire to leave, ability to have meaningful relationships, employment and school experiences, advocacy priorities, access to housing and community, etc.

The survey tool utilized a combination of multiple choice and short answer questions along with scales to capture the information. Respondents were also given ample space to expand their responses. The survey was administered anonymously. No compensation or incentive was offered for participation in the research, however, in an effort to increase uptake, respondents who completed the survey online had the option to enter for a chance to win JMD 10,000. Those who were interested, were asked to provide an e-mail address or phone number.

Very few questions were mandatory, and participants were allowed to withdraw from the survey at any time, if they choose. The research was conducted between July – November 2019 with a total of 301 respondents.

Demographics

Data was collected from 301 LGBT persons living in Jamaica and at least 18 years of age. Prior to being released in its final version, 12 persons completed a draft version of the survey as well as a focus group discussion to offer feedback on the tool. They are included in the final number of respondents stated here.

It is important to note that only 9 trans men and 8 trans women responded to this survey. The information about the trans community is presented here in its disaggregated form to accurately represent the differences in experience between trans men, trans women, gender fluid and non-binary persons. However the sample size of trans men and trans women must be kept in mind when attempting to make broad generalizations about their experiences based on these findings.

A. Age

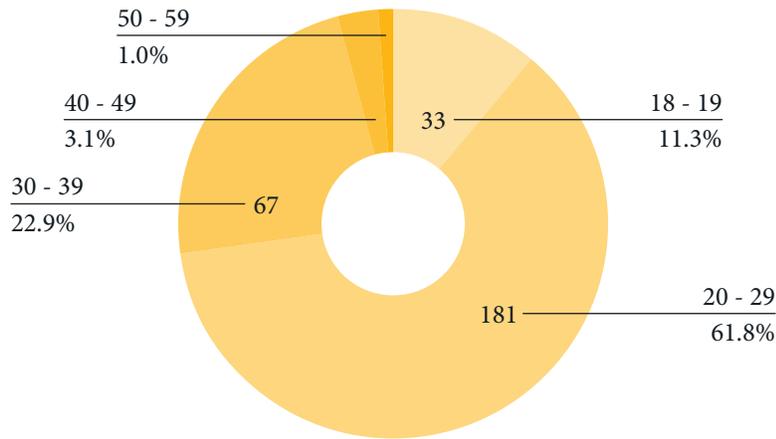


Figure 1: Age of Respondents

Respondents were between 18 and 57 years of age. Cumulatively 72% of the respondents were between the ages of 18 - 29. Information for persons younger than 18 who may have responded to the survey was not included in the findings.

B. Parish of Residence

Survey respondents were primarily from Kingston and St. Andrew (48%) which is in keeping with the distribution of Jamaica’s population. The next most popular parish of residence was St. Catherine (22%) followed by St. James (11%). Responses were received from all parishes, however participation from Portland and Hanover was particularly low with only one person in each parish completing the survey.

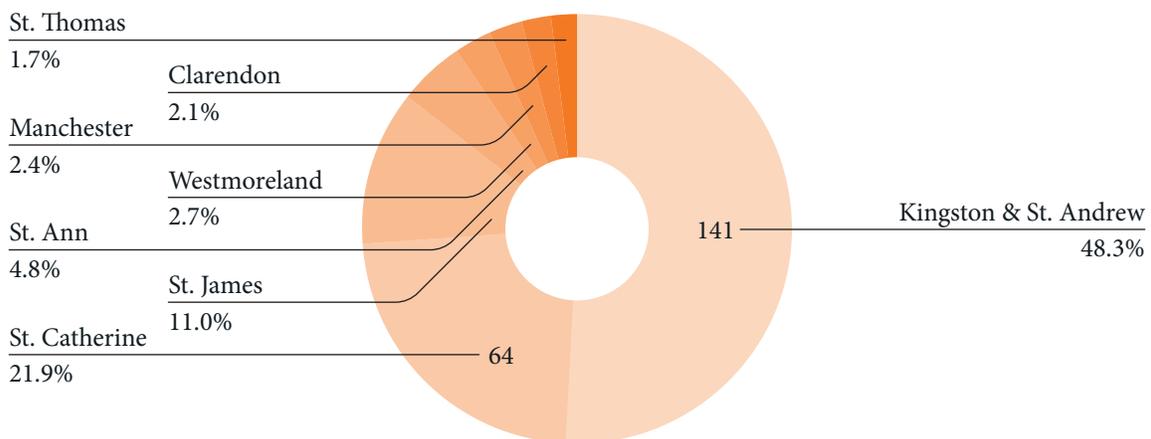


Figure 2: Parish of Residence

C. Level of Education

50% of respondents reported University (Undergraduate) as their highest level of education, which is much higher than the national average of about 15%. The next most popular response was secondary (37%) and University post graduate (11%). 1% of respondents had no education at all.

More than half the respondents with Postgraduate education resided in Kingston and St. Andrew and the vast majority resided between Kingston and St. Andrew and St Catherine which are adjoining urban areas.

Trans men were equally likely to report University (Undergraduate) or secondary school as their highest level of education while trans women were most likely to report secondary school as their highest level of education with one completing University education and another having no education at all.

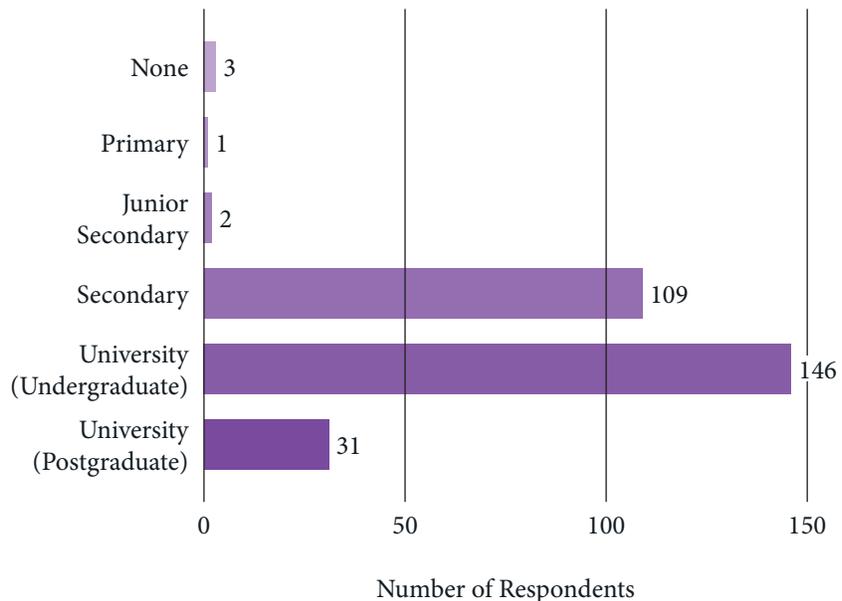


Figure 3: Highest Level of Education

Cisgender men and women along with gender fluid persons and those who preferred to self-describe were represented across Secondary and University graduate categories. No gender fluid persons had post-graduate education. Cisgender women were most likely to report post graduate education (in keeping with national trends) and cisgender men were the second most represented.

D. Type of Area of Residence

The majority of participants were from urban areas (51%) with another 35.8% from rural areas and 13% from inner city areas. Both respondents reporting Junior Secondary as the highest level of educational attainment were from inner city areas. The majority of persons reporting no education were from inner city areas as well. Otherwise, there is fair representation of educational attainment, gender identity and sexual orientation from all three residence areas.

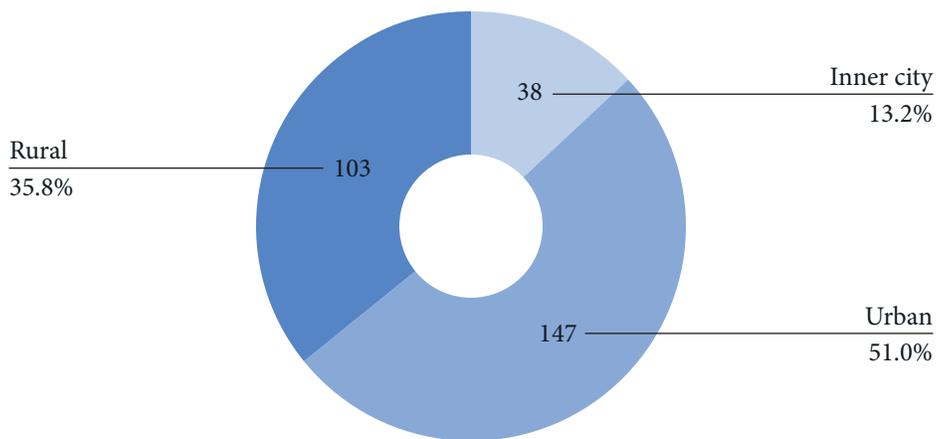


Figure 4: Type of Area of Residence

E. Employment Status

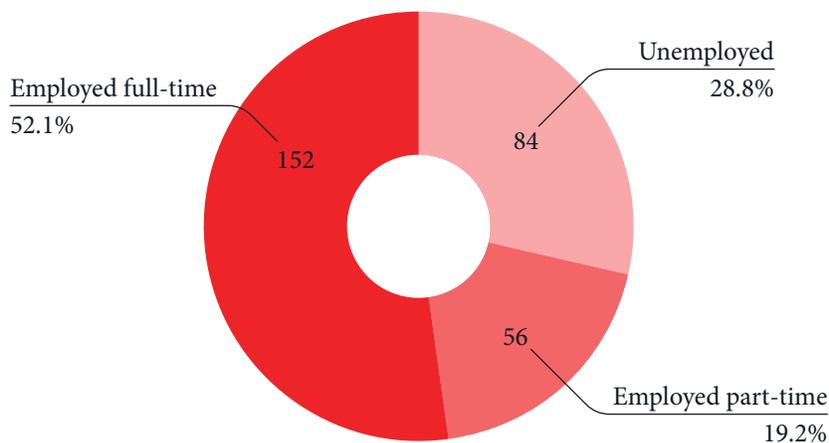


Figure 5: Employment Status

The majority of respondents (52%) were employed full-time. 29% were unemployed and 19% had part time employment. Persons from all gender identities responded that they were unemployed however trans women were more likely to be unemployed than any other set of respondents. Cisgender men were most likely to be employed and most likely to be employed full time.

Respondents worked in a number of sectors, however, when asked to expound on their places of work BPO - including call centres, contact centres and customer service - were very popular responses. Next most popular were health, NGO, and hospitality/tourism. Education, marketing and the creative industries were also mentioned.

F. Monthly Income

The most frequently indicated monthly income was \$31,000 - \$60,000 JMD for 21.6% of respondents. The next most popular response was \$1 - \$30,000 JMD for 20.2% of respondents followed by \$0 JMD for 19.5% of respondents. Only 2.7% of respondents earned in the highest category of \$300,000 JMD or more per month. Cisgender men were most likely to earn in this category while no trans men or women were in this category. There was one gender fluid respondent who earned over \$300,000 JMD per month. No trans women earned above \$61,000 - \$100,000 JMD per month and no trans men earned over \$101,000 - \$150,000 JMD per month. Those earning the highest incomes all resided in Kingston and St. Andrew, most were cisgender men with post graduate education.

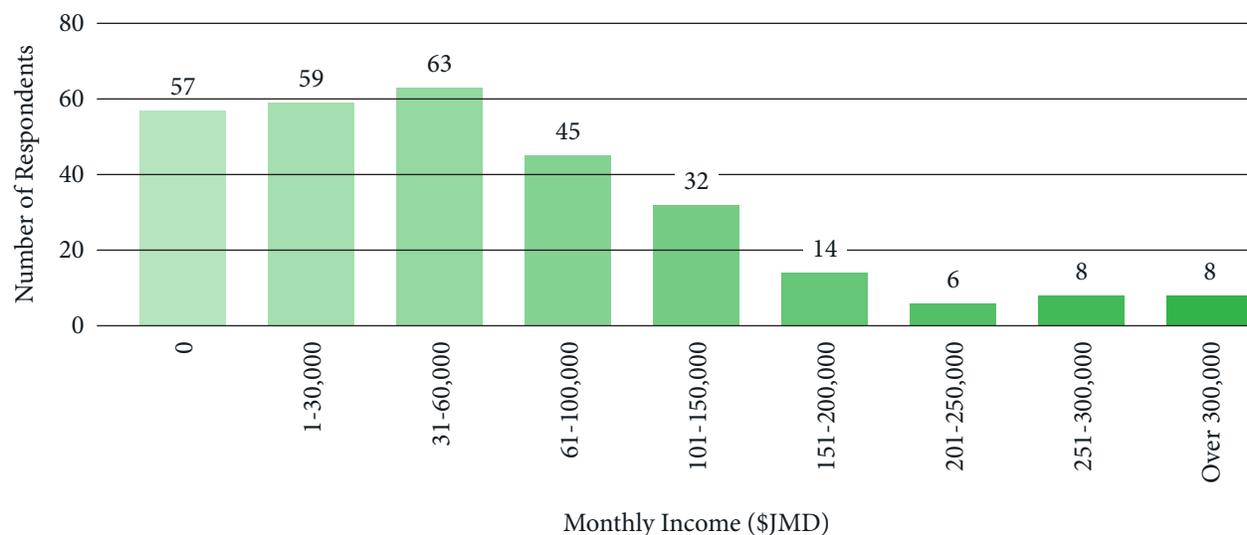


Figure 6: Monthly Income

G. Sexual Orientation

51% of survey respondents self-identified as homosexual. Another 26% identified as bisexual and 10% preferred to self-describe.

Less than 1% identified as heterosexual, 9% were pansexual and 4% were uncertain.

10% of respondents preferred to self-describe and their descriptions included homoromantic demisexual, battyman, stud, hardworking Scorpio, pansexual asexual, tomboy and persons who thought they defied description or did not like labels.

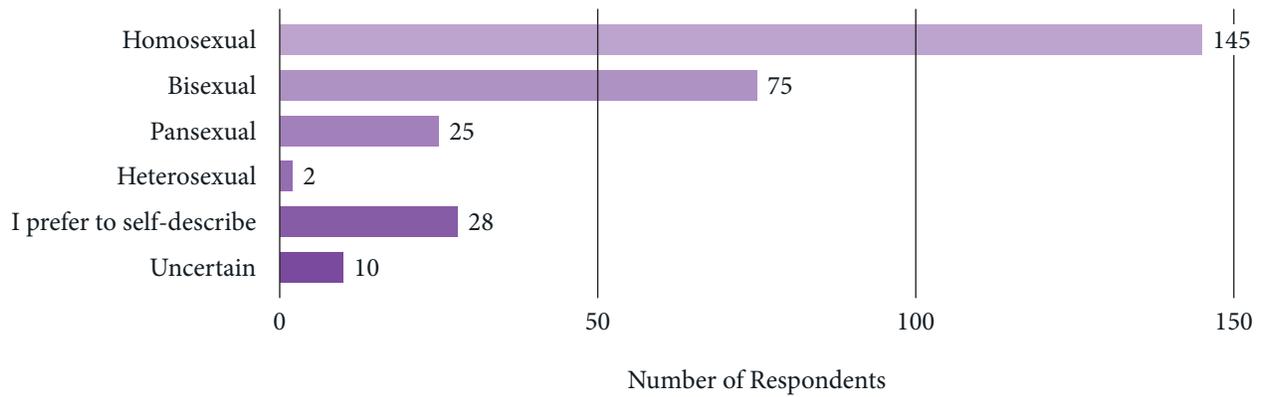


Figure 7: Sexual Orientation

H. Gender Identity

37% of respondents identified as cisgender women, 23% identified as cisgender men, 3% of respondents were trans men, 3% were trans women, 8% of persons were nonbinary, 1 respondent was intersex, another 9% preferred to self-describe and 10% preferred not to say.

Of those who chose to self-identify the descriptions included female, feminine, stud, not a girl and not a man, loving and caring person and strong beautiful black woman.

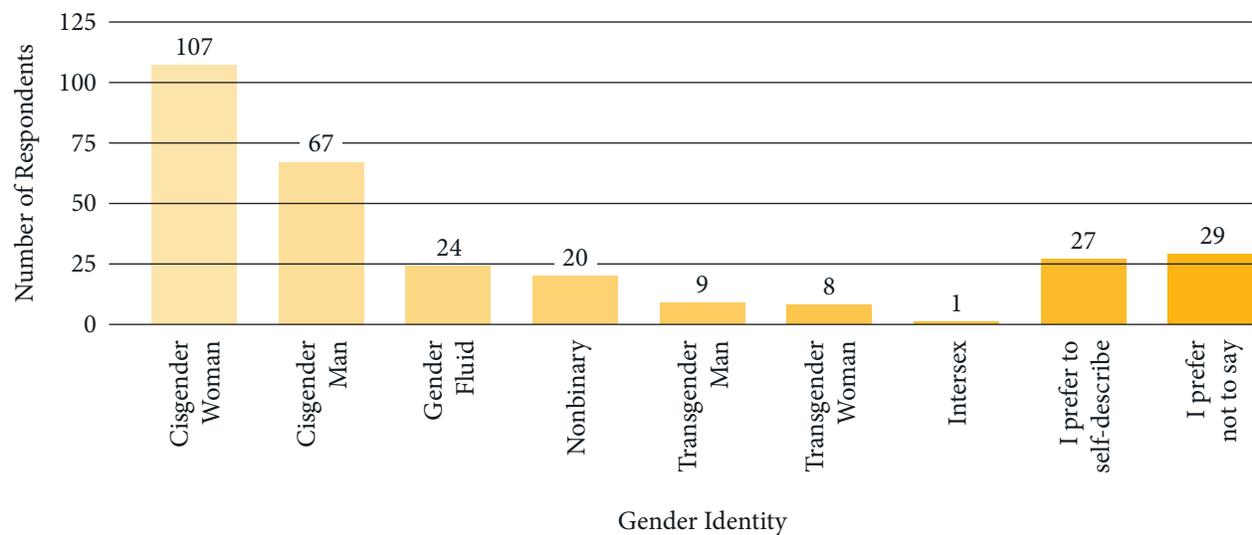


Figure 8: Gender Identity

I. Relationship Status

51% of respondents were single. The next most popular response was in a relationship (28%) followed by dating (11%). Another 3% of persons selected other and used descriptions such as “juggling”, “exchange is no robbery” and “she is married but am with her and am afraid to be known”.

There was a fairly even representation of persons of all gender identities across relationship status categories, with the exception of trans women, who were almost exclusively single. The domestic partnership category was primarily selected by cisgender women and gender fluid persons.

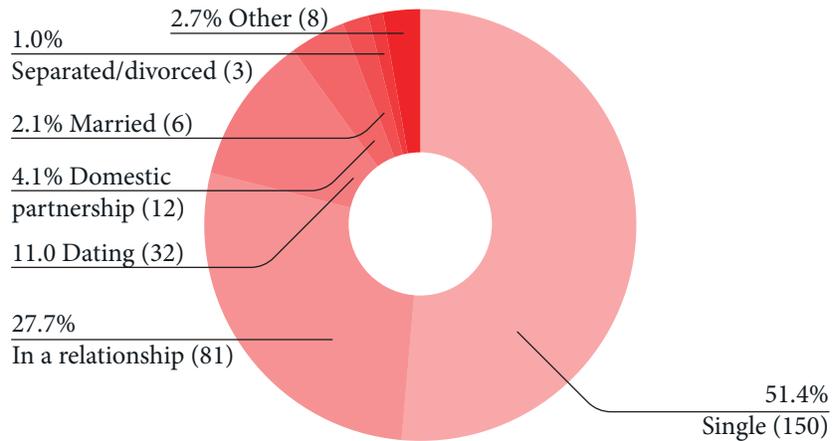


Figure 9: Relationship Status

J. Living Situation

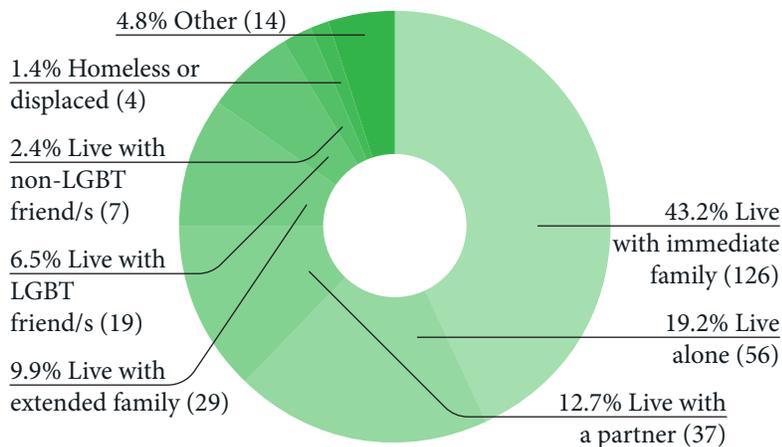


Figure 10: Living Situation

43% of respondents lived with their immediate family. The next most popular response was living alone (19%) followed by living with a partner (13%).

4% of respondents were homeless or displaced. Half of the homeless/displaced persons had no education. Gender identity did not seem to be a factor in displacement as cisgender men, nonbinary persons and trans women were represented within the group. The majority of homeless and displaced persons lived outside of Kingston and St. Andrew.

4.8% of respondents selected ‘other’ and their responses included living in University accommodations, living with their children, living at work, and living with relatives while hiding their identity.

K. Disability Status

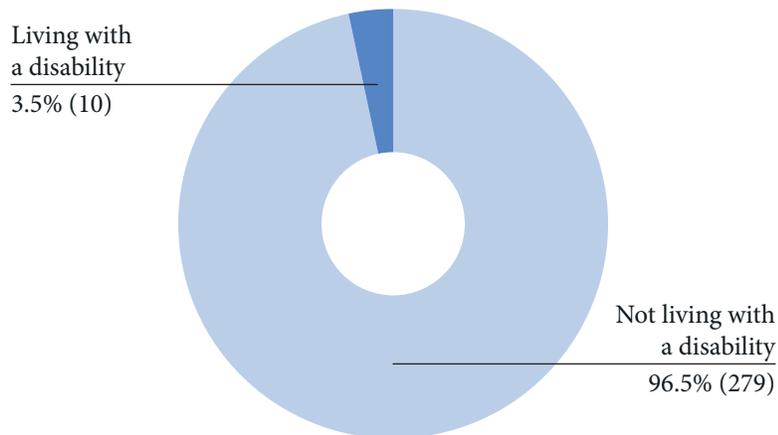


Figure 11: Disability Status

4% of respondents report living with a disability. Of those, disabilities pertaining to vision, mobility and the brain were most frequently mentioned at 25% each.

Limitations

Participation in the survey may have been limited by internet access, especially for rural and low income persons who might not have data plans. Literacy may have also been an additional barrier. Since the survey was shared by J-FLAG and its partners it may not have reached LGBT persons who are not in those networks, for instance those who deliberately do not engage the organizations or those who live in rural areas where outreach from those organizations is comparatively low.

Additionally, the language used in the survey may have been inaccessible for some persons, in particular those who did not have significant exposure to LGBT organizations and the language they employ. In some cases, terms such as non-binary and asexual may not have been familiar to them, impacting their ability to adequately engage the survey.

Research Findings

Life Satisfaction

1. I am satisfied with my life in Jamaica

About 7% of LGBT people were satisfied and another 8% were very satisfied with their life in Jamaica. The most popular response was neutral at 39% while 24% of LGBT people report being very dissatisfied with their life in Jamaica and another 24% report being dissatisfied. The majority of trans men reported feeling very satisfied with their lives in Jamaica while trans women were mostly neutral or satisfied.

Cisgender men were comparatively more likely to feel completely unsatisfied than cisgender women. Persons in St. Elizabeth and St. Mary were comparatively more likely to be completely unsatisfied with their lives in Jamaica.

Employment status did not seem to impact level of satisfaction.

When asked what impacted their level of satisfaction, respondents identified having a good paying job and good family relationships as positive factors. Homophobia, transphobia, judgment, misogyny, poor economy and infrastructure, the justice and education system and inability to live a high quality of life outside of Kingston were listed as negative factors.

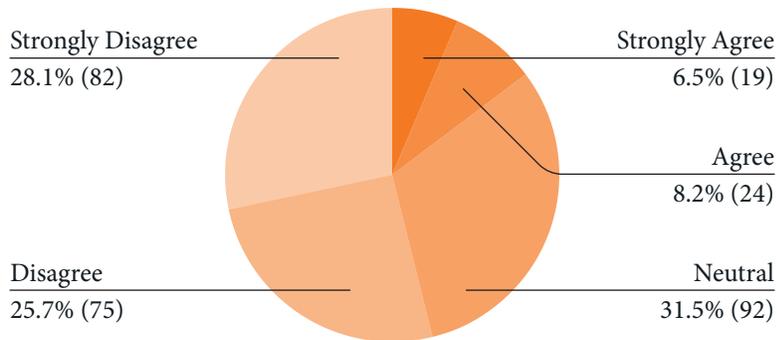


“I am satisfied with my life in Jamaica.”

Figure 12: Level of Satisfaction with Life in Jamaica

When asked what impacted their level of satisfaction, respondents identified having a good paying job and good family relationships as positive factors. Homophobia, transphobia, judgment, misogyny, poor economy and infrastructure, the justice and education system and inability to live a high quality of life outside of Kingston were listed as negative factors.

2. It is easy to meet your life goals while living in Jamaica



“It is easy to meet your life goals while living in Jamaica.”

Figure 13: Ability to Meet Life Goals while Living in Jamaica

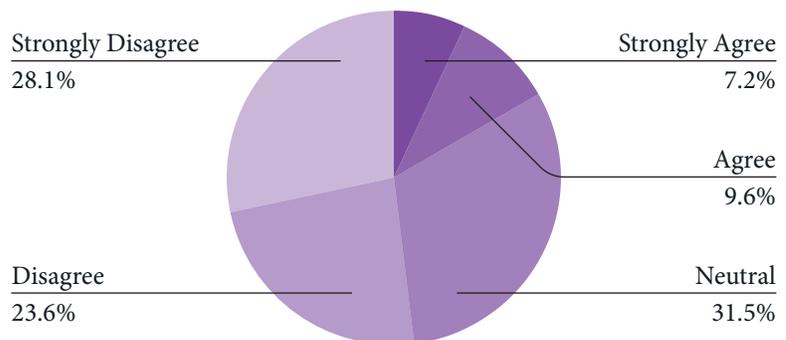
32% of respondents felt neutral about being able to meet their life goals in Jamaica. 28% strongly disagreed with the statement and only 7% strongly agreed.

Barriers to meeting life goals while living in Jamaica were primarily linked to the country’s economy and lack of opportunities, low paying jobs and limited options for persons with high school education, high cost of living and the necessity of ‘links’ (connections to persons with power and influence) when seeking employment. A few persons mentioned anti-LGBT issues, but the majority circled around poor conditions in the country, especially for artists and creatives as well as personal barriers for those with mental health issues.

3. I am able to demonstrate my full potential while living in Jamaica

32% of respondents felt neutral as to whether they were able to demonstrate their full potential while living in Jamaica. 28% felt it would be very difficult. Only 7% of people felt it would be very easy to demonstrate their full potential in the country.

Having a strong support system, being determined, and having a strong sense of self were positive factors. Homophobia, lack of opportunities, mental health issues, and inability to get a job where they can express themselves freely were factors that worked against demonstrating full potential.



“I am able to demonstrate my full potential while living in Jamaica.”

Figure 14: Ability to Demonstrate Full Potential while Living in Jamaica

4. I am comfortable being openly LGBT in Jamaica

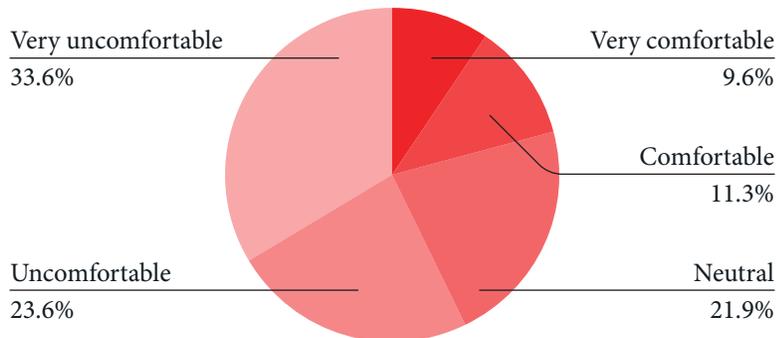


Figure 15: Level of Comfort Being Openly LGBT in Jamaica

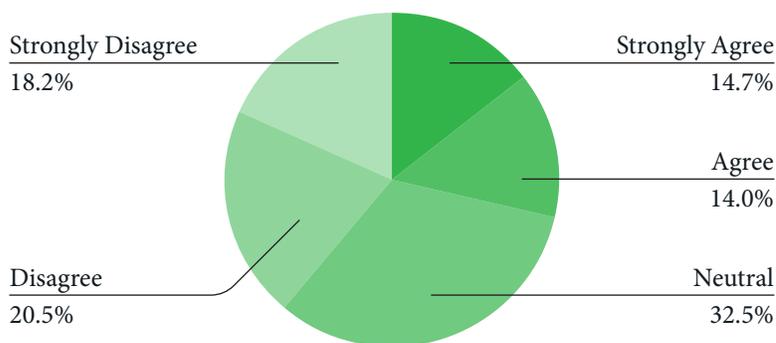
This survey indicates that most LGBT Jamaicans are uncomfortable being openly LGBT in Jamaica. 34% of participants were very uncomfortable while 24% of persons report being uncomfortable. 22% of persons said they were neutral. Only 10% of people were very comfortable being openly LGBT in Jamaica.

58% of respondents felt uncomfortable or very uncomfortable being openly LGBT in Jamaica.

5. I think other LGBT people in Jamaica are more comfortable being open than I am

33% of respondents felt neutral as to whether other persons were more comfortable being openly LGBT than they were. Around 39% of persons disagreed or strongly disagreed with the idea and 29% of persons agreed or strongly agreed.

Having access to safe spaces as well as non-judgmental family and friends led people to feel they were more open than others. Fear of violence, high levels of scrutiny in public spaces and high levels of intolerance resulted in respondents feeling less comfortable than others.



“I think other people in Jamaica are more comfortable being open than I am.”

Figure 16: Perception that Other People were More Comfortable Being LGBT than the Respondent

Safety

6. How safe do you feel living in Jamaica?

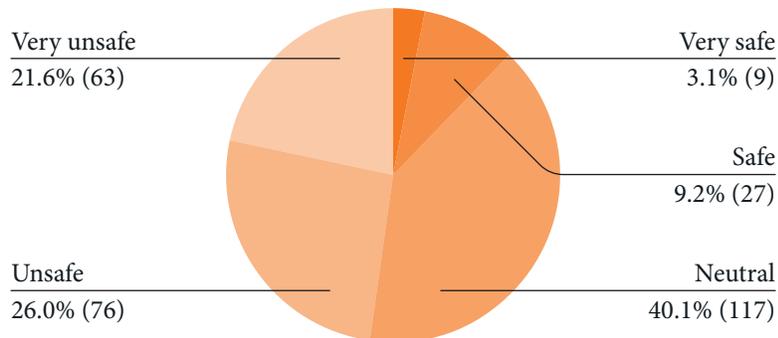


Figure 17: Perception of Being Safe Living in Jamaica

40% of respondents felt neutral about being safe living in Jamaica. 26% of persons report feeling unsafe while 22% feel very unsafe. Only 3% of people felt very safe.

7. How safe do you feel in the following spaces?

Respondents were asked to indicate their feelings of safety in specific areas such as public spaces, family homes or homes that they own or share.

Most people felt very safe in their own home (32%), their family home (20%) and LGBT entertainment spaces (20%).

On the other hand, persons were most likely to feel very unsafe in non-LGBT entertainment spaces (14%), public spaces such as streets and plazas, and faith based spaces such as churches (12% each).

Public spaces were primarily considered somewhat safe by about 46% of respondents, family homes were considered safe by about another 32%.

Homes that were personally rented, owned or shared were considered very safe by 94 persons (or about 32%).

Respondents considered entertainment spaces to be somewhat safe with 35% feeling somewhat safe in non-LGBT entertainment spaces and 30% feeling the same in LGBT entertainment spaces.

Faith spaces were mostly considered somewhat safe by 32% of respondents. Similarly, schools and work spaces were mostly considered safe or somewhat by about 65% of respondents.

28% of respondents considered school to be safe while 29% considered it to be somewhat safe.

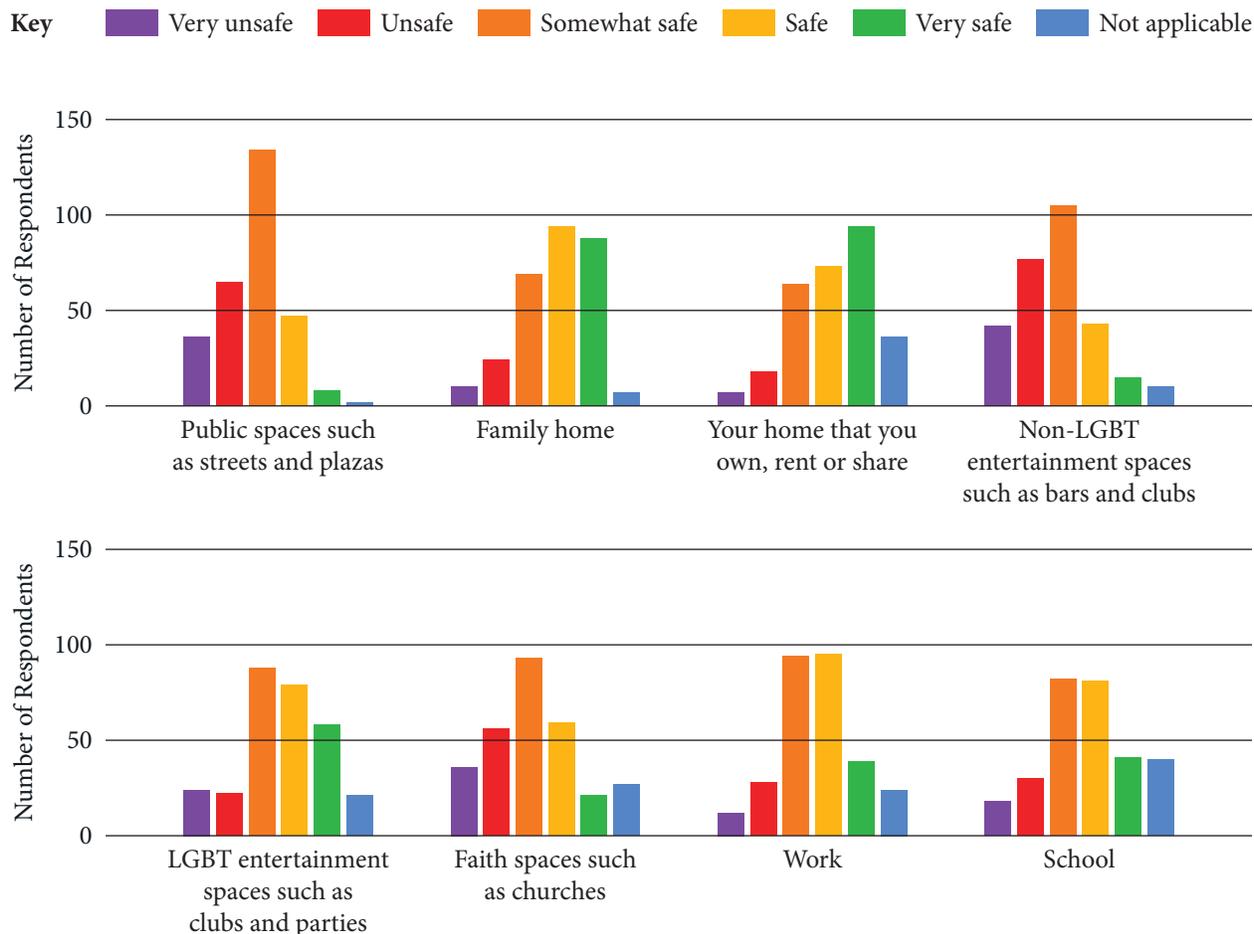


Figure 18: Feeling of Safety in Specific Spaces

Only **32%** of respondents felt very safe in their own home.

When asked what caused them to feel safe or unsafe in a space, most respondents felt that this was dependent on the people in the space as not knowing who would be in a space, encountering people who were homophobic, transphobic or misogynistic impacted feelings of safety. Other factors which impacted how safe respondents felt in spaces included the likelihood of sexual threats or being assaulted by persons who target areas frequented by the LGBT community specifically to harass and attack them. For many respondents, home spaces and spaces in which they had control over who could enter felt safer, as did spaces with people who were tolerant, friendly and familiar.

8. Have you ever experienced any type of violence in your lifetime?

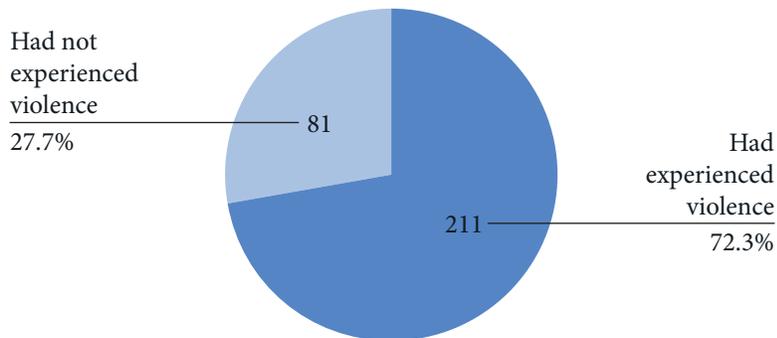


Figure 19: Lifetime Experiences of Violence

72% of respondents had experienced some form of violence in their lifetime. All trans men and trans women had experienced violence in their lifetime and the vast majority of non-binary persons had experienced violence as well.

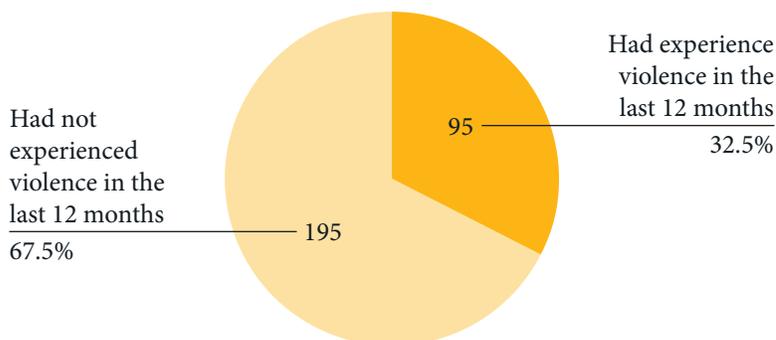
72% of respondents had experienced violence in their lifetime.

All trans men and trans women who responded had experienced violence in their lifetime.

9. Have you experienced any type of violence in the last twelve months?

Figure 20: Experience of Violence in the Last 12 Months

While 68% of respondents had not experienced violence in the last 12 months, there may be a connection between low levels of education and being a victim of violence as the majority of persons with no education had experienced violence in the last 12 months.



10. Type of violence experienced

Of the persons who had experienced violence, the most common type of violence was verbal assault or threats (69%). Discrimination was the second most common response at 65%, bullying and harassment were both very common with 42% and 44% of persons having those experiences, respectively.

Sexual violence such as rape and assault was the next most frequently experienced type of violence at 27%, and 8% of respondents had experienced actual or attempted corrective rape. Additionally, 24% of people had experienced physical attacks, another 24% had experienced outing or disclosure of their LGBT status without their permission and 11% of respondents experienced blackmail and threats of exposure to family.

Cisgender men were least likely to report experiences of sexual violence.

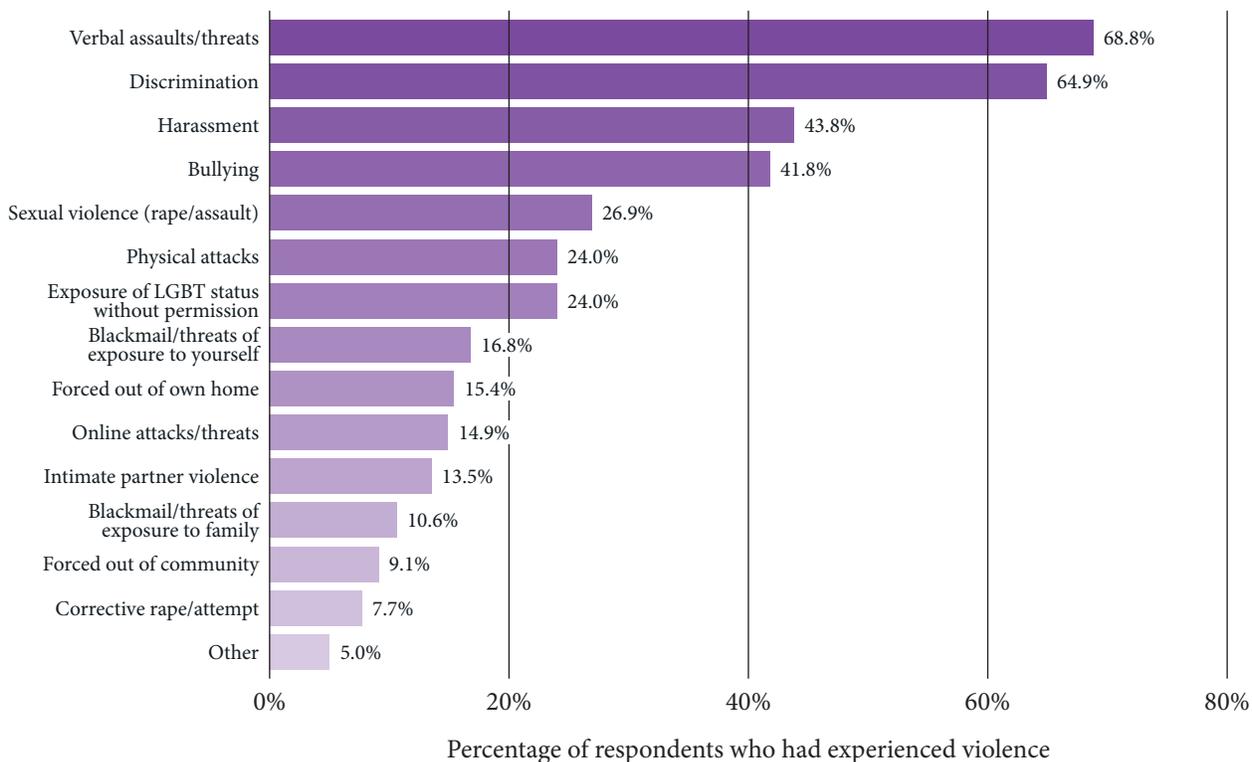
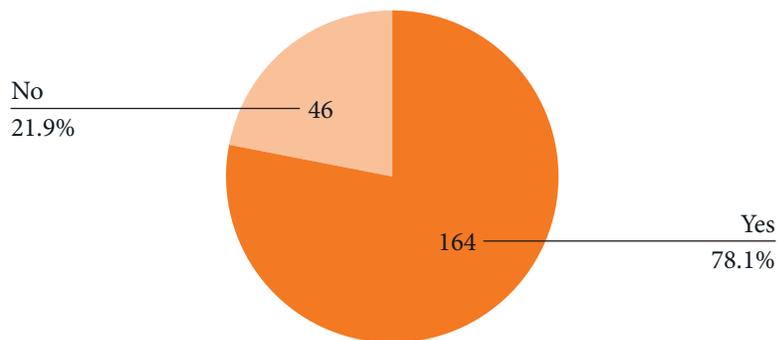


Figure 21: Type of Violence Experienced

Persons who selected 'Other' cited incidents such as having their belongings thrown out of their dorm room during vacation, being threatened that their head would be cut off and delivered to their family, multiple reports of robbery, being stalked by an ex, having no friends in high school then being targeted when they did find a group of queer friends, and being threatened with death because they were hugging and holding hands with female friends.

11. Was the violence linked to your LGBT identity?



“Was the violence linked to your LGBT identity?”

Figure 22: Link Between Violence and LGBT Identity

Most persons who experienced violence reported that the incident was linked to their sexual orientation or gender identity. When asked how they knew the two were linked most respondents noted that usually anti-LGBT slurs were used during the attack. For instance, one woman refused to smile at men who were propositioning her on the street and was told her ‘gayness’ was showing followed by a verbal assault, another was attacked by an ex and the ex’s parent after their identity was discovered, and many others were told they should die or that they would be ‘straightened out’. One person was attacked by police and then robbed again by other gay men from whom they were seeking sex.

78% of respondents who had experienced violence in their lifetime reported that the incident was linked to their LGBT identity.

In **71%** of violent situations, strangers were the aggressors.

12. Who carried out the violence?

The most common aggressor in violent situations were strangers (71%), another 33% of persons had experienced violence from their family members and 24% from a fellow student while at school.

Superiors such as teachers, bosses and principals carried out the violence in 12% of the instances and for 20% of persons, the violence was perpetrated by co-workers. The persons most likely to be attacked by fellow students were cisgender men. Cisgender women were most likely to be attacked by strangers.

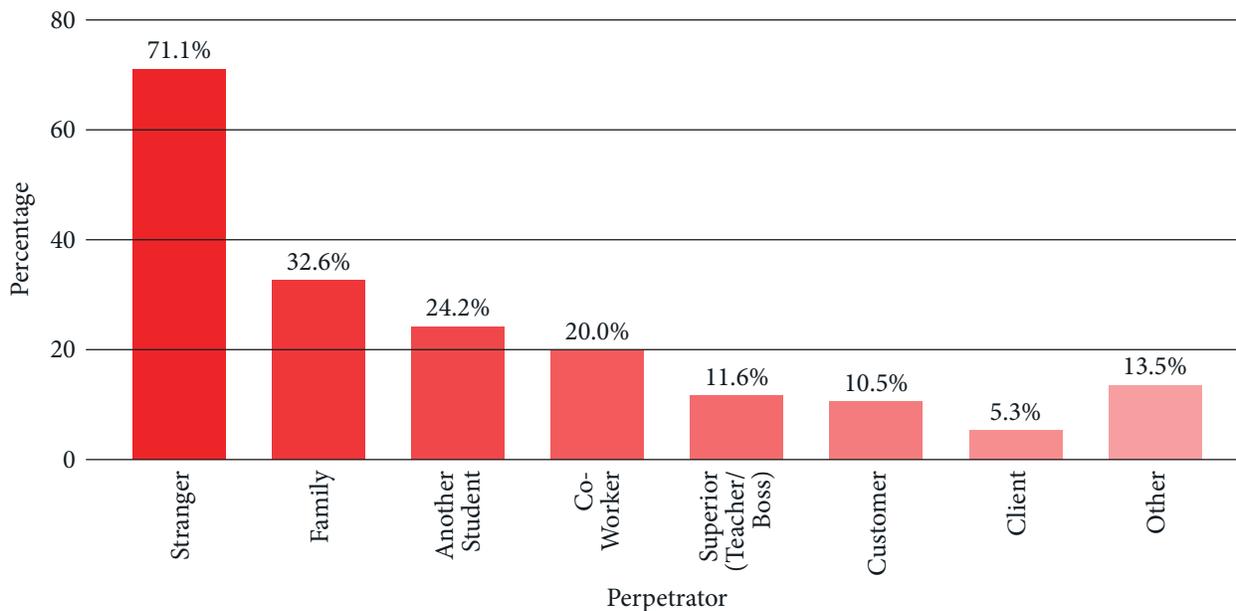
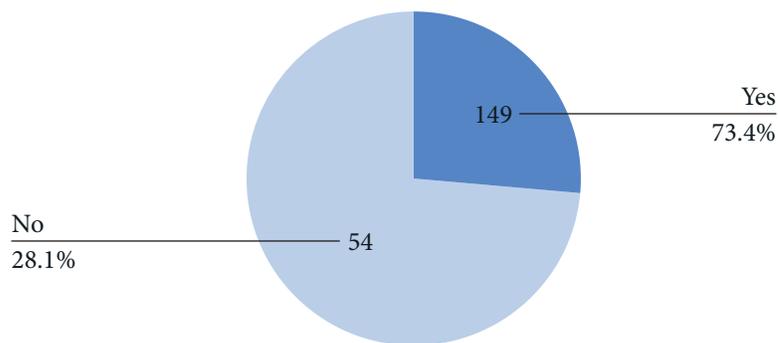


Figure 23: Perpetrators of Violence

13. Did you report the violence?

Figure 24: Reporting Incidents of Violence

27% of persons who experienced violence reported it and 73% did not. The majority of people who reported the violence did so to the police. Very few received any justice and many were turned away. One person reported being especially pleased with how things were handled. Others reported to human resources but few of them had positive outcomes. Others reported to principals and vice principals and in some instances the attackers were suspended or some intervention attempted.



“Did you report the violence?”

Those who did not report the incident explained that they thought there would be no positive outcome. One person thought they would have been run out of the police station, another felt that verbal harassment happened so often it was not worth reporting, several people indicated that they did not want to have to explain the reason for their attack out of fear that they would be victimized or garner unnecessary attention. A few mentioned that they were children and had no idea where to seek support.

14. Who would support you if you were attacked?

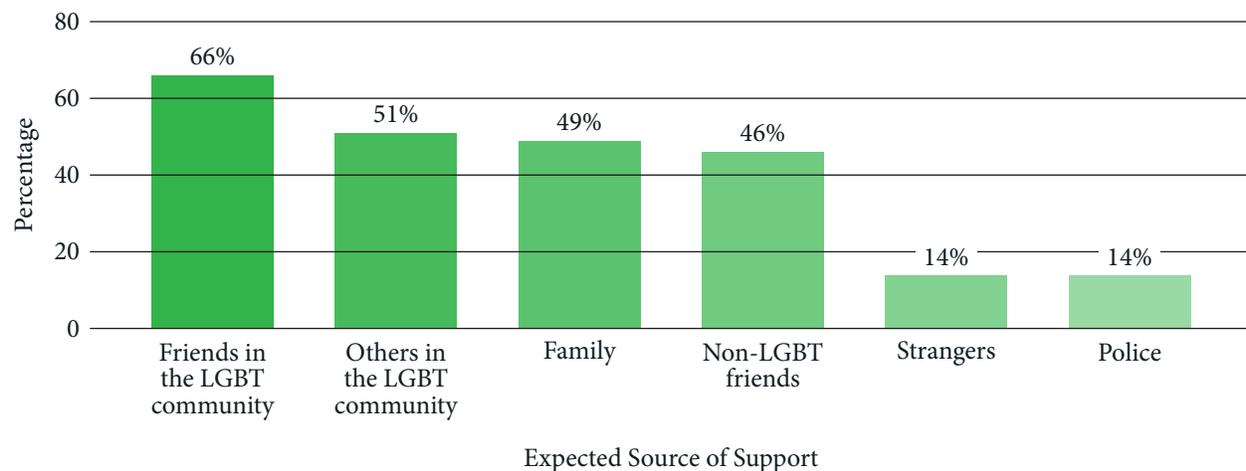


Figure 25: Who Would Support You if You were Attacked?

Most LGBT people in Jamaica are likely to seek support from other LGBT people. 66% of respondents thought their friends from the LGBT community would support them if they were attacked. The next most popular answer was other members of the LGBT community at 51% and family at 49%. The least popular responses were strangers and police at 14% each.

“[A safe space is] any space that is explicitly or implicitly welcoming of LGBT people and promote equality and non-discrimination.”

15. What is your idea of a safe space?

Responses to this question focused around spaces that felt like ‘home’. Other responses included a space to express oneself freely without judgment, a space free from violence and a space where one would be accepted. For many, not being judged for their ideas or their sexuality or gender identity was important while for others, a space with other LGBT people and family members was also mentioned. Also mentioned was, being able to look how they want, to hold hands with their partners and feeling that they can do something with their lives. One person clearly indicated this meant being out of Jamaica. Another describes it as “Any space that is explicitly or implicitly welcoming of LGBT people and promote equality and non-discrimination.”

Openness being LGBT

16. I am comfortable being openly LGBT in these spaces

Persons were most likely to feel comfortable being openly LGBT in their home spaces that they rent or own (42%), their family home (18%), or their school (14%) and private sector places such as business offices (10%).

Persons were most likely to feel uncomfortable being openly LGBT in faith based spaces (67%), public sector spaces such as government offices (64%), their communities (63%) and in public (57%).

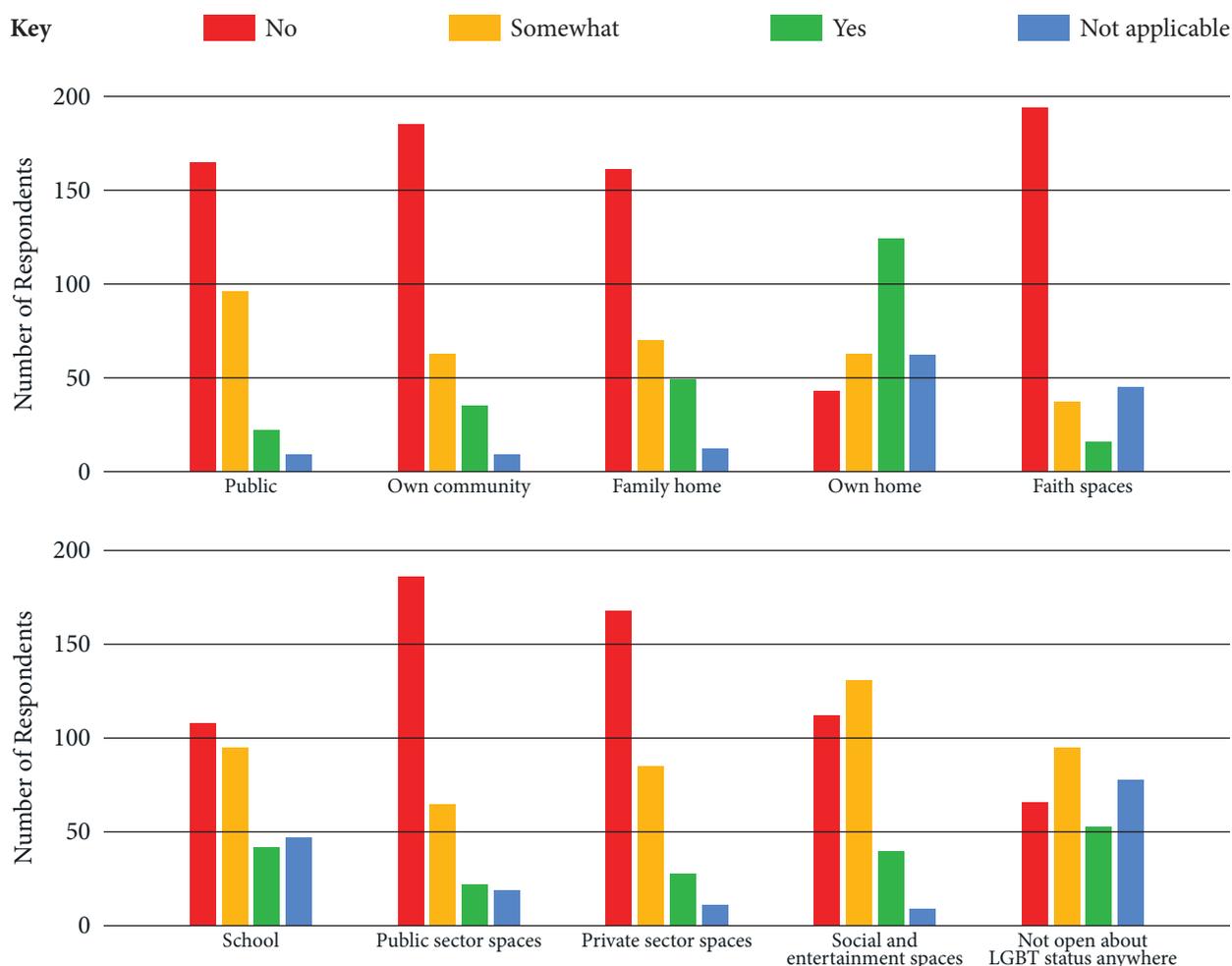
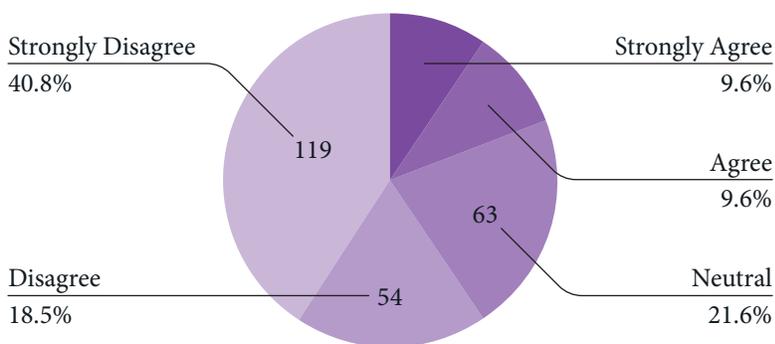


Figure 26: Level of Comfort Being Openly LGBT in Specific Spaces

In most spaces, not comfortable was the most frequent response with the exceptions of homes that were rented or owned, where comfortable was the most frequent response and social and entertainment spaces such as parties and restaurants where somewhat comfortable was the most frequent response (45%).

About 33% of respondents indicated they were about as likely as unlikely to be open about their LGBT status anywhere and 18% were not open about their LGBT status anywhere.

17. I am comfortable showing my partner affection in public



“I am comfortable showing my partner affection in public.”

Figure 27: Level Of Comfort Showing Partner Affection In Public

Most respondents (41%) were very uncomfortable showing their partner affection in public while 22% of people reported being somewhat comfortable doing so. Only 9% of persons were very comfortable or comfortable showing their partners affection in public.

Respondents who identified as cisgender gay or bisexual men were the most apprehensive about sharing intimacy with their partners outside of their homes: 84% were either very uncomfortable or uncomfortable showing affection to their partners in public.

Only 3% of cis men reported feeling comfortable showing their partners affection in public and none reported feeling very comfortable.

Cisgender women were most likely to feel neutral (33%) followed by very uncomfortable (25%). About 17% of ciswomen reported feeling comfortable showing affection in public and 11% were very comfortable showing their partners affection in public.

19% were comfortable showing their partner affection in public.

For gender fluid persons,uncomfortable was the most frequent response (42%). Neutral was the next most popular response (25%) followed by very comfortable (13%). Non-binary persons shared similar responses with 45% being very uncomfortable and 30% feeling neutral. 15% of non-binary persons were comfortable showing affection in public.

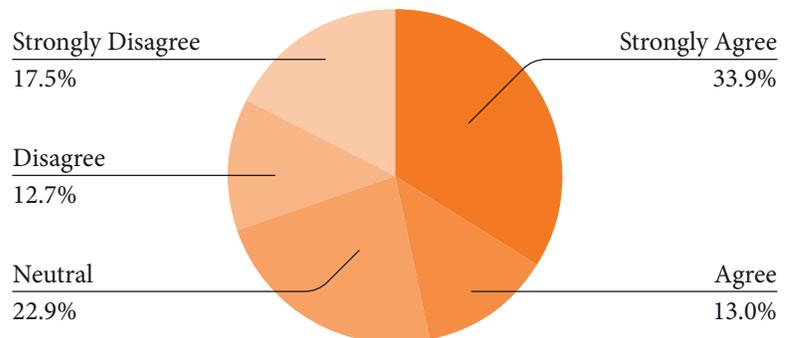
Trans men were most likely to feel very uncomfortable (67%). However 22% of trans men (2 persons) felt very comfortable showing affection in public. Trans women were most likely to feel very uncomfortable showing a partner affection (63%).

18. I feel comfortable wearing clothes that affirm my gender identity/expression in public

“I feel comfortable wearing clothes that affirm my gender identity/expression in public”

Figure 28: Level of Comfort Wearing Gender-Affirming Clothes in Public

Most persons (34%) felt comfortable wearing clothes that affirm their gender identity or expression in public. 30% of LGBT persons reported feeling neutral while 18% felt very uncomfortable doing so. Persons from all groups were represented across all categories.



19. What spaces do you feel are safe for openly LGBT people and why?

When asked which spaces were safe for openly LGBT persons most respondents indicated that spaces created specifically for the community were safest. LGBT events, J-FLAG activities and LGBT venues were popular responses. Soca events, Carnival, school and home were mentioned by a few persons. It is to be noted that Jamaica’s Carnival events and those parties that cater to fans of Soca music (a music form originating in Trinidad and Tobago) have become a safer space for LGBT Jamaicans. This may be because the music shows less homophobia than dancehall music and attendees of the event are less committed to policing masculinity and femininity in traditional ways.

There were also several participants who indicated that ‘uptown’ or ‘well to do’ communities were safer for LGBT Jamaicans. Strip clubs, private spaces such as homes, and call centres were deemed safe as well.

20. What areas do you feel are very unsafe for openly LGBT people and why?

Public spaces, church, and anywhere in Jamaica were deemed the least safe for openly LGBT people. Perceptions of LGBT persons as sinful and immoral prompted violence in fellow Jamaicans which made public spaces particularly unsafe. Half Way Tree (a popular commercial area in Kingston) was mentioned along with inner city communities. Public sector spaces such as health facilities along with rural communities were also deemed unsafe.

21. Which of these people know you are LGBT?

Respondents were most likely to disclose their LGBT identity to their closest friends (80%) followed by their best friends (76%). Siblings ranked high at 51% followed by friends at work at 36% and extended family at 30%.

For those in school, classmates were most likely to know they were LGBT at 21% while they were least likely to disclose to their guidance counsellors at 8%.

For 24% of persons, none of their family members knew they were LGBT, for 1% of persons none of their friends knew they were LGBT, for 14% of persons nobody at work knew they were LGBT and for 11% of persons, nobody at school knew they were LGBT.

Persons at work were more likely to disclose their LGBT identity to colleagues on the same level (28%) than to lower level workers and people they supervise (11%).

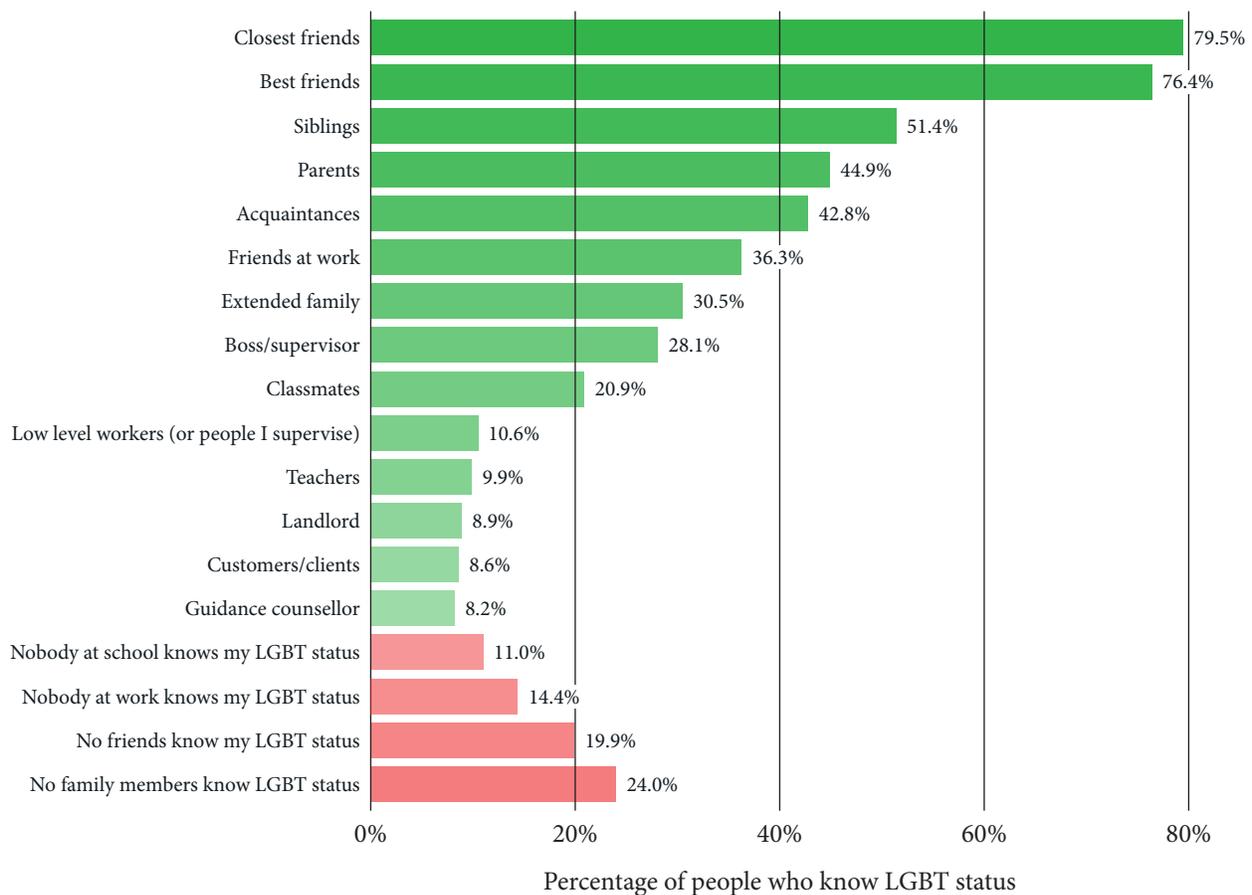
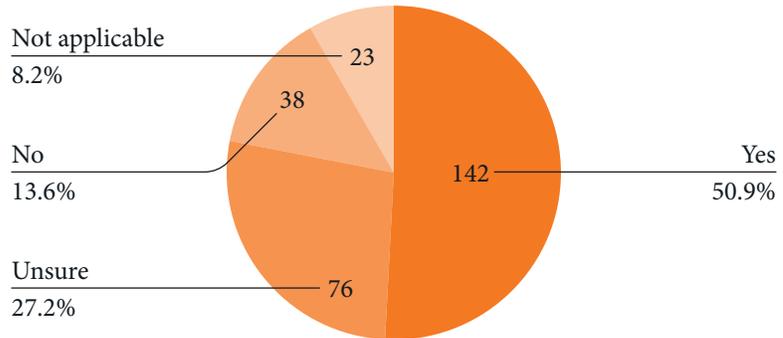


Figure 29: Disclosure of LGBT Identity to Specific Persons

22. Do you think being openly LGBT affects your ability to get jobs?

Figure 30: Impact of Being Openly LGBT on Ability to Get Jobs

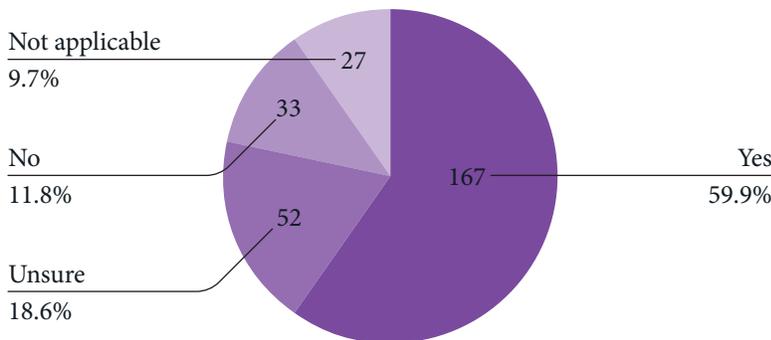
51% of respondents felt being openly LGBT impacted their ability to get jobs. 27% felt it didn't and 14% were unsure. The overwhelming majority of trans men and trans women answered yes to this question, in a proportion much higher than other gender identities. Persons who felt that being openly LGBT did not affect their employment status reside almost exclusively in the urban areas of Kingston and St. Andrew, St. Catherine and St. James. All but one person residing in Manchester, Trelawny and St. Thomas felt that being openly LGBT impacted their ability to get jobs.



“Do you think being openly LGBT affects your ability to get jobs?”

23. Do you think being openly LGBT affects your access to living spaces?

Figure 31: Impact of Being Openly LGBT on Access to Living Space



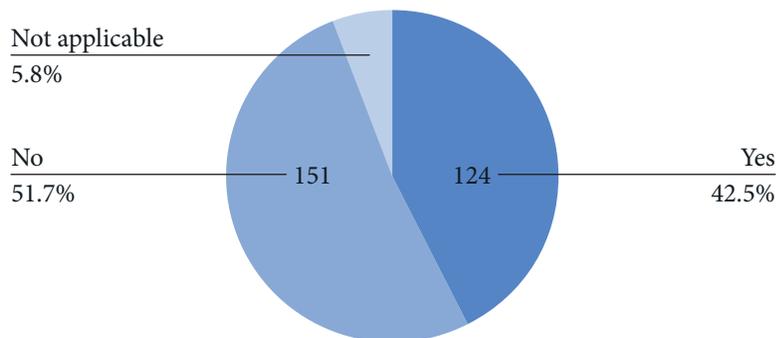
“Do you think being openly LGBT affects your access to living spaces?”

About 60% of respondents thought being openly LGBT affected their access to living spaces while 19% were unsure. 12% felt there was no impact. Cisgender women were more likely to respond no to this question while non-binary persons were more likely to respond yes. Trans men replied no almost exclusively while trans women almost exclusively responded yes. Cisgender men were more or less balanced in their responses.

Respondents from St. Ann, St. Catherine, St. James, St. Thomas, and Westmoreland responded yes at rates higher than the overall survey rate of 60%.

Education and Training

24. Were you ever bullied in school because of your gender identity or sexual orientation?



“Were you ever bullied in school because of your gender identity or sexual orientation?”

Figure 32: Experiences of Bullying Based on Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity

This section collected data on present day experiences as well as experiences of persons who were no longer in school. 43% of respondents had been bullied in school because of their gender identity or sexual orientation. The majority of persons (52%) had never been bullied while in school.

It is difficult to say there is a link between parish of residence, or gender identity and bullying.

43% of respondents had been bullied in school because of their gender identity or sexual orientation.

Verbal abuse or harassment was the most frequent type of bullying.

25. What type of bullying did you experience in school?

The most frequently experienced type of bullying in school was verbal abuse or harassment (80%). Having one's LGBT status revealed without permission was the next most common at 46%, followed by threats at 41%.

For the 4% of respondents that selected 'other', name calling, mean jokes, rumour spreading, and threats to reveal LGBT status were listed.

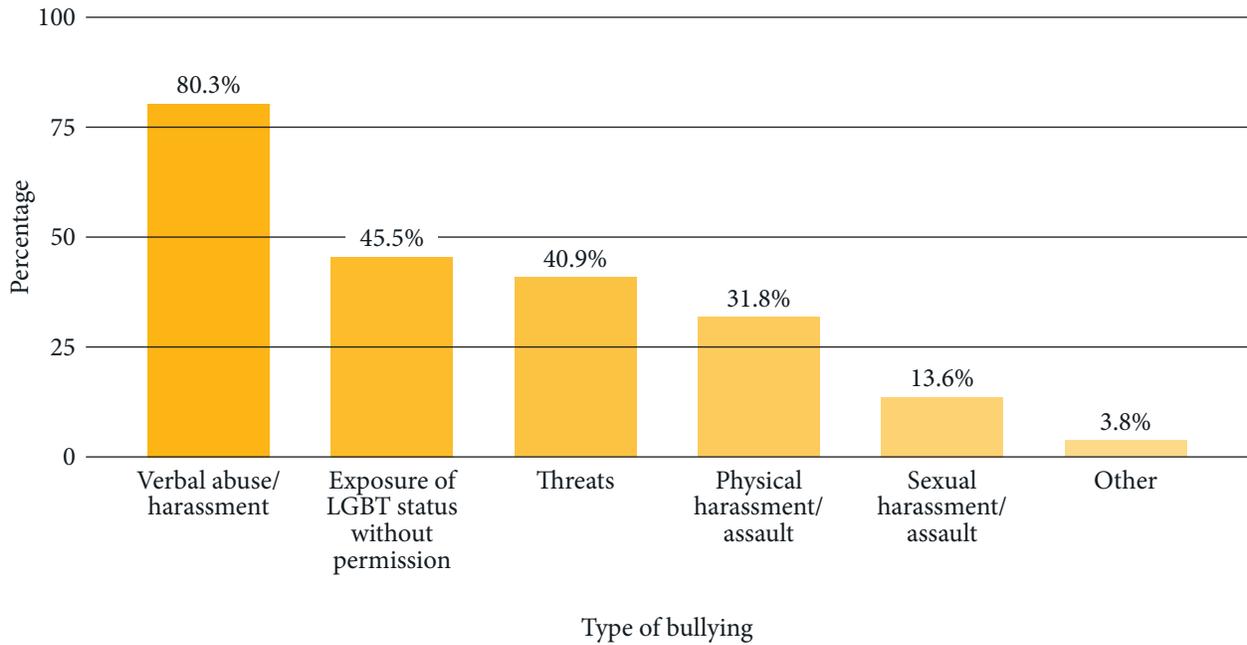
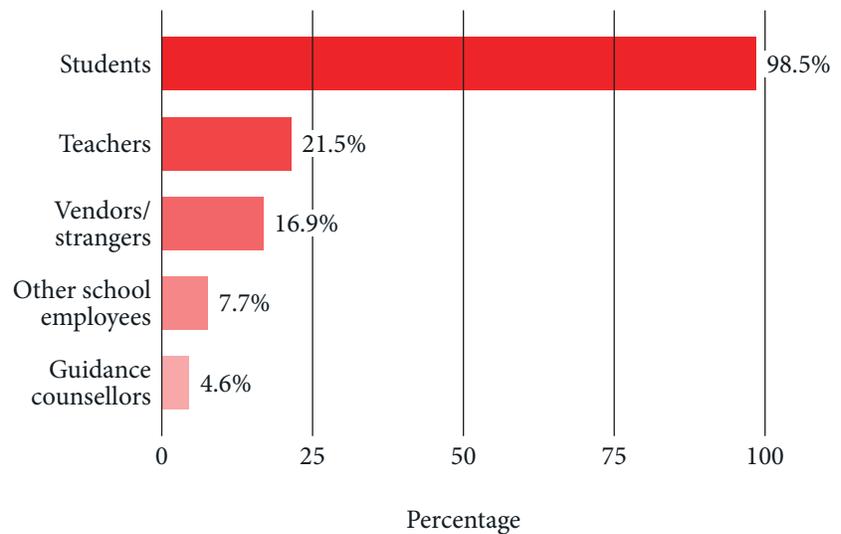


Figure 33: Types of Bullying Experienced in School

26. If you were bullied in school who was responsible?

Figure 34: Persons Responsible for Bullying in Schools

The vast majority of respondents were bullied by other students (99%), teachers (22%) and vendors or strangers at the school (17%).



27. At what level of schooling did the bullying occur?

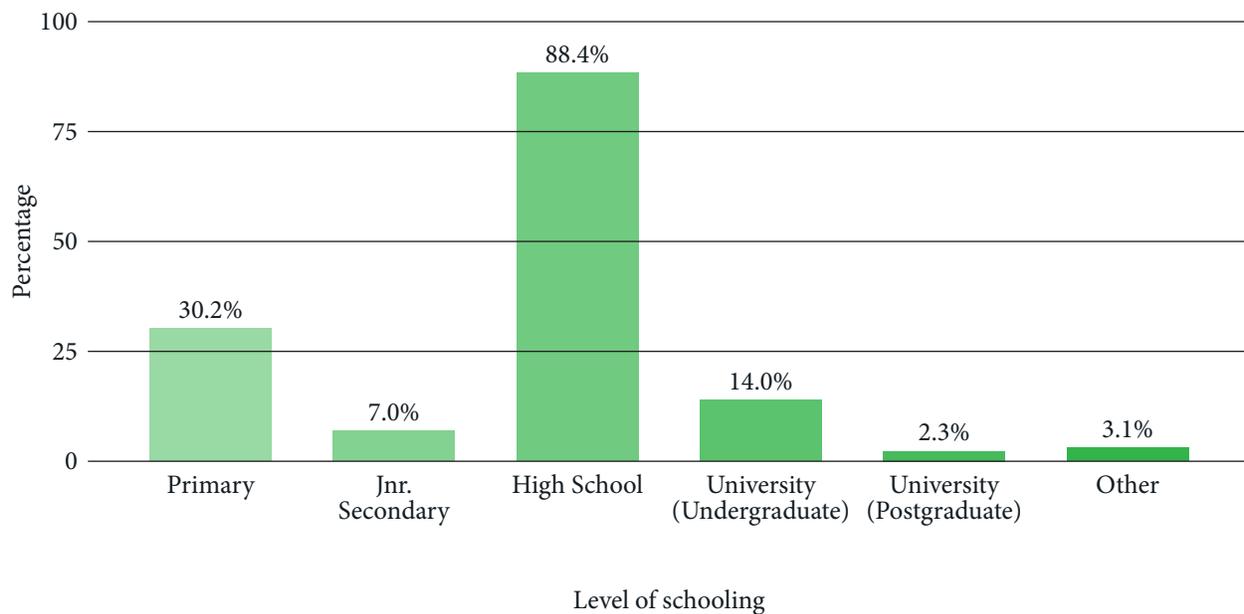


Figure 35: Level of Schooling at which Bullying Occurred

For the majority of participants, bullying occurred at high school (88%) with primary school being the next most frequent response at 30%. The persons who selected 'other' primarily noted the HEART Trust NTA as the site of bullying.

28. Who knew about the bullying and did they try to help?

For most respondents (45%) teachers did not know they were being bullied while for about 34% persons, teachers knew but did not help. For 70% of respondents their principals were even less likely to know about bullying than their teachers.

For about 21% of persons, their teachers knew and did help and for another 11% principals knew and did try to help. Of all groups, friends were the most likely to know and help (61%). In many other cases (62%) other students were very likely to know and not help while the next most likely scenario was that other students knew and did help (21%).

In the majority of instances (51%) guidance counsellors did not know LGBT students were being bullied. When they did know, they were more likely to help (28%) than they were to not help (21%).

Of all the groups, parents were the most likely to not know students were being bullied (75%). When parents did know they were more likely to help (14%) than they were to not help (11%).

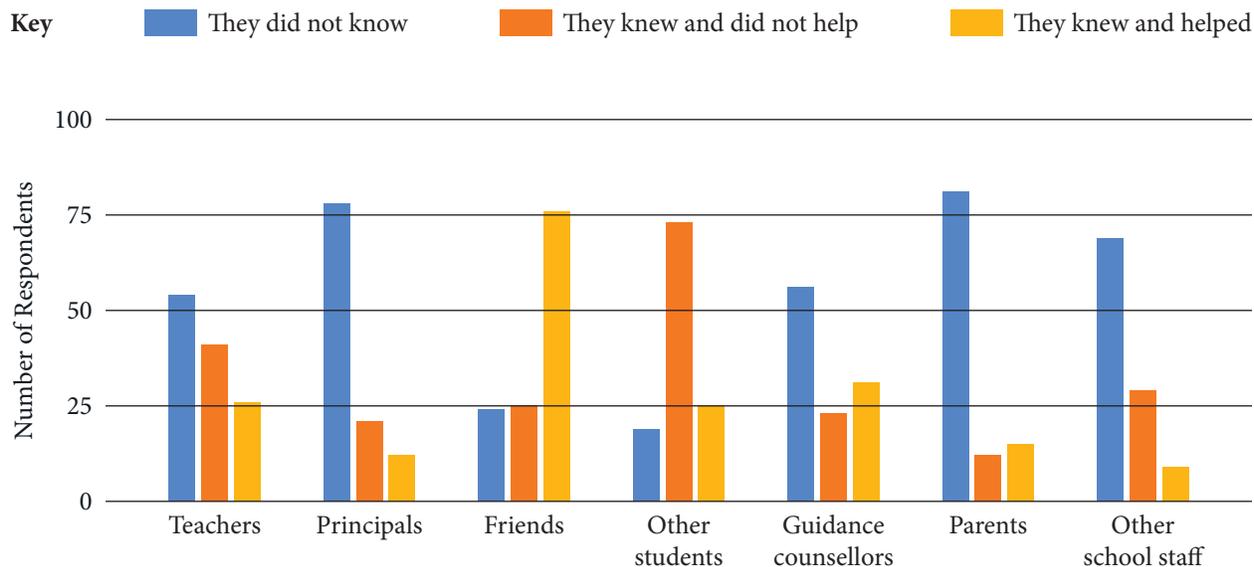


Figure 36: Who Knew About School Bullying and if they Tried to Help

Other school staff were more likely to not know (64%) than to know. When they did know they were more likely to not help (27%) than they were to help (8%).

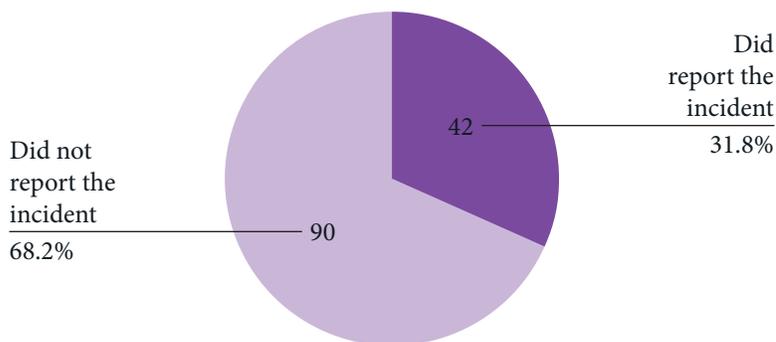
Teachers who knew about bullying, were more likely to **not** help.

29. Did you report the bullying incident?

“Did you report the bullying incident?”

Figure 37a: Reporting of Bullying Incidents

68% of persons did not report being bullied while only 32% did.



30. If you reported the incident what was the outcome?

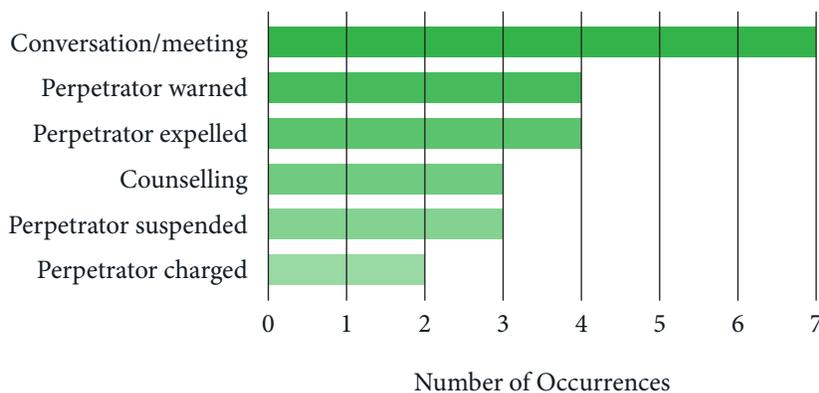


Figure 37b: Outcomes of Reported Bullying Incidents

Of those who did report, about half stated that nothing came of the report. A fair number of persons report that the offender was counselled or a meeting was held with parents and school administration.

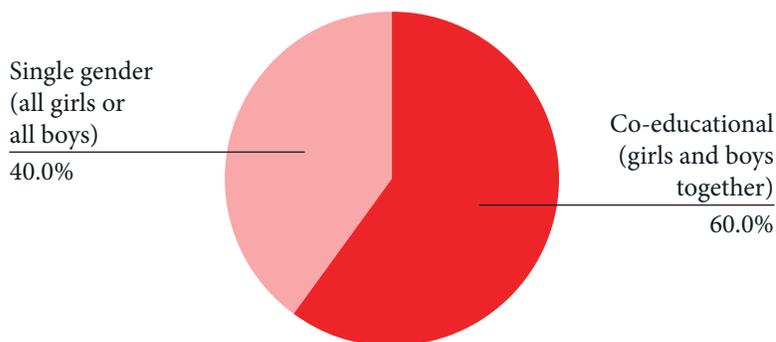
Half of respondents stated that nothing came of reporting bullying incidents.

79% of respondents stated that the school curriculum did **not** adequately address the needs of LGBT students.

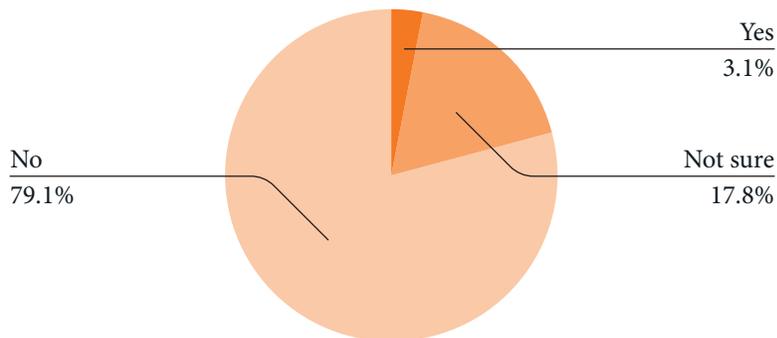
31. At what type of school did the bullying occur?

Figure 38: Type of School Where Bullying Occurred

The majority of respondents who experienced bullying were students at co-educational schools (60%) while 40% had experienced bullying at single gender schools.



32. Did the school curriculum adequately address the needs of LGBT students?



“Did the curriculum adequately address the needs of LGBT students?”

Figure 39: Adequacy of School Curriculum in Addressing Needs of LGBT Students

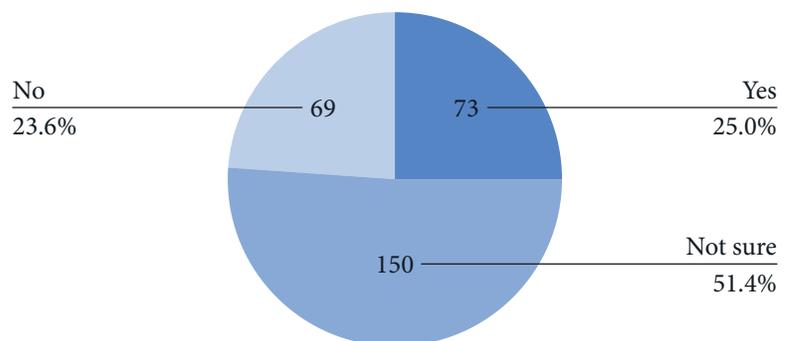
79% of respondents felt the school curriculum did not address the needs of LGBT students while 3% of respondents felt it did.

33. Do you think any school rules are discriminatory to LGBT students?

“Do you think any school rules are discriminatory to LGBT students?”

Figure 40: Perception of School Rules as Discriminatory to LGBT Students

The majority of respondents (51%) were not sure if any school rules were discriminatory. 25% felt they were and 24% felt they were not.



When asked which rules were discriminatory the most common responses were those that reinforced the gender binary by stipulating different dress codes for male and female students, including hair and demanding that females wear skirts. Some participants thought ‘single gender’ schools were discriminatory as they were actually single sex schools.

Transgender students who were enrolled in those schools had no choice but to maintain a gender presentation based on their sex. Rules that forbade sexual conduct or intimacy between students of the same sex were also considered discriminatory. Similarly some high schools handbooks specify that a student may be expelled for being LGBT.

Separation of students on gendered bases for sports and subjects was also an issue. Several respondents had issues with Christian-based teaching in schools and forcing students to practice a particular religion as a part of getting an education.

Health

34. How often have you accessed medical care in the last 12 months?

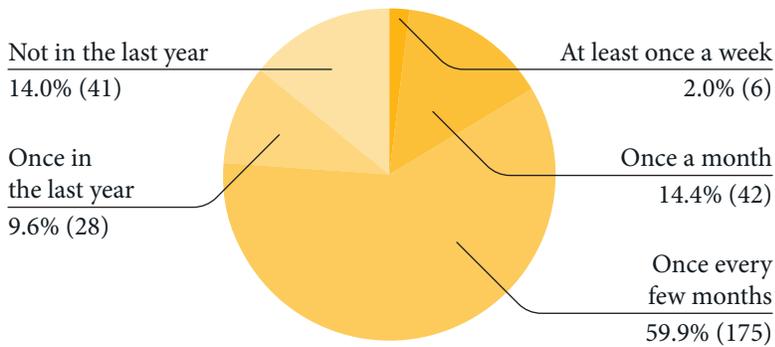


Figure 41: Frequency of Accessing Medical Care

In the last 12 months, 60% of respondents had accessed medical care once every few months. 14% had accessed medical care once a month and 14% had not accessed medical care in over a year.

Cisgender women, trans women, gender fluid persons, and those who preferred to not disclose their gender identity were disproportionately more likely to not have accessed medical care in over a year.

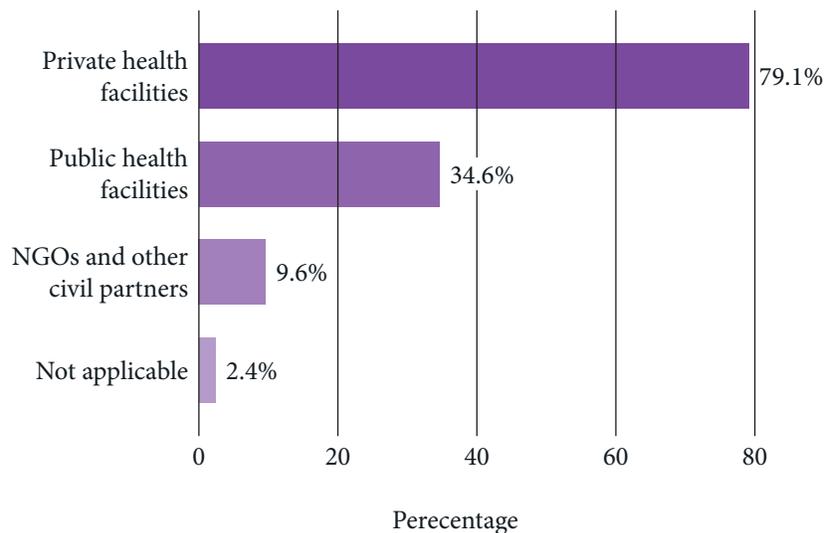
“How often have you accessed healthcare in the last 12 months?”

35. Where do you usually access health care services?

Figure 42: Where Persons are Accessing Healthcare

Most respondents (79%) usually access health care services at private health facilities. The next most popular option was public health facilities (35%). NGOs were third most likely at 9.6%.

Public health facilities were selected because of the low cost while private healthcare facilities and NGOs were selected because they were perceived to be friendly to LGBT persons. Some persons remained with their family doctor while others went to NGOs because they felt fully accepted there.



36. Are you comfortable discussing your gender identity in the following settings?

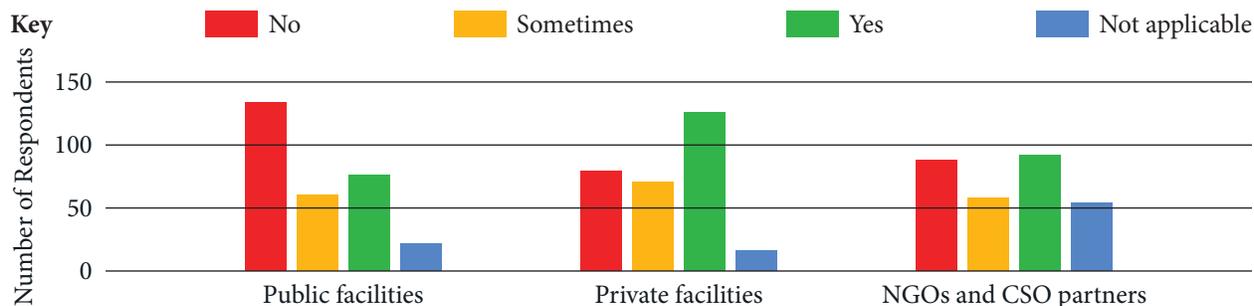


Figure 43: Level of Comfort Discussing Gender Identity in Specific Healthcare Settings

Respondents were most likely to be comfortable disclosing their gender identity in private facilities (43%) and most likely to be uncomfortable in public facilities (46%). They were about as likely to be comfortable (32%) and uncomfortable (30%) with NGO and CSO partners. About 26% of persons were comfortable in public facilities and 27% were uncomfortable in private facilities.

37. Are you comfortable discussing your sexual orientation in the following settings?

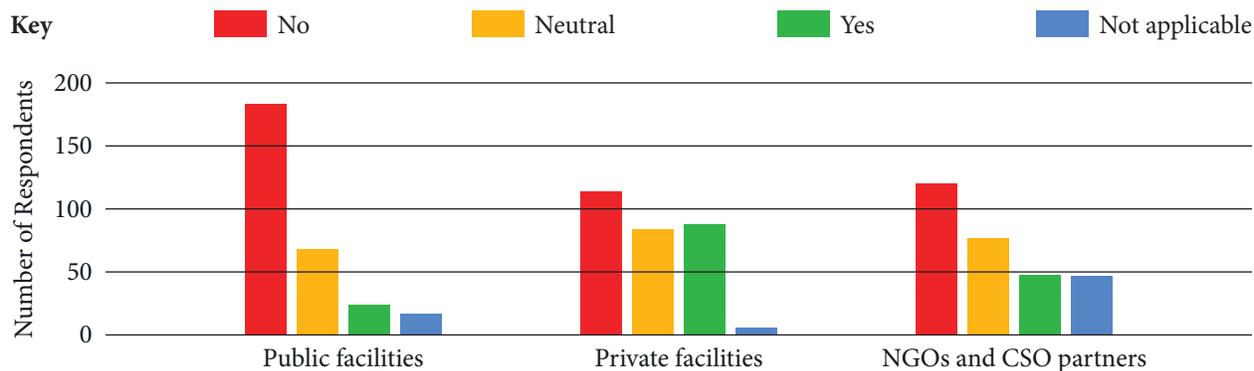


Figure 44: Level of Comfort Discussing Sexual Orientation in Specific Healthcare Settings

Respondents were most likely to be uncomfortable discussing their sexual orientation regardless of facility type: public facilities (63%), private facility (39%), NGO and CSO (41%). They were most likely to be comfortable in private facilities (30%) followed by NGO and CSO (16%). They were about as likely to feel neutral in private facilities (29%) as with NGO and CSO partners (26%). 23% of persons felt neutral discussing sexual orientation in public.

38. How easy is it to access trans-specific health care in Jamaica?

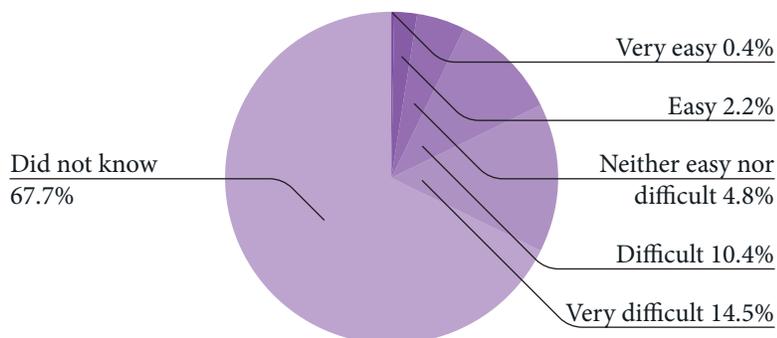


Figure 45: Ease of Access to Trans-Specific Medical Care in Jamaica

68% of respondents did not know how easy or hard it was to access trans specific health care in Jamaica. 15% of persons thought it was very difficult and 10% thought it was difficult. 2% thought it was easy. Respondents from all gender identities were represented across response categories.



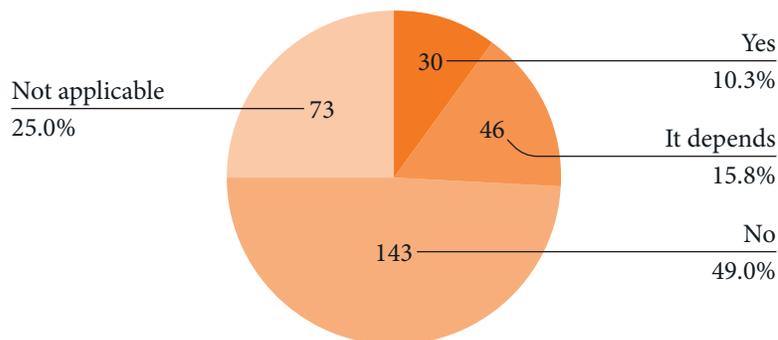
Only **2.6%** of respondents thought it was easy or very easy to access trans-specific healthcare in Jamaica.

39. Do you change your gender expression when accessing healthcare?

Figure 46: Changes to Gender Expression when Accessing Medical Care

The majority of respondents (49%) do not change their gender expression when accessing health care while 10% did. 16% of people would change their gender expression depending on the occasion.

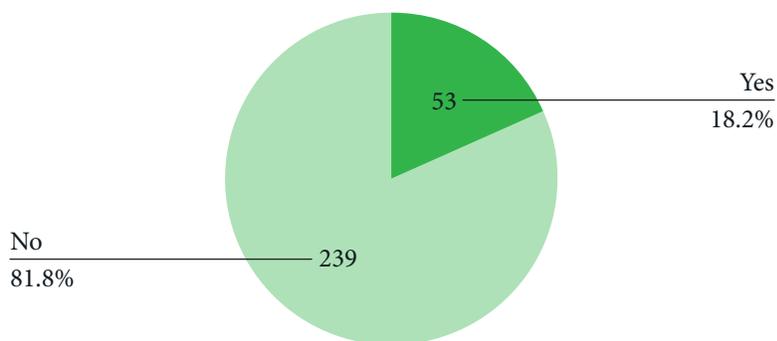
No trans men reported changing their gender expression while about 50% of trans women did. Most gender fluid persons did not change their gender expression when accessing medical care.



“Do you change your gender expression when accessing healthcare?”

Mental Health

40. Have you accessed mental services the past month?



“Have you accessed mental services the past 30 days?”

Figure 47: Uptake of Mental Health Services in the Past Month

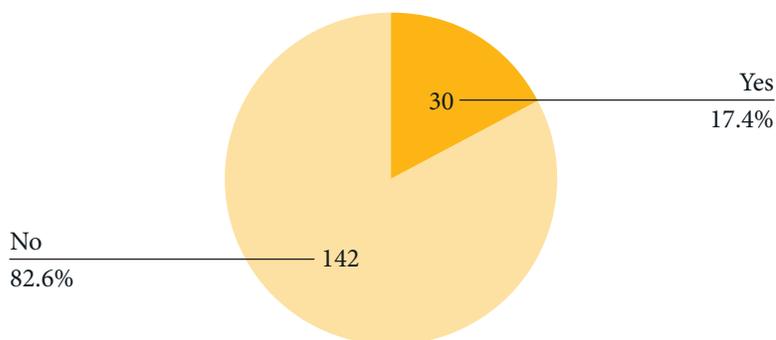
82% of respondents had not accessed mental health services in the last 30 days whereas 18% had. Trans men were most likely to have accessed mental health services and nonbinary persons were least likely.

Participants identified private counselling, public health facilities and JASL when asked where they were accessing mental health support. Several persons mentioned being treated for depression and two mentioned Bellevue, a psychiatric hospital in Jamaica.

41. Were there any barriers to accessing mental health services?

Figure 48: Experience of Barriers when Accessing Mental Health Services

83% of participants had not experienced any barriers to accessing mental health services and 17% had. Of those who had experienced barriers, the most common was the cost of counselling. Fear of being judged as well as uncomfortable experiences such as therapists forcing their beliefs upon clients and needing to change gender presentation to access services were also mentioned.



“Have you accessed mental services the past 30 days?”

42. How do you perceive your mental health?

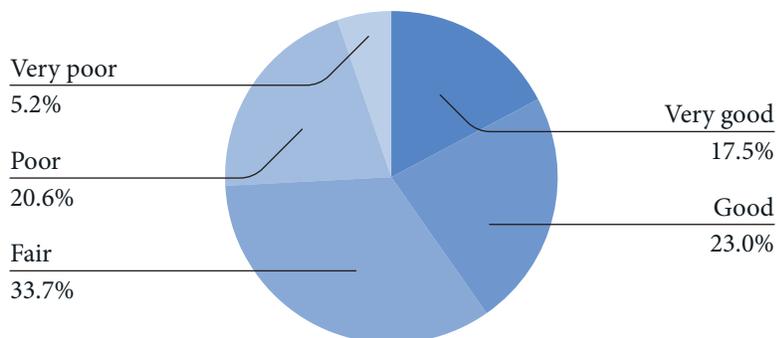


Figure 49: Self- Perception of Mental Health

The most frequent self-perception of mental health was fair at 34%. The next most frequent response was good at 23% followed by poor at 21%.

Approximately 18% of people thought their mental health was very good and 5% thought it was very poor.

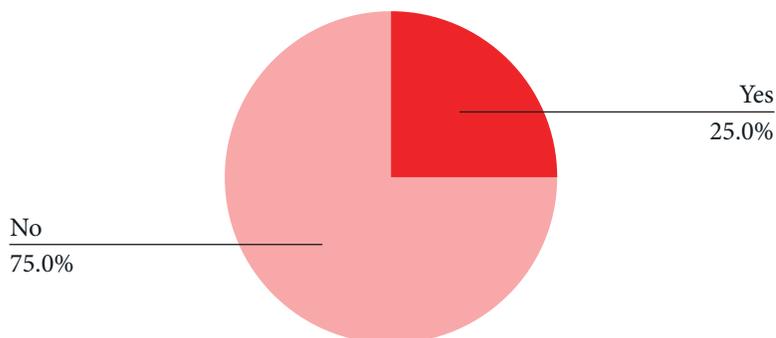
26% of respondents perceived mental health as poor or very poor.
76% of respondents experienced depression.
37% of respondents experienced suicidal ideation.

43. Have you been formally diagnosed with any mental health disorder?

“Have you been formally diagnosed with any mental health disorder?”

Figure 50: Formal Diagnoses of Mental Health Disorders

75% of respondents had not been formally diagnosed with a mental health disorder while 25% had. Depression, anxiety and bipolar disorder were the most frequent diagnoses. PTSD, borderline personality disorder and multiple personality disorder were also mentioned.



44. Do you perceive yourself as experiencing any of the following?

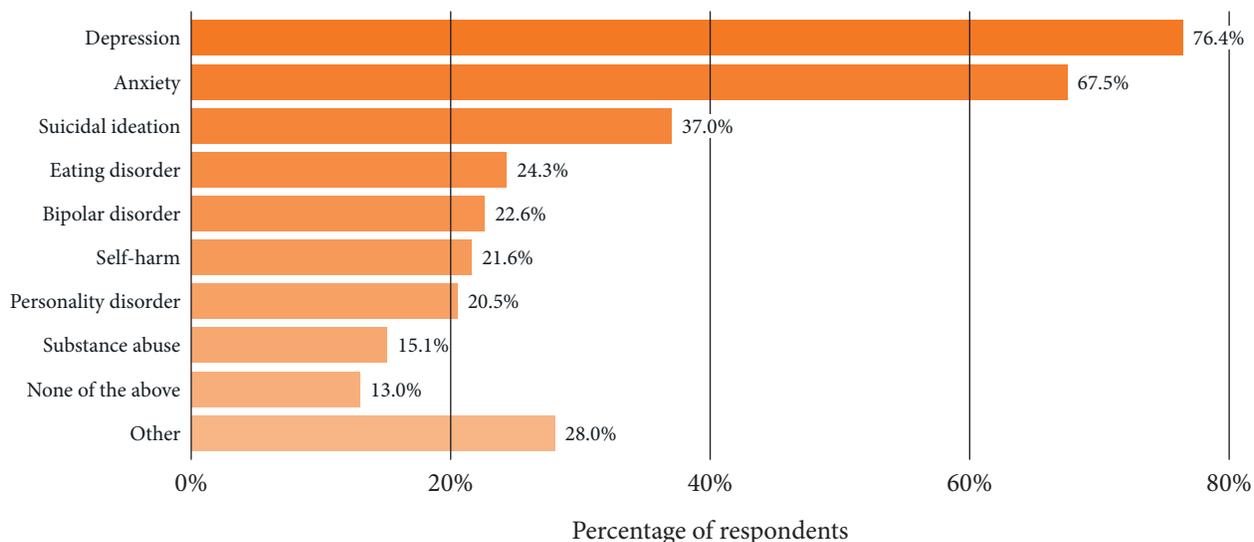


Figure 51: Self-Perception of Specific Mental Health Issues

Most participants perceive themselves as experiencing depression (76%) followed by anxiety (68%) and suicidal ideation (37%). PTSD was also frequently mentioned at 25%. Eating disorders were fairly common at 24% as was self-harm at 22%.

13% of persons report experiencing none of the named behaviours.

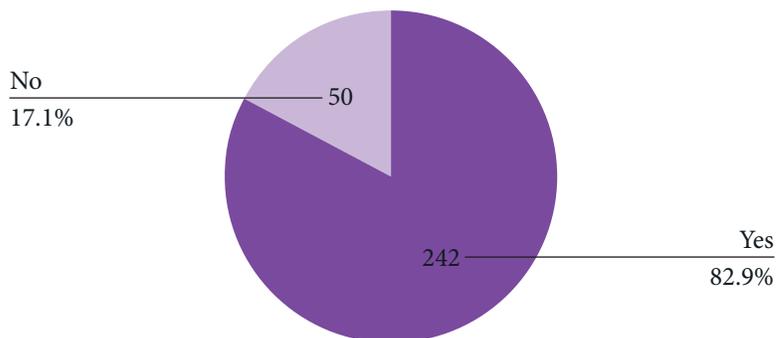
Workplace

45. Have you been employed within the last 12 months?

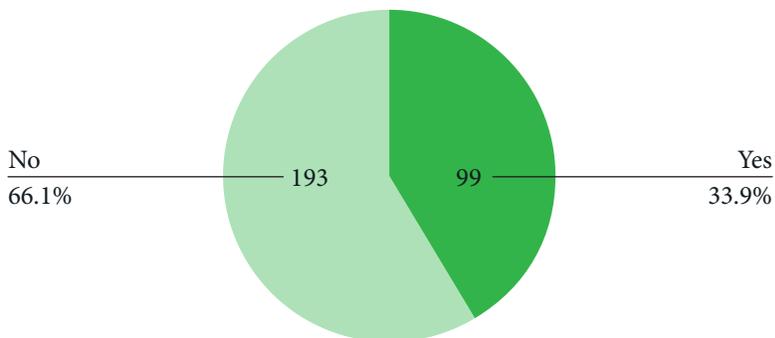
“Have you been employed within the last 12 months?”

Figure 52: Experiences of Employment within the Last 12 Months

83% of persons have been employed in the last 12 months.



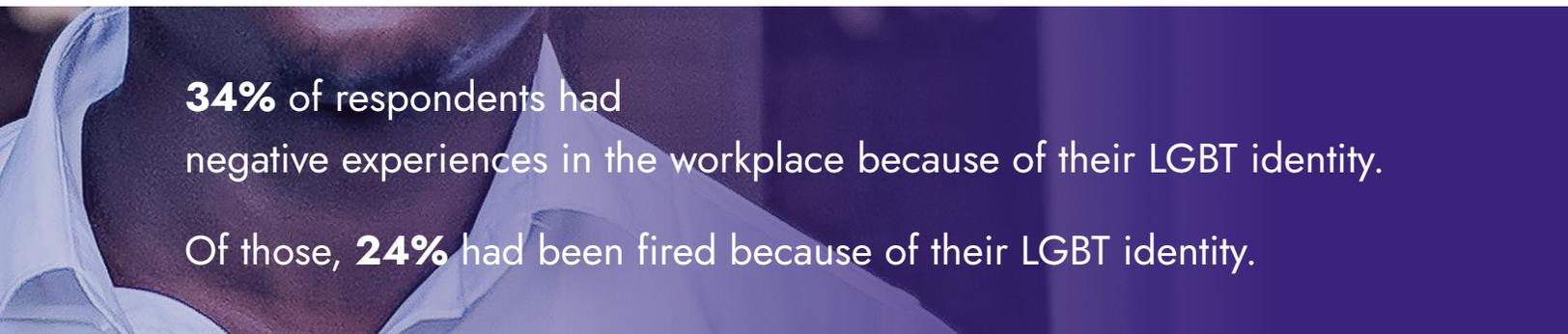
46. Have you been unemployed within the last 12 months?



“Have you been unemployed within the last 12 months?”

Figure 53: Experiences of Unemployment within the Last 12 Months

34% of respondents had been unemployed within the last 12 months and 66% had not. Westmoreland showed the highest level of unemployment within the last 12 months at 100%.



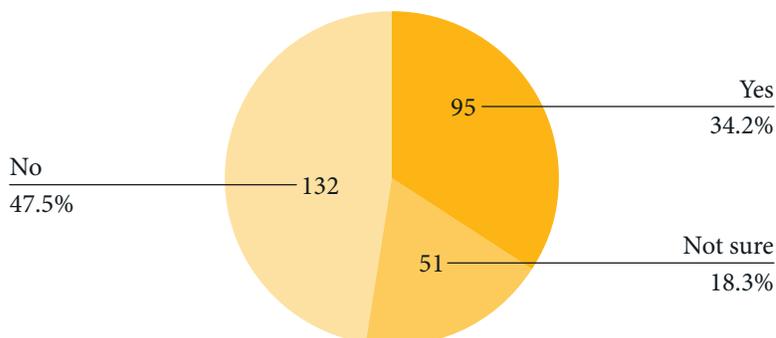
34% of respondents had negative experiences in the workplace because of their LGBT identity. Of those, **24%** had been fired because of their LGBT identity.

47. Have you ever had negative experiences in the workplace because of your LGBT identity?

“Have you ever had negative experiences in the workplace because of your LGBT identity?”

Figure 54: Negative Workplace Experiences due to LGBT Identity

Most respondents (48%) had not had a negative experience in the workplace due to being LGBT while 34% had had a negative experience and 18% were not sure. Sexual orientation and gender identity did not seem to have a significant impact on the experiences LGBT people had in workplaces.



48. If you had negative experiences in the workplace because of your LGBT identity, what happened and who was the perpetrator?

In this section the most commonly reported experiences were verbal abuse or harassment (46%) and discrimination (49%). About 24% of respondents indicated that they had been fired because of their LGBT identity. When persons were asked to leave jobs the most likely perpetrators were managers (13%) followed by co-workers (12%). In the case of being denied opportunities such as promotions managers (26%) and supervisors (24%) were the most likely perpetrators.

In the case of verbal abuse, co-workers were the most likely perpetrators for 37% of respondents followed by supervisors for 14%. In the case of discrimination, co-workers were the most likely perpetrators (39%), followed by supervisors (16%) and managers (15%).

Key ■ Customers ■ Co-workers ■ Supervisors ■ Managers ■ Other ■ Not applicable

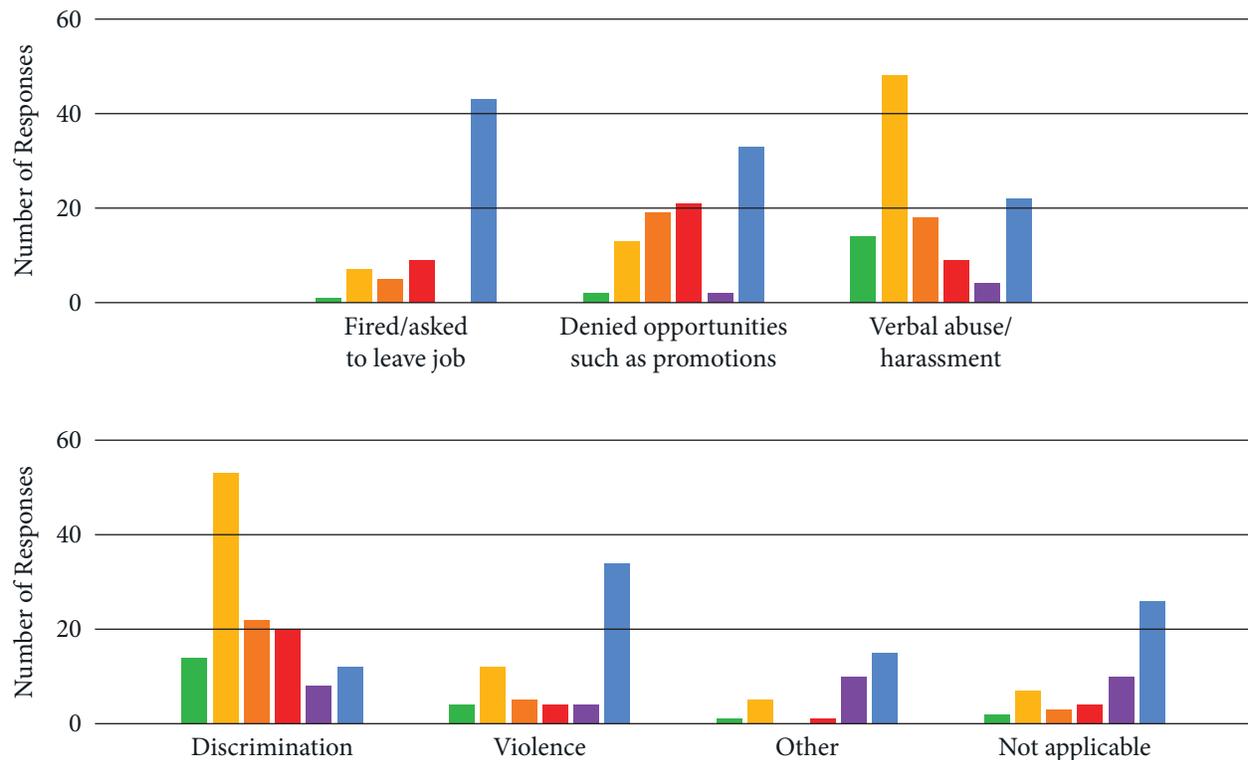


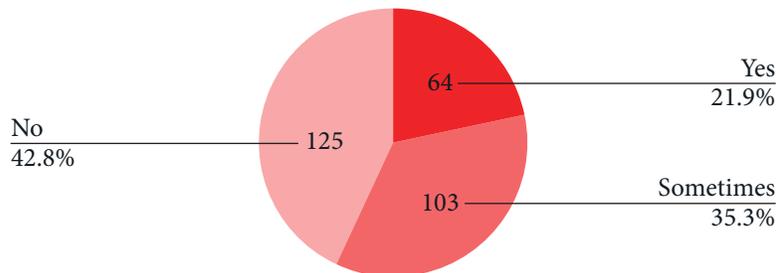
Figure 55: Type of Workplace Violence and Perpetrator

Co-workers were the most likely perpetrators of violence with 18% of respondents sharing that experience.

For persons who selected ‘other’, the use of homophobic slurs and sexual harassment; customers making issue because the worker was discovered to be gay; and anti-LGBT hiring panels were reported.

Relationships

49. Is it easy for you to form healthy romantic relationships as an LGBT person?



43% of persons felt it was not easy to form healthy romantic relationships as an LGBT person. 35% of persons selected sometimes and 22% of persons selected yes.

For this category there were some notable differences by parish: almost all persons in Trelawny said no, only one person in St. Ann said yes. Responses from other parishes reflected the general trend.

“Is it easy for you to form healthy romantic relationships as an LGBT person?”

Figure 56: Ease of Forming Healthy Romantic Relationships

Biphobia, non-acceptance and distrust of bisexuals were mentioned often as barriers to romantic relationships. Low interest among gay men in anything but hook-ups and sex was also an issue.

Not being sure who is LGBT and therefore eligible for dating was mentioned frequently, along with the secrecy of the relationships because of homophobic cultures. Low levels of trust and unwillingness to commit were raised by numerous participants.

Understanding that things are easier when it's 'just the two of us', online dating, and access to social media made forming relationships easier.

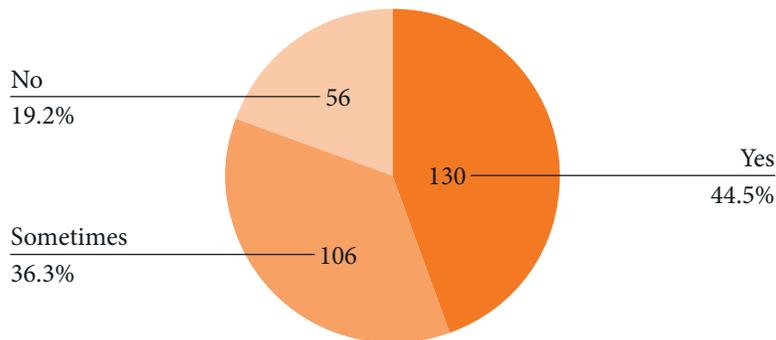
43% of respondents felt it was **not** easy to form healthy romantic relationships as an LGBT person.

50. Is it easy for you to form healthy friendships as an LGBT person?

Most participants (45%) found it easy to form healthy friendships. 36% found it easy sometimes and 19% felt it was not easy to form healthy friendships. Having things in common with other LGBT people was a significant bonding point that allowed for friendship formation. The community was perceived as small as well as supportive, truthful, honest, and loving.

Barriers to friendship formation included low levels of trust between members of the LGBT community, loss of interest if the friendship shows no prospects for becoming a romantic connection, excessive focus on sexual conquest versus friendship, difficulty meeting people because they have to hide their identity, and difficulty finding safe spaces to hang out.

Members of the community were perceived to discriminate against each other as well as encourage too much drama (conflict).



“Is it easy for you to form healthy friendships as an LGBT person?”

Figure 57: Ease of Forming Healthy Friendships

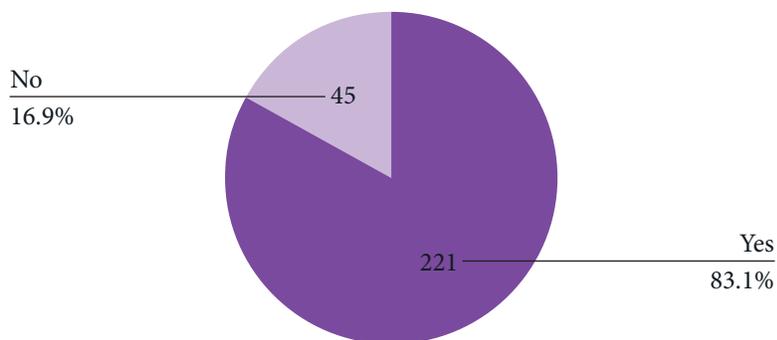
51. How and where do you usually meet romantic partners?

Most people meet dating partners online through social media, dating sites and dating apps. Meeting through friends and at LGBT events and in LGBT spaces was also popular. School, work, and in hotels were also recorded as great places to meet romantic partners.

52. How and where do you usually meet friends?

Online and through social media were the most likely places to meet friends. School was an especially popular response in this category, so was ‘through partners’ or ‘through friends’. LGBT events, public spaces and ‘anywhere’ were also commonly mentioned.

53. Are you interested in being able to marry?



“Are you interested in being able to marry?”

Figure 58: Interest in Being Able to Marry

83% of participants were interested in getting married while 17% were not. Cisgender men and trans women were comparatively most interested in marriage. Ciswomen were comparatively slightly less likely to be interested in marriage.

54. How comfortable would you feel living with your partner or raising children with your partner in Jamaica?

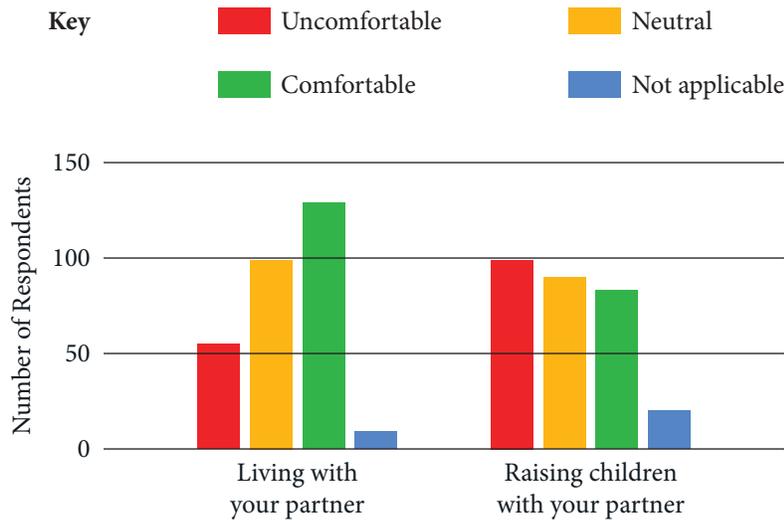


Figure 59: Level of Comfort Living and Raising Children with a Partner

Most respondents (44%) would feel comfortable living with their partner in Jamaica, however, most (34%) would feel uncomfortable raising children with their partner. In both instances, neutral was the second most popular answer. 34% of respondents felt neutral about living with their partner and 31% felt neutral about raising children with their partner.

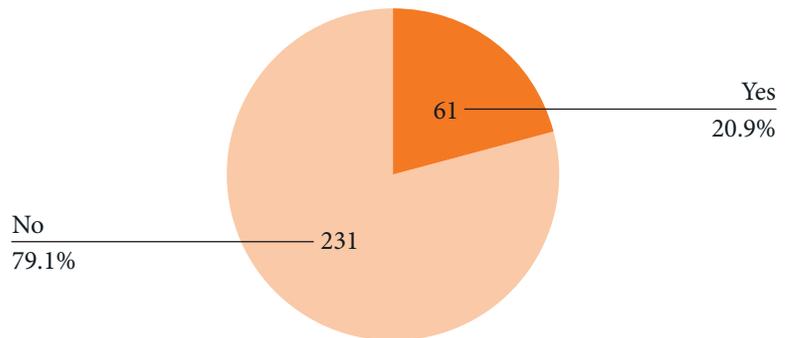
19% of respondents would feel uncomfortable living with a partner and 28% would feel comfortable raising children.

Homelessness and Displacement

55. Have you ever been homeless or displaced?

Figure 60: Lifetime Experiences of Homelessness

21% of respondents had been homeless or displaced at some point in their life. More than half of the trans women and trans men who responded had been homeless or displaced which is higher than for any other group. Non-binary persons also had higher than average experiences of homelessness at almost 45%. Level of education, age, and sexual orientation seemed to have no bearing on experiences of homelessness.



“Have you ever been homeless or displaced?”

56. Period of homelessness or displacement

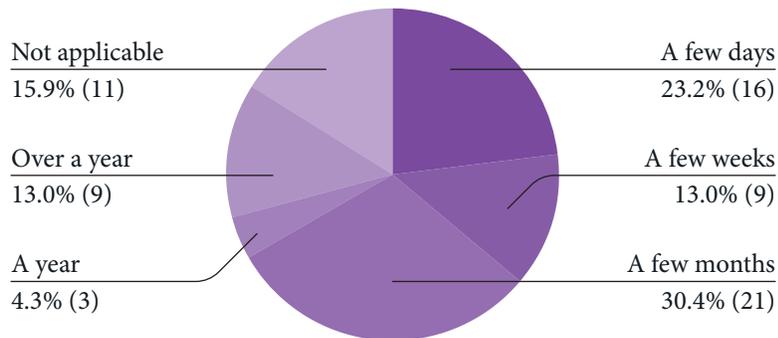


Figure 61: Longest Period of Homelessness or Displacement

The most frequent period of homelessness or displacement was a few months at around 30%. The next most frequent response was a few days (around 23%) followed by over a year and a few weeks at 13% each. Gender fluid respondents almost exclusively reported homelessness or displacement for a few days while all other groups were represented in multiple time span categories. Trans men seemed likely to be displaced for longer with no respondents being displaced for less than a few months.

21% of respondents had been homeless at some point in their lives.

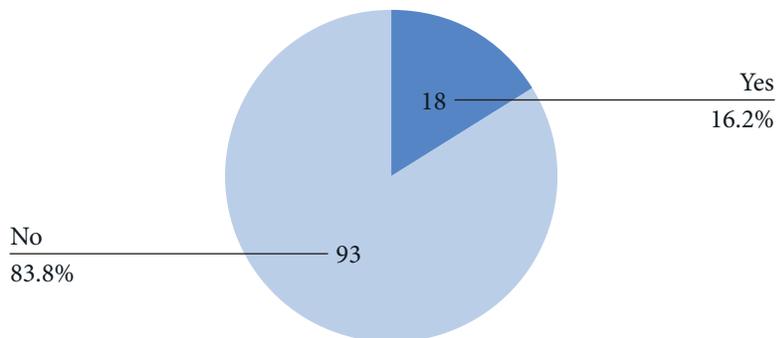
More than half of the trans women and trans men who responded had been homeless.

57. What led to homelessness or displacement?

Around 48% of persons who responded to this question were put out by their family because of their LGBT identity. For 25% of persons their relatives or community members forced their family to put them out and for about another 14% they were couch surfing with friends and were put out.

Space was left for persons to expand on other reasons which included being forced out of rented houses, being targeted because they were seen with persons who were openly gay, being asked to leave because a parent's partner had a crush on the respondent, leaving the community after being threatened with death, having their house burned down, and staying in various homes while job hunting. There were a few persons who mentioned displacement while trying to relocate to Kingston from other areas of the island.

58. Do you feel safe in non-LGBT spaces like shelters and drop-in centres?



“Do you feel safe in non-LGBT spaces like shelters and drop-in centres?”

Figure 62: Perception of Safety in Non-LGBT Social Support Spaces

Around 84% of respondents did not feel safe in non-LGBT spaces like shelters. No trans men or gender fluid persons responded yes to this question. The majority of persons answering yes to this question were in their 20’s or teens. About half the persons who answered yes had been homeless or displaced at some point in their life, most for a few days followed by for over a year.

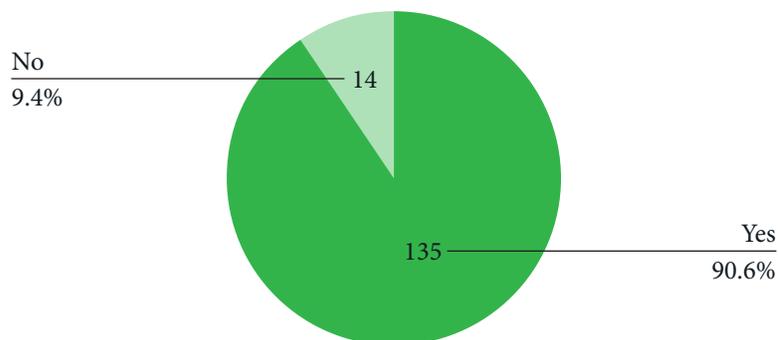
91% of respondents thought an LGBT shelter would be useful.

59. Do you think an LGBT shelter would be useful?

“Do you think an LGBT shelter would be useful?”

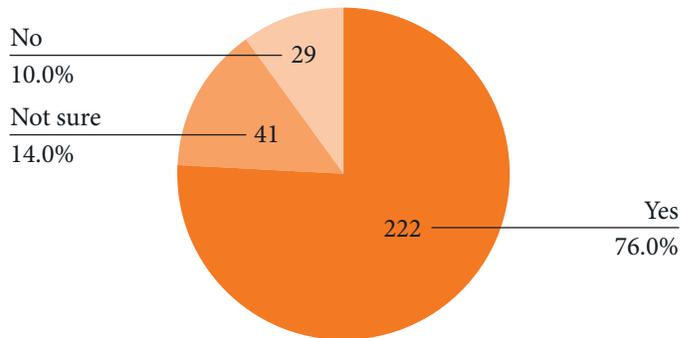
Figure 63: Perceived Usefulness of an LGBT Shelter

Around 91% of respondents thought an LGBT shelter would be useful. Persons who said no came from all gender identity and sexual orientation groups and included persons who had experienced homelessness, those who had not, persons who felt comfortable in non-LGBT shelters and those who did not.



Interest in Leaving Jamaica

60. Are you interested in leaving Jamaica?



“Are you interested in leaving Jamaica?”

Figure 64: Interest in Leaving Jamaica

76% of respondents were interested in leaving Jamaica while another 14% were not sure and around 10% were not interested. All trans women responded yes to this question.

Employment status did not seem to be a determinant as persons from all employment brackets answered no to this question. Persons who were employed full time and those who were unemployed were most likely to wish to remain in Jamaica. Persons earning in the \$101,000 - \$150,000 income bracket were most likely to respond no to this question. Persons from all education backgrounds and areas of residence also responded no.

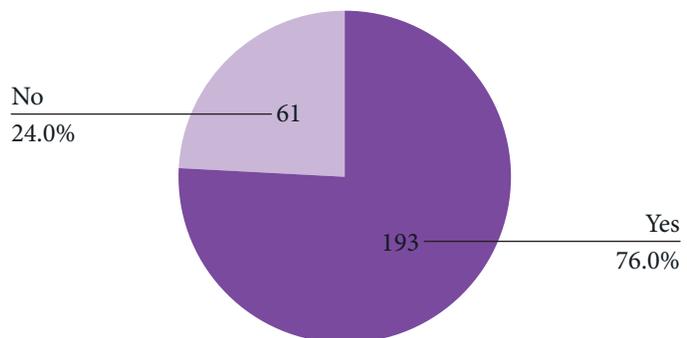


76% of respondents were interested in leaving Jamaica.

61. Is your desire to leave Jamaica linked to your LGBT identity?

Figure 65: Link Between LGBT Identity and Desire to Leave Jamaica

Persons who answered yes or not sure to question 60 were asked to respond to this question. 76% of persons responded with yes. All trans men indicated that their desire to leave Jamaica was linked to their sexual orientation or gender identity. Only one transwoman indicated that it was not. Homosexual ciswomen were most likely to respond that their desire to leave was not linked to their sexual orientation or gender identity.



“Is your desire to leave Jamaica linked to your LGBT identity?”

62. What is the reason you want to leave Jamaica?

Persons who answered yes or not sure to question 61 were asked to state why they wanted to leave Jamaica.

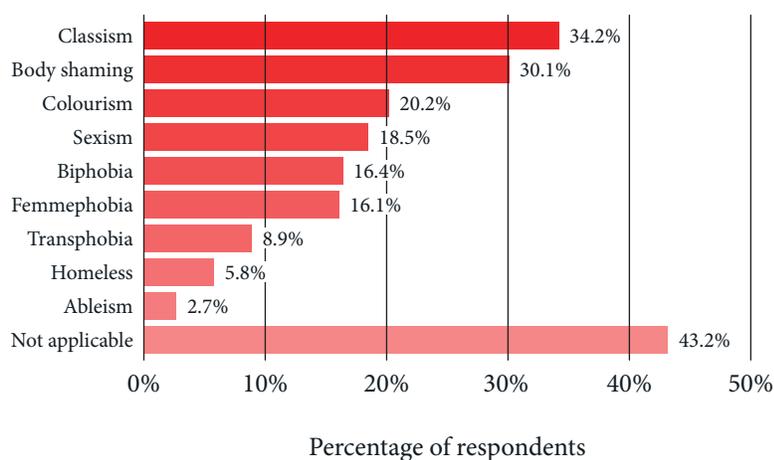
Most people want to leave for better work opportunities (87%), education (60%), being able to marry (59%) and seek asylum (33%). Respondents were given the space to expand on other reasons for wanting leave. The reasons circled around a desire for freedom and comfort. To be able to live a healthy and comfortable life, to have children with a partner without scrutiny, to save existing children from scrutiny and to be able to be their authentic selves. There was also mention of missing out on opportunities because of sexual orientation.

Experiences within the Community

63. Have you experienced any discrimination within the LGBT community?

34% of persons who responded to this question had experienced discrimination based on class. The next most common experience was body shaming at 30%. Colourism was common at 20% as was biphobia (16%) and femmephobia (16%). About 9% of respondents had experienced transphobia and 3% had experienced discrimination based on disability status. The largest group of persons (43%) felt the question was not applicable to them. It is important to note that trans men and trans women were a very small subset of survey participants.

80% of respondents living with disabilities had experienced ableism. Experiences of transphobia spanned across trans, gender fluid and non-binary persons. Most trans persons had experienced transphobia within the LGBT community. More than half of the bisexual respondents had experienced biphobia. Ciswomen and gender fluid persons were most likely to feel the question did not apply to them. Cismen and trans women were most likely to report experiences of femmephobia.



When asked to share their experiences respondents talked about the perception of bisexuals as greedy, constant reference to their fatness or skinniness, unacceptability of being fluid in love and gender expression. Persons also report being rejected because of the darkness of their skin, not believing it's possible for men to be bisexual (i.e. that they are gay but hiding it), and members of the community treating you less than because of class status. Family members thinking it was inappropriate for men to be feminine and women to be masculine was also mentioned. Feminine men and gender fluid persons reported being unable to find partners because men prefer to date other masculine people.

Figure 66: Experiences of Discrimination within the LGBT Community

Some quotes are included below:

I experience biphobia (even though I am not bisexual but pansexual) through others denying that I truly have an attraction to women and it is just a "front." Some do not believe that bi/pan people can be faithful. Also, there is a lot of misogyny at times from cis gay men.

If you feel comfortable being "masculine" or being identified as a "Man", you're committing a crime in this modern LGBT community. You're referred to as being closetted, misogynist and hating toxic. Being feminine is the way to go these days, hence sooner or later people who can't relate will demand a subgroup for themselves. What happened to being or doing what you're comfortable with? Does being gay/homosexual equals feminine? Does identifying as a man mean you hate women? Does choosing what you're comfortable with makes you the enemy?

Alot of gay ppl think that if you're not born in the ivy league you're not worthy or beneath them and I experience ppl looking down and talking bad about me because of my clothes or because I may not have it

A fem once ask me y do i look like a man so much and it doesn't fits me.

People often reject me because of my size. Some guys think because I'm a fat guy I'm desperate and will allow them to make a fool of me.

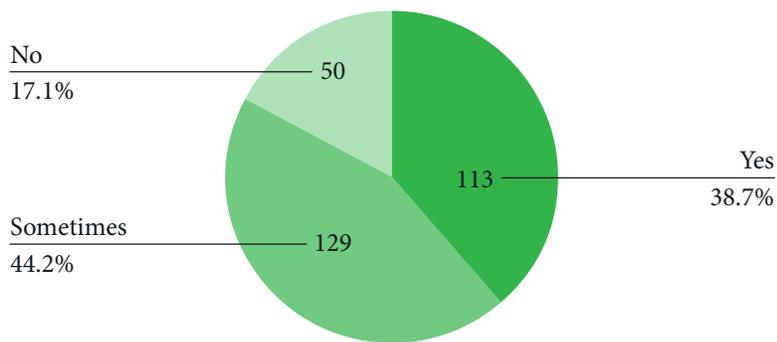
I was told i am fat, i dont shape good.....My rapist said to me " your body feel strong n firm you can carry a nice baby boy" he also said " you a sex woman n think you a man this is how a penis feel and this is what it does"

Guys say too fat. You too black

64. Sense of belonging to the LGBT community

39% of persons felt a sense of belonging to the community while 17% did not. The majority of persons (44%) felt a sense of belonging sometimes. When asked what facilitated a feeling of belonging or exclusion the answers were myriad.

Feelings of belonging were facilitated by sharing space with like-minded persons, having an LGBT chosen family, events and activities that brought the community together, determination to share knowledge with other LGBT persons and the presence of good people in the community.



Feeling of belonging could be compromised by limiting gender roles and also judgmental attitudes within the community, geographical distance from the community in Kingston and St. Andrew, internalised phobias that were acted out in social spaces. Biphobia and acephobia (prejudice towards asexual people) were also issues.

Figure 67: Feeling of Belonging to the LGBT Community

“Do you feel a sense of belonging to the LGBT community?”

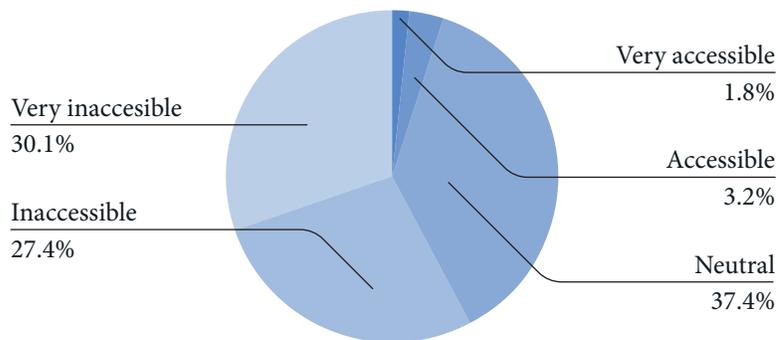


17% of respondents do **not** feel a sense of belonging to the LGBT community in Jamaica.

65. Accessibility of LGBT spaces for PLWD

Figure 68: Accessibility of LGBT Spaces for PLWD

37% of persons who responded to this question felt neutral as to whether LGBT spaces were accessible to PLWD. 30% felt they were very inaccessible and 27% felt they were inaccessible. Less than 2% of people felt LGBT spaces were very accessible for PLWD.



Many people were unable to say what could be done to make spaces more accessible. Others indicated a need for ramps, materials in braille, and standardised offering of sign language at activities and events. Others suggested having paid assistants for PLWD as well as placing a specific emphasis on including LGBT PLWD. Having community gatekeepers be aware of the needs of the community and also consulting with PLWD about their specific needs was thought to be useful. Having specific empowerment workshops and social media posts were also recommended.

Service to Community and Political Priorities

66. How satisfied are you with the work of LGBT organizations in the community?

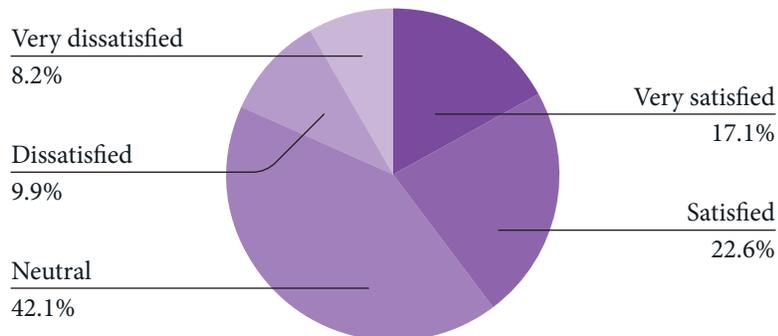


Figure 69: Level of Satisfaction with LGBT Organizations

Most respondents (42%) felt neutral about the work of LGBT organizations in Jamaica. 23% were satisfied, 17% were very satisfied and 8% were very dissatisfied. There were no marked differences according to age, geographic location, sexual orientation or gender identity, education level or income.

67. What are LGBT organizations doing right?

LGBT organizations were perceived as doing well at advocacy, creating safe spaces and community and maintaining visibility. They were also recognized for bringing a focus on LGBT health - including HIV testing - pushing for legislative reform, offering vision and guidance to the community, and maintaining a national focus on the community. Focusing on youth and creating opportunities for employment and offering training to the community were also strong points.

68. What should LGBT organizations do differently?

LGBT organizations were perceived as needing improvement in level of accessibility. Classism in the organizations was mentioned often. A need to focus on the most vulnerable members of the community through supporting asylum seeking, addressing homelessness and providing employment. Diversifying advocacy outside of the priorities of international donors was recommended; community fundraising was suggested in support of this. A hotline for abused persons within the community was thought to be useful. Creating more safe spaces, perhaps more permanent ones such as bars and cafes, also creating a database of safe spaces and landlords. More work on anti-discrimination legislation was mentioned, also very prominent was an increased focus on communities outside of Kingston and creating events that working people could attend. More diversity in education techniques, less publicised events and advocacy that did not focus around visibility were also suggested by multiple respondents. There were numerous recommendations for the holistic development of the community as well as advocacy that moved outside of the LGBT community.

69. Do you think Jamaicans will treat LGBT persons better in the future?

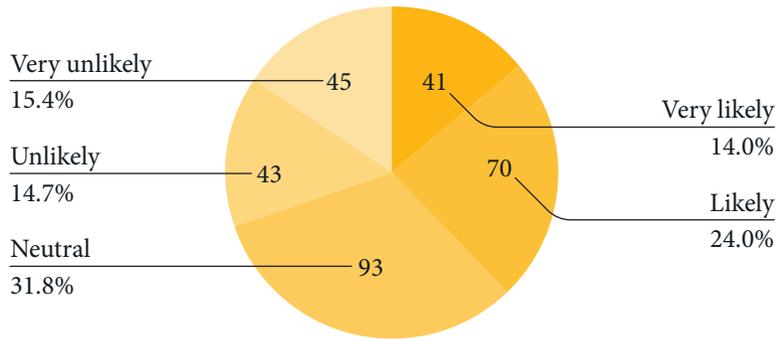


Figure 70: Likelihood of Jamaicans Becoming More Accepting of LGBT Persons in the Future

Most respondents felt neutral about this question (32%) with the next most popular response being likely (24%) followed by very unlikely (15%) and unlikely (15%). Gender fluid persons and trans men disproportionately felt things were not likely to change. Cisgender women were most likely to think things would very likely improve.

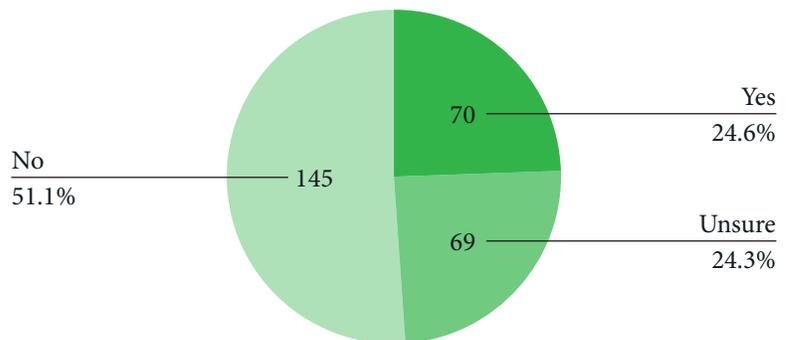
25% of respondents would be willing to run for political office.

81% of respondents ranked substantial anti-discrimination legislation as very important, followed by the repeal of the anti-buggery laws (71%), marriage (57%), and gender affirmation support (44%).

70. Would you be willing to run for political office?

Figure 71a: Willingness to Run for Political Office

51% of participants would not be willing to run for political office. 25% would be willing to run and 24% were unsure.



71. Why would you run or not run for political office?

When asked what influenced their decisions many persons indicated that they did not have an interest in politics. There was a widespread and pronounced distrust of the political system as being dangerous, a show, and a breeding ground for corruption. Others mentioned that they perceived their sexuality would be a barrier or they were afraid of how people would react if their sexuality became public. Others felt their callings were in other areas.

Those who were interested wanted the opportunity to change Jamaica and to create a country where people would not be killed because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. One person was studying political science for that specific reason. Persons thought that collectively the community could make a difference with more political power, and others were interested in politics for the explicit purpose of changing laws. They were very motivated to give a voice to the community at the highest level. A few respondents mentioned that their level of privilege made them ideal for the position and they were willing to use it.

72. How important are the following political issues?

The repeal of laws that justify homophobic attacks was considered very important by the most respondents in any category (84%). This includes laws that accept homosexual advances as reason for murder.

Substantial anti-discrimination legislation was the next most likely to be ranked very important (81%) followed by the repeal of the anti-buggery laws (71%), marriage (57%), gender affirmation support (44%) and changing gender marker on identification (36%).

Across all categories changing gender identification was the political issue most likely to be deemed not important. For example 94 persons felt changing gender identity was not important compared to 33 people who felt marriage was not an important issue.

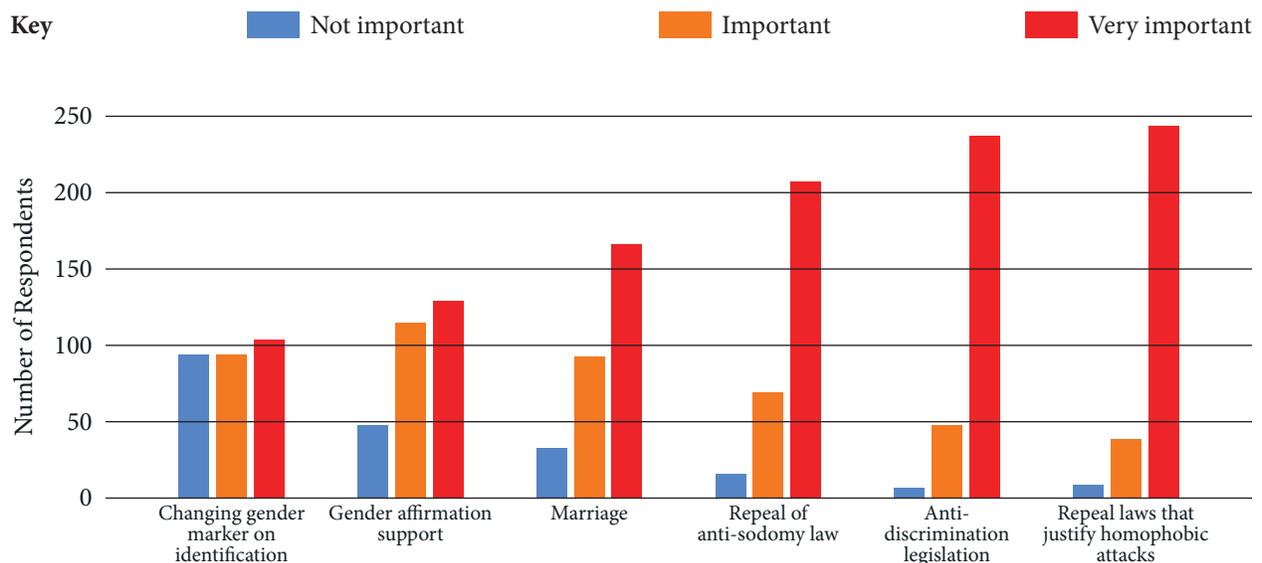


Figure 71b: Importance of Specific Political Issues

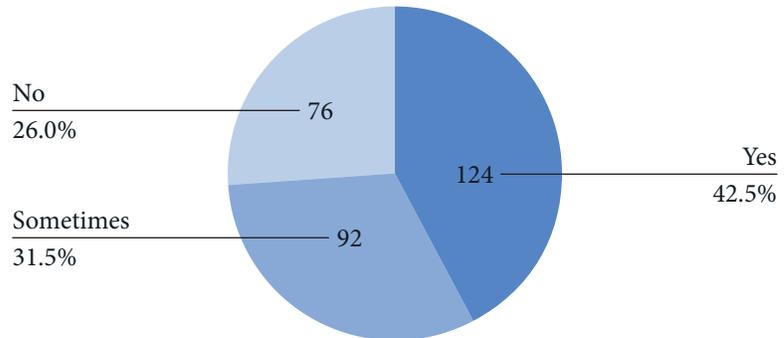
Independence

74. Are you able to meet your basic needs (food, clothes, shelter) without support from anyone else?

“Are you able to meet your basic needs without support from anyone else?”

Figure 73: Ability to Meet Basic Needs Without External Support

43% of respondents were able to meet their basic needs on their own. 32% were able to do so sometimes and 26% were not. There was fair representation of persons from all backgrounds in all categories.



26% of participants were **not** able to meet their basic needs.

75. In the past year, have you been hungry and unable to feed yourself without support at any time?

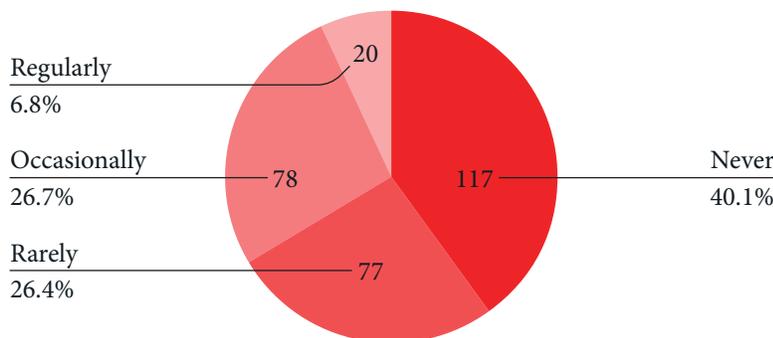


Figure 74: Inability to Feed Oneself Without External Support in the Past Year

In the past year 41% of respondents had never been hungry and unable to feed themselves without support. 27% had the experience occasionally, 26% rarely and 7% regularly. Trans men, trans women, gender fluid and non-binary persons disproportionately indicated they had experienced such hunger regularly. They were also proportionally more likely to respond with occasionally.

76. If you were financially dependent, who was providing you with support?

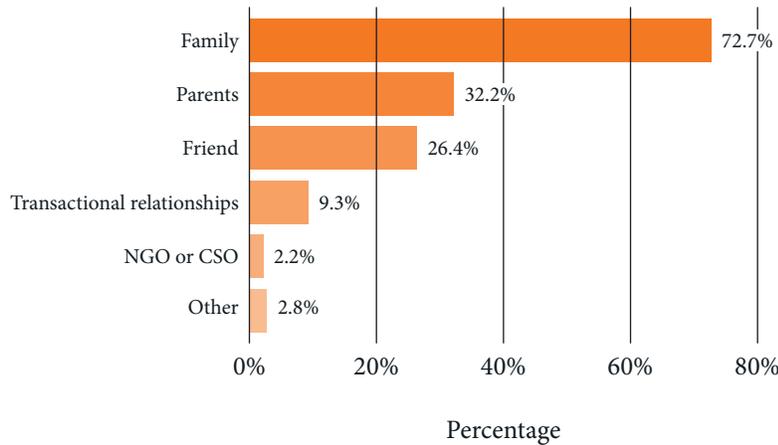


Figure 75: Source of Financial Support

Most persons who experienced financial dependency were supported by their family (73%), the next most popular response was partners (33%) followed by friends (27%). The next most popular response was transactional relationships (9.3%) followed by NGOs and CSOs (2%).

When given the opportunity to expand on other sources of support, grandparents, hustling, and no one were answers offered.

73% of respondents who were financially dependent were supported by their family.

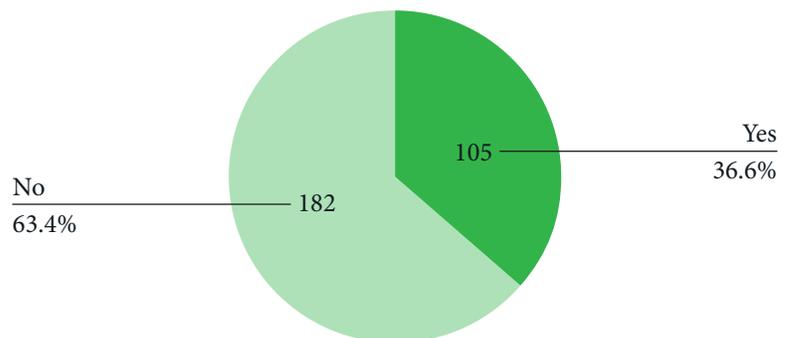
Faith Based Organizations

77. Do you attend church or any other faith based spaces?

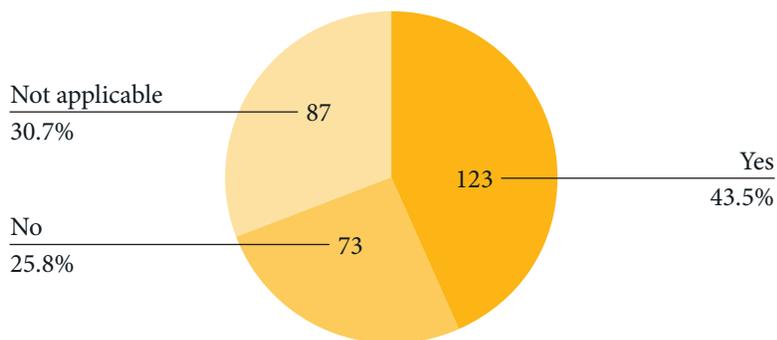
“Do you attend church or any other faith based spaces?”

Figure 76: Participation in Church and Other Faith Spaces

37% of respondents attended church or another faith based space while 63% did not. Persons from all backgrounds were fairly represented in both categories.



78. Have you ever experienced discrimination in faith based spaces such as churches?



“Have you ever experienced discrimination in faith based spaces?”

Figure 77: Experiences of Discrimination in Faith Based Spaces

The majority of respondents (44%) had experienced discrimination in faith based spaces while another 31% felt it was not applicable. 26% of respondents had not experienced discrimination.

63% of respondents did **not** attend faith based spaces.

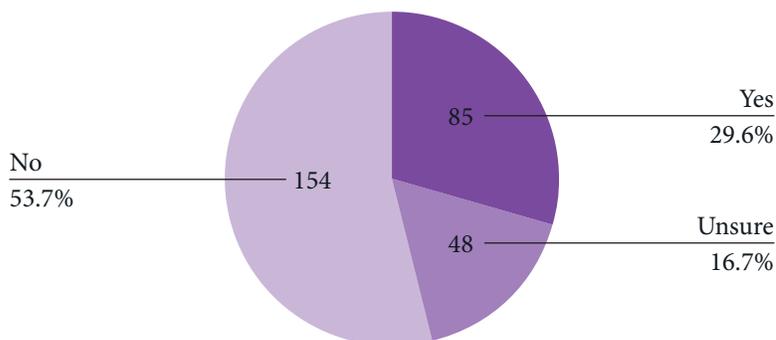
44% of respondents had experienced discrimination in faith based spaces.

79. Do you perceive spirituality to be an area that is lacking in your life?

“Do you attend church or any other faith based spaces?”

Figure 78: Perception of Spirituality as Lacking in Personal Life

54% of respondents did not perceive spirituality to be lacking in their lives while 30% did and 17% were unsure.



Recommendations

Life Satisfaction

Jamaica's poor economy and lack of opportunities were perceived as significant barriers to meeting life goals as well as meeting full potential. Economic empowerment of the LGBT community as well as deliberate efforts to combat exclusion from traditional networks of connection is recommended. Simultaneously the development of LGBT and ally networks of employers is recommended. However, it is important to note that much of the issue is systemic and may be outside the scope of the LGBT community alone. Inability to find workspaces that were LGBT friendly remains a barrier so anti-discrimination policies that focus on workplaces may be of use.

Comfort being Openly LGBT

The majority of respondents were very uncomfortable being openly LGBT, however supportive families as well as friends increased feelings of comfort. Activities and programmes that support creation of community networks are recommended along with those that bridge family divides.

Safety

Most participants felt unsafe or very unsafe living in Jamaica. In particular, they felt unsafe in public spaces, faith based spaces and entertainment spaces. Curation of safe entertainment spaces, in line with ongoing work, remains integral. Continued efforts to include LGBT promoters and party planners as well as to strengthen their events is recommended. Carnival events are a good example of the community creating safe spaces for themselves, which was further facilitated by LGBT organizations, which can be built upon. Faith-based spaces and the Christian religion are becoming an obvious barrier to the community and an increase in advocacy within those spaces is recommended. Experiences of violence within the trans and non-binary community are near universal. Specific interventions that increase public knowledge around those identities is recommended.

Verbal assaults and threats along with discrimination are the two most frequently experienced forms of violence. Critical consideration of the impact of verbal assault on mental health is necessary along with the creation of programs that offer community support in that area. Anti-discrimination legislation is vital. Sexual violence is commonplace and the expansion of support to the community around that issue as well as interventions geared towards prevention is recommended.

Strangers and family members remain the most common perpetrators of violence, and trust in the police force is low. Continued sensitisation of the force is necessary so LGBT persons can successfully report violence and so persons know they will be held accountable for their actions. Interventions that minimise commonly held beliefs about LGBT that spur violence are critical.

Jobs and Living Spaces

The majority of persons felt being LGBT affected their access to living spaces and jobs. The absence of clear anti-discrimination legislation and overarching rent and employment policies that speak specifically to sexual orientation and gender identity allow this to persist and as such should be addressed. Sensitivity training within individual companies as well as with organizations which guide the private sector would be useful here. This could include understanding and building on the models currently used by equitable employers along with direct intervention in problematic work settings. The recent CaPRI study on the economic cost of discrimination provides good support here.

Schools

Experiences of bullying in school are prevalent and largely left unchecked by persons in authority. A deliberate focus on sexual orientation and gender identity in Jamaica's anti-bullying efforts is recommended along with an expansion of the safe school policy. Critical interventions with teachers, parents, guidance counsellors and principals are necessary as they are reported either to know about bullying and not help or to not know about bullying at all. Parent support groups (for those with LGBT children) remain integral as well as expanded training to teachers and guidance counsellors. Work around discriminatory school rules is needed.

Healthcare

Most respondents accessed healthcare in private health facilities and felt uncomfortable discussing their sexual orientation in public health settings. Training in public health facilities has happened for years and should be continued and expanded. Additionally, bridging the gap between the community and public health facilities is necessary to encourage LGBT persons to capitalise on accessible services. Raising awareness and building capacity in trans specific healthcare is also recommended.

Reported experiences of depression and anxiety are high, even without formal diagnoses. Provision of increased mental health support through group sessions, support groups, and financial support for counselling services is recommended.

Relationships

Forming healthy emotional relationships was perceived as difficult because of biphobia, not being sure who was LGBT as well as low level of trust and toxic traits. Building capacity in having healthy relationships along with mental health support to the community in this area is suggested. Work is also needed in expanding understandings of gender and moving beyond restrictive gender roles in the community. The online space is suggested for supporting platonic and romantic relationship formation. However, the space is largely unregulated and meeting online contacts in-person can be dangerous. It might be useful for EFAF to facilitate these meet-ups by building them into existing social spaces.

Homelessness

Experiences of homelessness are still high within the community (1.4% homeless or displaced at the time of the survey and 20.9% at some point in their lives). Discrimination against homeless people is also high. Intervention in the form of a half-way house or shelter is suggested. Also, partnership with existing spaces, limited though they may be, to get them ready for LGBT clients is recommended. Work within the community to create safe temporary spaces may also be useful. The greatest source of homelessness is being put out by family or the community, and therefore work with families of LGBT persons to safely re-integrate them or to prevent displacement is also suggested.

Discrimination and Exclusion within the Community

Experiences of discrimination based on class, colour, gender identity and expression, body type and ability status occurred fairly often within the community. Classism was of particular concern. Bridging those divides is necessary through deliberate community building and critical conversations around the issue.

Persons Living with Disability

Making the space more welcoming to PLWD is critical. This can be accomplished through outreach in formats that are accessible to PLWD as well as outreach at institutions that offer service to PLWD. Making spaces more accessible and reflective of the needs of LGBT PLWD in terms of infrastructure and programs offered is also recommended. Consultation with the community in the development of all policies, programs and interventions would be useful.

Community Service and Political Priorities

The anti-sodomy law was the third most important piece of legislation which should be reformed according to respondents. Laws that accept homosexual approaches as justification for murder and anti-discrimination laws were seen as most important. Also viewed as important was a focus on gender affirmation support and thus it is also recommended as an area of political priority. Organizing advocacy and also funding around these priority areas is recommended.

Research Findings

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