



# FINAL REPORT

## Consultancy to assess LGBT Inclusivity and Diversity in Select Government Based-Youth Programmes

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CISHET	Cisgender and Heterosexual
EYJ	Equality Youth Jamaica
GBMSM	Gay Bisexual and other Men who have Sex with Men
HEART/NSTA Trust	Human Employment and Resource Training /National Service Training Agency Trust
ILGA	International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Association
J-FLAG	Jamaica Forum for Lesbians All-Sexual and Gays
LGBT	Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender
MDA	Ministry Department and Agency
MOHW	Ministry of Health and Wellness
MOEYI	Ministry of Education Youth and Information
MSM	Men who have Sex with Men
NYS	National Youth Service
OAPA	Offences Against the Person Act
SOA	Sexual Offences Act
SOGI	Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
Trans	Transgender
UN	United Nations
YIC	Youth Innovation Centre (Formerly Youth Information Centre)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This survey was conducted between September and October 2021 with the goal of gathering information about the inclusiveness of government-run youth programmes: the usefulness of inclusion and diversity training conducted by J-FLAG with staff at government run youth programmes; the overall level of inclusivity in government run youth programmes; and whether levels of inclusivity had changed over time.

The survey utilised an intersectional mixed methods approach to determine the difference in knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) about LGBT+ inclusion and diversity in government-run youth institutions. The study engaged 65 participants across Jamaica's 14 parishes through a combination of self-administered online survey and in-depth interviews: 30 members of staff from government run youth programmes as well as youth focused ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) and 35 youth who were users of government run youth programmes. It also assessed the level of job satisfaction among staff at government run youth spaces with the understanding that job satisfaction significantly impacts job performance – including service provision. The study included an assessment of disability inclusion as a control measure for inclusivity overall.

The information in this report may be used to improve the inclusivity of government run youth spaces as well as in MDAs. It provides insight into the experiences of LGBT youth and staff members as well as recommendations for making improvements.

The majority of participants were cisgender women, in both staff and youth surveys and interviews LGBT+ persons were represented. Overall, seven participants lived with disabilities.

All staff who participated in interviews found the inclusion and diversity training useful and had an overall positive view of the level of inclusivity among their co-workers. However, and this trend is echoed across all sectors of the research, government MDAs were perceived to be less inclusive at the organizational level. The majority of staff who were interviewed were comfortable or very comfortable interacting with LGBT youth.

The staff survey revealed that most LGBT staff members were aware of employment and promotion opportunities within their organizations. Only 33.3 % of the six participants said they were unaware of opportunities. However, the majority of LGBT respondents (66%) indicated low morale in their organizations, compared to only 29% of cisgender and heterosexual (cis/het) respondents. When asked about their satisfaction with the level of inclusion and diversity, heterosexual respondents were equally satisfied and somewhat dissatisfied 21.7 %. However only 4.3 % of the LGBT persons were satisfied the level of inclusion and diversity. Of the 13 % of respondents who indicated they were dissatisfied with the level of inclusivity, all were LGBT+.

The majority of staff survey respondents had been with their organizations for more than 6 years and therefore were aware of any shifts in culture and attitude.

Youth interview participants' rated government run youth programmes between good and very good for their level of inclusivity. Youth Innovation Centres ranked highest followed by HEART Trust/NTA. However

an overall poor attitude among some youth programme workers – in particular at HEART – was perceived to be a barrier to both LGBT+ and cis/het participants.

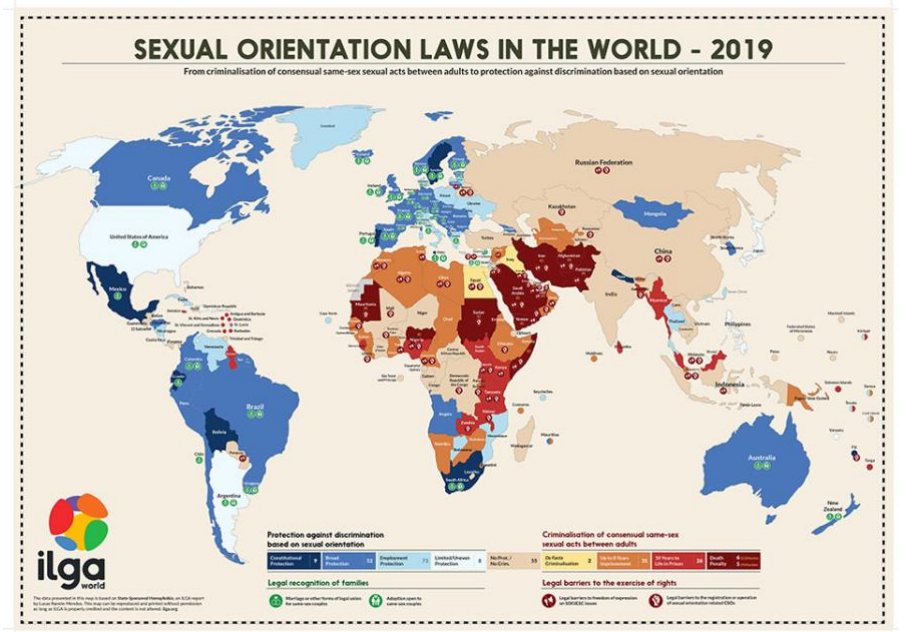
For survey respondents about 41% of 12 LGBT+ respondents felt ambivalent about the level of respect they received while participating in government-run youth programmes, while 25% disagreed or strongly disagreed that they felt respected while participating. Comparatively the overwhelming majority of heterosexual respondents agreed or felt neutral about being respected. Of the 14.3% of persons who disagreed with the idea that staff in government run youth programmes were interested in creating more inclusive spaces, the majority were LGBT youth. LGBT youth were also the most likely to have experienced discriminatory harassment in government run youth spaces.

The information in this report reflects that there have been improvements to the level of inclusivity in government run youth spaces since J-FLAG's intervention. The organizations that were included in sensitization and training (YICs) rank highest for inclusivity. And according to LGBT+ youth 'even one good staff member makes a difference'. However there is more work to be done at the organizational level and the need for expansion into other MDAs. LGBT youth are still disproportionately impacted by stigma and discrimination based on their sexual orientation and gender identity. There are also differences in experiences based on gender with transwomen and gay men being seen as less acceptable than trans men and lesbians.

# CONTEXT

## INTRODUCTION

Almost 3 billion people live in nations that criminalize consensual same-sex behaviour. Despite substantial progress in recent years, the map below demonstrates how much work remains to be done. According to the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Association (ILGA), homosexuality is punished by jail, torture, or even death in 70 United Nations (UN) member nations, and none of them guarantee LGBT+ persons the same rights as their heterosexual counterparts. Jamaica is one such country wherein LGBT+ persons are at a disadvantage because a significant portion of the population adhere to anti-queer ideas buoyed by repressive laws and policies. For instance, in Jamaica, anal sex is criminalised under Articles 76 and 77 of the 1864 Offences Against the Person Act (OAPA); this is wrongly interpreted to mean it is illegal to be gay in Jamaica, and deployed against gay bisexual and other men who have sex with men (GBMSM) and trans women. Article 79 of the OAPA criminalises ‘Outrages on Decency’ between male persons, however what constitutes gross indecency not clearly stated and the provision may be used to target GBMSM and trans women for almost any act of intimacy. In 2011 Jamaican amended its constitution to include the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms which laid out the grounds on which its citizens would be protected from discrimination. While there are areas in the Charter that may be applied to protect the LGBTQ+ community, there is no protection on the basis of sexuality or gender – rather on the basis of being male or female. There is no ‘catch-all’ category of other status, and the Charter retains its Savings Law Clause that protects the ‘buggery law’ and laws that criminalised abortion in the OAPA from challenge on the grounds on unconstitutionality.



According to 2017 research conducted by Keon West, slightly less than 50% of Jamaicans would engage in or support some form of violence against LGBT+ persons and LGBT youth were at risk of being ostracised by their own families.<sup>2</sup> In an earlier survey (2012) done by the University of the West Indies at Mona, 76 percent of respondents opposed altering the buggery legislation, and a majority (65 percent) oppose amending the Charter of Fundamental Freedoms to protect the rights of LGBT+ people<sup>3</sup>. This anti LGBT+ mentality is evident in schools and the workplace, resulting in discrimination against members of the LGBT+ community, including LGBT+ youth. Inherently, anti-equality mind-sets will not yield outcomes in which individuals feel valued, heard, and respected, hence hindering the formation of an inclusive culture.

<sup>1</sup> (Degrees of Equality: A National Study Examining Workplace Climate for LGBT Employees)

<sup>2</sup> (West)

<sup>3</sup> (Gaylord and Perez-Santiago)

According to the Human Rights Campaign Foundation about 46% of LGBT+ individuals are closeted at work and 28% are totally closeted and not open to anyone in their lives. According the J-FLAG's Community Experience and Needs Assessment less than 10% of respondents were very comfortable being openly LGBT in Jamaica while about 34% were very uncomfortable. 51% of respondents felt being openly LGBT impacted their ability to get jobs with the trans community overwhelmingly indicating workplace discrimination<sup>4</sup>. The fact that the majority of LGBT employees conceal their LGBT status at work is a straightforward indicator that more work needs to be done to translate inclusive policies into an inclusive climate.<sup>5</sup> The need for more inclusive workplaces also highlights the high possibility that external clients - including youth clients - will also experience discrimination upon use of organizations and associated facilities.

Despite the retention of the archaic "buggery laws," which criminalize same-sex intimacy the LGBT+ community in Jamaica continues to fight for equal rights. Jamaica continues to make significant progress in improving the human rights situation for members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT+) community. However, the lack of awareness, diversity, and inclusivity negatively influences the quality of life and chances of success for LGBT+ Jamaicans. Equality for All Foundation Jamaica identified the need for organizational transformation inside government-run facilities that reflect the greater Jamaican oppressive attitude toward LGBT+ people. Subsequently, a number of LGBT+ inclusivity and diversity programmes were implemented with the goal of making government-run facilities more accessible and user-friendly to LGBT+ people. This post-assessment study on specified government-based youth programmes aimed at assessing the present knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAPs) of

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<sup>4</sup> (J-FLAG 2019 Community Experience and Needs Assessment Survey)

<sup>5</sup> (Degrees of Equality: A National Study Examining Workplace Climate for LGBT Employees)

the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Information (MOEYI) and their subsidiary government facilities (youth centres) employees who participated in programmes aimed at raising awareness and sensitization of the LGBT+ youth issues.

## **EMPOWERMENT FOR LGBT+ YOUTH**

The diversity of the LGBT+ youth population creates a unique set of experiences and needs as they are forced to live and work in predominantly heteronormative and cis-normative communities. Many LGBT+ youth experience discrimination and marginalization at the hands of the social systems with which they interact; despite developments in the political landscape for LGBT-identified people, research shows that LGBT+ youth continue to endure harassment.<sup>6</sup> In Jamaica, about 43% of LGBT youth were bullied in school based on their SOGI, with verbal abuse being the most prevalent form (80% of respondents). According a UNICEF 2015 study on Jamaica's children, 46% of respondents had their sexual and/or gender identity revealed without their permission. Both students and school employees were involved in the bullying of LGBT+ students, and in about 34% of cases teachers were aware of the bullying but did not intervene. Usually, the persons charged with offering emotional support and protection to youth such as guidance counsellors (51%) and parents (75%) were unaware that LGBT+ youth were being bullied. As a result of pervasive and unchallenged discrimination, affirmative social inclusion and social support are essential to the growth and success of LGBT+ youth in all settings<sup>7</sup>. This includes diversity, equality and inclusion training with those who offer education, care, and empowerment services to LGBT+ youth.

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<sup>6</sup> (Wagaman)

<sup>7</sup> (Chambers and Watson-Williams)

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## GOVERNMENT -RUN YOUTH PROGRAMMES

Much of the work on youth, in general, has focused on how the social and political context affects them, with little attention paid to how young people affect those domains<sup>8</sup>. As a result, programmes and interventions aimed at young people rarely address structural inequities or ways for young people to become more conscious of and involved in attempts to change these inequities and the institutions that underpin or reinforce them.<sup>9</sup>

The goal of the government-run programmes is to improve the lives of the people. These programmes are guided by a transformational approach that aims to effect change in individuals and social systems. However, a solid evidence base is required for effective organizational transformation. This entails hearing directly from those who will be impacted by organizational reform. Therefore, programmes that promote inclusion and diversity should follow a holistic methodology that raises the visibility of LGBT+ youth and allows them to express their concerns.

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## JAMAICA YOUTH PROGRAMMES

The Government of Jamaica has sought, over the years, to address the needs of the nation's youth. Established in 1973, re-launched in 1995 the National Youth Service (NYS) has been a driving force behind youth empowerment. The other most notable youth agency is the Human Employment and Resource Training /National Service Training Agency Trust (HEART/NSTA Trust) established in 1982. 'HEART' serves as the country's principal human capital development agency. In addition the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MOEYI) have facilitated multiple ongoing youth programmes/organizations namely:

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<sup>8</sup> (Christens)

<sup>9</sup> (Wagaman)

1. Youth Innovation Centres (YICs) – Youth Information Centres
2. Youth and Adolescents Policy Division (YAPD)
3. Jamaica House Fellowship
4. Hope Programme
5. Learn Earn Give Save (LEGS) Programme (Multi Ministry Collaboration)
6. Jamaica Youth Ambassadors Programme
7. Youth Advisory Council of Jamaica
8. National Youth Parliament, Jamaica
9. Charge Up Project
10. Jamaica Library Service
11. Child Protection and Family Services Agency

The above programmes are only a few examples; within each, there are breakout programmes that focus on specific theme areas aimed at offering opportunities to the nation's youth. However, most of these programmes do not address the inclusivity and diversity of LGBT+ youth, putting them at a greater risk of being unable to access these services. To this end, JFLAG, in 2019, implemented several interventions to educate Jamaicans on the importance of respect and tolerance towards the LGBT+ community, one of which incorporated MOEYI and their youth centres.<sup>10</sup>

The 2017 National Youth Policy of Jamaica defines youth a person between the ages of 15-29 (formerly youth was understood to be persons aged 15-24 years).<sup>11</sup> The Ministry of Youth and Culture supports many initiatives geared towards improving the lives of the youth. A primary focus of these

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<sup>10</sup> (Building An Inclusive Jamaica that treats the LGBT Jamaicans with Respect and Dignity)

<sup>11</sup> (Culture)

programmes is to deter young people from getting in trouble with the law, as emphasized by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang:

*“Jamaica continues to boast a relatively young population. However, a matter of significant concern and urgency for the government is the high level of youth ages 12-14, who enter into conflict with the law.”*

LGBT+ youth are at a disadvantage because of specific provisions within the law that fuel stigma and discrimination such as the aforementioned Article 76 of the Offences Against the Person Act.<sup>12</sup> In the past this provision – and the notion that it makes homosexuality illegal - has been utilised by guidance counsellors to justify not providing support to LGBT+ students in schools<sup>13</sup>. We also observe difficulties when the distinctions between the state and the church are blurred, because the cornerstone of Jamaican society is based on Christian ideals that reject LGBT+ persons on the basis of vertical morality (obedience to god). As a result, LGBT+ youth face possible stigmatization, discrimination, and marginalization within public and private spaces such as the workplace and the family unit among other social support systems aimed at providing and enhance human security and human right. As a consequence, the personal and professional development of LGBT+ youths is jeopardized because the aforementioned social institutions are commonly uphold harmful religious dogma. The lack of an inclusive and diverse society exposes LGBT+ youth to public and private harassment and violence, increasing the possibility of unlawful behaviour, putting LGBT+ youth at a high risk of imprisonment, as shown in research undertaken with MSM between 2007 and 2008 and published in 2013 show that 18.4% had spent at least one night in jail.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> (LGBT Issues in Jamaica)

<sup>13</sup> (“Homosexual acts are illegal, guidance counsellors cannot break the law -JTA <https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20160112/homosexual-acts-are-illegal-guidance-counsellors-cannot-break-law-jta>)

<sup>14</sup> (Figueroa J.P. et al “High HIV Prevalence among MSM in Jamaica is associated with Social Vulnerability and other Sexually Transmitted Infections”)

## ORGANIZATIONAL INCLUSION & DIVERSITY

The United Nations defines social inclusion as ‘as a process by which efforts are made to ensure equal opportunities for all, regardless of their background, so that persons can achieve their full potential in life.<sup>15</sup> At the organizational level, inclusion entails creating an environment that allows individuals with diverse backgrounds, qualities, and ways of thinking to collaborate productively. People must feel valued, heard, and respected in order to develop an inclusive culture.<sup>16</sup> Inclusion is the degree to which employees believe they are a part of central company activities. Inclusion therefore necessitates adaptation to rapid social changes that challenge the organization’s status quo and create chances to improve services provided. According to Ferdman's definition of inclusion, it is a multi-layered process, that theorizes, in particular, that there are six levels that influence inclusion: (a) individual experience, (b) interpersonal behaviour, (c) group norms and experiences, (d) leaders and leadership, (e) organizational policies, practices, and climate, and (f) societal values and ideologies. Ferdman suggested that inclusion is a process that evolves through time as a result of interactions between individuals and the levels indicated.<sup>17</sup>

Diversity, in its simplest form refers to variety. Respecting diversity entails treating each member of an organization as an individual with unique needs, experiences, values and beliefs. The work that is necessary to support diversity in organizations, is also contextual, as it is defined by societal constructs. Thus data on diversity and inclusion should be viewed with caution because they are often context-specific, hence unreliable for cross-organizational comparisons. The corpus of data on diversity practices

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<sup>15</sup> (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs)

<sup>16</sup> (Thompson)

<sup>17</sup> (Therriault, Implementation of Promising Practices for LGBTQ Inclusion: A Multilevel Process)

is limited, with many articles relying on case studies or anecdotal accounts. Case-study data frequently focuses on diversity programmes aimed at lowering staff turnover and/or increasing employee engagement.<sup>18</sup>

Discrimination and exclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT+) personnel in the workplace is a persistent concern confronting public administration – it also reflects the likely treatment of LGBT+ clients accessing services through those organizations. For instance, about 64% of respondents were uncomfortable being openly LGBT+ in public sector spaces such as government offices, the only other place that ranked higher for discomfort was the church and faith based spaces<sup>19</sup>. According to a 2020 study on inclusive workplace practices, the promotion of LGBT+ acceptance and inclusion, had a favourable influence on LGBT+ employees’ job satisfaction and effective commitment among federal government workers.<sup>20</sup> Having employees of varied genders, sexualities, ability statuses, ethnicities, socioeconomic level, and backgrounds in the workplace can boost innovation, problem-solving, and competitiveness. Inclusion and diversity appear to be important determinants of organizational commitment and job success, according to a growing body of studies.<sup>21</sup>As such, an assessment of job satisfaction levels as well as emotional attachment to government-run organizations is a critical first step in understanding the experiences of both LGBT+ employees and LGBT+ clients.<sup>22</sup>

Employee support – in this instance, heterosexual employees – is another vital part of inclusion and diversity. Employee behavioural support for various organizational objectives (e.g., LGBT+ inclusion),

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<sup>18</sup> (Thompson)

<sup>19</sup> (J-FLAG 2019 LGBT Community Experience and Need Assessment Survey)

<sup>20</sup> (Thompson)

<sup>21</sup> (Cho and Mor Barak)

<sup>22</sup> (Hur)

according to Herscovitch and Meyer (2002), can take one of two forms: focused or discretionary. Focused behaviours are those that the employee is compelled to undertake as a result of her or his job and relationship with the company. While the term focal refers to employee actions that give obligatory support for organizational aims, employee efforts that do not provide such support are referred to as resistant. Supportive workplace relationships are interpersonal resources that can impact employees' job experiences, and they are especially important for those who identify as LGBT+.<sup>23</sup> Hence it is important that diversity measures consider where an organizations was and where it is now but to measure how far they have progressed. Data can be utilized to determine the effectiveness of continuing diversity programmes over time.

## **INTERSECTIONALITY**

Intersectionality has aided the ongoing intellectual and political deconstruction of dichotomous identities that individually fall within categories of oppression. Some of these social categories (such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic class) intersect at the micro-level of human experience to reflect multiple interlocking systems of privilege and oppression at the macro, social-structural level (e.g., racism, sexism, and heterosexism).<sup>24</sup> The value of intersectionality is found in its ability to conceptualize several identities at the same time, as well as to demonstrate how these overlapping identities are linked to legal doctrine, social structures, and inequalities.<sup>25</sup> As previously stated, the LGBT+ youth population is already diverse, mainly owing to diverse sexual and gender identities. Nevertheless, within these variations exist other identifiers that are prone to prejudice. For

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<sup>23</sup> (Webster, Adams and Maranto)

<sup>24</sup> (LGBT Issues in Jamaica)

<sup>25</sup> (S. Cho)

example, Black LGBT+ persons are frequently subjected to various intersecting structural adversities because of their sexual orientations, gender identities, and racial identities - they may have an even greater likelihood of receiving unfair treatment linked to their sexual, gender, and racial identities.<sup>26</sup> Another noteworthy mention is women's struggle within the patriarchal system that governs societies and most organizational structures. Women, especially those of racial/ethnic minorities, have all been historically oppressed and marginalized.<sup>27</sup> As such, for women within the LGBT+ community, they struggle with multiple identifiers that overlap.

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#### INTERSECTIONALITY – JAMAICAN CONTEXT

In the Jamaica context, LGBT+ youth from lower-income homes and those who reside in rural communities encounter intersectional barriers to inclusion. Trans youth are also especially vulnerable to social exclusion and violence. One outcome is high levels of homelessness – with 21% of LGBT+ persons in a national study having experienced homelessness or displacement, and up to 50% of trans men and women being homeless or displaced at some point in time.<sup>28</sup> Homeless and street youth who identify as gay or trans are more continuously and severely vulnerable than their heterosexual or cisgender counterparts; nevertheless, current youth programmes within the government system do not specifically identify or address the vulnerability of LGBT+ youth at high risk of homelessness. To think of LGBT+ people's rights as isolated and exclusive to that group – much like any other group or individual's rights, or rights linked with any particular issue – is to ignore the numerous identities and circumstances that shape and define how people live their lives.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> (Dale)

<sup>27</sup> (Bowleg)

<sup>28</sup> J-FLAG 2019 LGBT Community Experience and Needs Assessment Survey

<sup>29</sup> (D'Elio and Sood)

# RESEARCH DESIGN

## TECHNICAL APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

For this post-assessment study, a cross-national mixed methods approach was used to capture the data. Data was collected from 65 participants spread across Jamaica's fourteen parishes. The study sought to determine the difference in knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) about LGBT+ inclusion and diversity in government-run youth institutions, including the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Information (MOEYI), Youth Information Centres (YIC), and other governmental spaces dedicated to youth development that engaged in awareness and sensitization programmes, the majority of which were directed by Equality for All Foundation Jamaica Ltd (formerly J-FLAG).

## SAMPLE

### GOVERNMENT RUN YOUTH PROGRAMME EMPLOYEES

The overall sample included participants of Equality for All Foundation Jamaica, youth diversity sensitization and training programmes. Twenty-one names were supplied by the Foundation from which seven participants were selected for employee in-depth interviews. In addition, twenty-three employees from various Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) took part in an online survey. This survey was designed to assess the success of employee sensitization and awareness training, as well as their level of inclusion and diversity.

### GOVERNMENT RUN YOUTH PROGRAMME CLIENTS

The overall sample included LGBT+ and non-LGBT+ young people who were recommended by participants from the employee sample. Interviews were conducted with a total of fourteen participants, two young persons from each of the seven regions of the Ministry of Education, Information and Youth.

In addition, a total of twenty-one young persons participated in an online survey. The purpose of this survey was to assess user experiences and facilities operations of Youth Information Centre in each parish. The online survey was disseminated by email and on the platform of the Equality for All Foundation, which also spearheaded online advertising via their social media accounts and staff of government-run youth centres.

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Number Participants</b>
<b>In-depth Interviews with Staff</b> <i>An interview per MOEYI region</i>	7
<b>Staff Survey</b>	23
<b>Staff Total</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>In-depth Interviews with Youth</b> <i>Two interviews per MOEYI region</i>	14
<b>Youth Survey</b>	21
<b>Youth Total</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Total Participants</b>	<b>65</b>

*Table 1. Number of Participants in each category*

## **INSTRUMENT DESIGN**

All instruments were designed to capture information relevant to the informant experience within MOEYI and YIC after participating in government-based youth programmes and to fulfil the objective of the study. A total of four questionnaires were developed:

1. Employee Inclusivity & Diversity Survey

2. Youth Experience and Facility Assessment Survey
3. Employee In-Depth Interview
4. Youth In-depth Interview

*Employee Inclusivity & Diversity Survey* - consists of thirty structured and open-ended questions about staff knowledge, attitudes, and practices, as well as the organization's overall culture toward youth, particularly members of the LGBT+ community.

*Youth Experience and Facility Assessment Survey* - consists of twenty-one structured and open-ended questions about youth experience in government run youth spaces and Ministry of Education, Youth, and Information.

*Employee In-Depth Interview* – consists of fifteen questions aimed at assessing the respondents' training experience, inclusion understanding, and application of what they have learnt.

*Youth In-Depth Interview* – consists of fifteen questions aimed at assessing the respondents' perception of inclusivity at government-run youth programme.

## **DATA COLLECTION**

Data was gathered through in-depth interviews with key informants' who are or were youth workers at Youth Information Centres across the island as well as persons who participated in awareness and sensitization programmes through Equality for All. Other participants who had access to or knowledge of government run youth empowerment spaces, as well as decision makers about government run youth empowerment spaces, completed online surveys. It was critical for this study to speak with hard-to-reach LGBT+ community members with youth programme experience because the topics covered required as many details and explanations as possible. As a result, the researchers used a mixed method approach,

which allowed for in-depth interactions while also capturing general knowledge, attitudes, and practices in government-run youth programmes.

## **IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS**

Participants were interviewed through virtual and digital mediums (Zoom Meetings and Mobile Phone Calls). Participants were recruited through the efforts of Equality for All Foundation, community gatekeepers, and youth service providers such as the MOEYI and HEART TRUST. In some instances respondents referred other service users. Each participant was contacted prior to their interview where the purpose of the study was communicated, and consent was obtained. The following is detailed description of interviews:

- Prior to starting each interview participants were reminded of their option to stop the interview at given point without penalty. They were also advised that they were allowed to not respond to any question that they were not comfortable with and to ask that information be removed at the end of the interview.
- The interviews lasted 20 to 30 minutes, which was communicated to all participants prior to the start of the session.
- Two interviews were conducted virtually via Zoom meeting, while the remaining nineteen were conducted over the phone.

Finally, it should be highlighted that supplementary questions were asked throughout each interview in order to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' perspectives of government-run youth spaces. This enabled us to determine the extent to which certain of the programme's sensitization methods were being employed and observed.

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## LIMITATION OF IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

The recruitment process took longer than expected as a number of key informants were no longer employees of Youth Information Centres while others had changed their contact information.

## ONLINE SURVEY

The employee surveys were aimed at persons who currently or in the past have worked or volunteered in government run youth spaces or programme, while the youth survey was aimed at person's ages 18-30 who utilise government run youth spaces or programmes or who have used them in the past. The following description speaks to the recruitment process:

- Participants were recruited through social media advertisements and word of mouth. Equality for All Foundation Jamaica Ltd hosted the survey on their platform through Google Forms.
- Participants were also recruited through recommendations from other participants especially those who were members of the LGBT+ community.

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## LIMITATION OF ONLINE SURVEY

Some transgender members of the LGBT+ community took issue with the wording of questions that they did not feel were inclusive. The principal researcher and the Equality for All Foundation Jamaica team responded quickly to this issue, sending apologetic emails and assuring that concerns were being taken into consideration. Following that, changes were made to the online survey to allow for more inclusive terminology, with a focus on ensuring that all participants had a collective knowledge of words.

## METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

All data was uploaded in an excel spreadsheet. For the youth qualitative data both univariate and bivariate analysis was applied. The frequency and cross tabulations used in the data analysis are displayed via tables and charts. Additionally, content analysis was conducted in order to determine the main

patterns identified within open-ended questions - the responses were divided into thematic analyses that reflected positive vs. negative opinions. However, due to the small size of the data set, cross tabulation was not possible for the employee qualitative analysis, hence only event frequencies were measured, also represented in tables and charts.

Google Forms hosted both the Employee and Youth online surveys. This service delivers quantitative data that demonstrate frequency distributions. Further analyses of the outputs were then conducted by the research team. These findings have also been presented in the form of tables, charts, and graphs.

## **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

There was low risk associated with participation in this study. However, all participants were fully informed of any risks associated with participation in the study and proceeded once they gave consent. They were provided with the option of withdrawing at any time without sanction. Participant information is kept confidential and only available to the research team.

# RESEARCH FINDINGS

## IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW FINDINGS

The two main objectives of the study were 1) to examine the extent to which government-run programmes have become more inclusive and diverse since JFLAG’s intervention and 2) to examine the extent to which government-run youth spaces have become inclusive for LGBT+ youth. As a result, while the qualitative study was being conducted (with the main goal of identifying elements that help or hinder inclusion and diversity within government-run youth spaces), a quantitative study was being conducted concurrently to capture the wider perception of the services provided by government-run youth institutions as compared to that of employees and staff who participated in the awareness and sensitivity programmes.

## EMPLOYEE IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

### EMPLOYEE DEMOGRAPHY

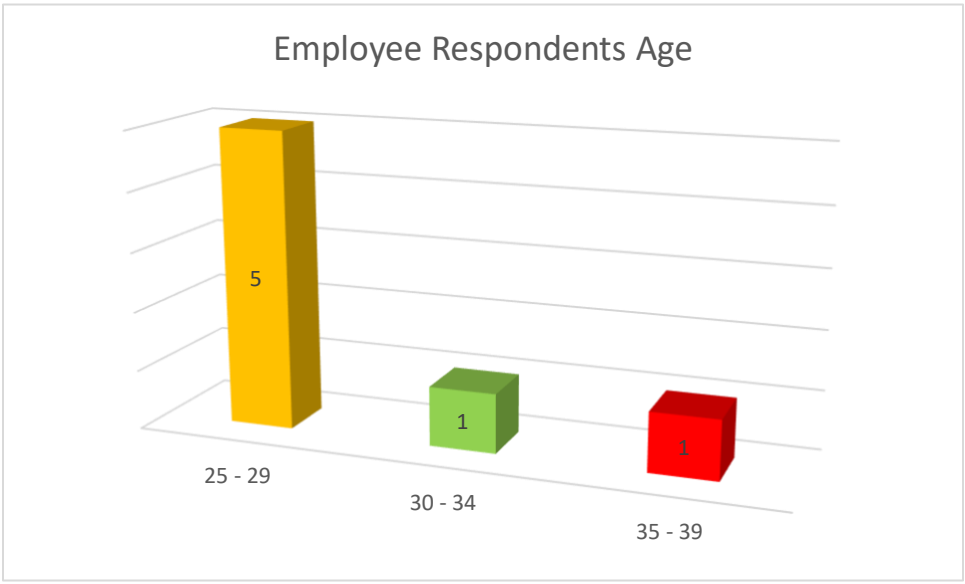


Figure 1. Shows the Age of Employee Respondents for In-depth Interview

The data shows that 71 per cent of employee respondents were between the ages of 25 – 29 while the 29 per cent was equally divided among the age ranges 30 – 34 and 35 - 39. A youth centre is a facility meant to give an indoor and outdoor space for young people to socialize with their peers. Young people use the facility to socialize in a secure and friendly environment through planned and unstructured arts, cultural, and sporting activities, as well as access to a range of services and programmes. Hence, it is prudent of youth centres to ensure that their staff majority are young people as this further exemplifies the important role the youth plays in community development and nation building.

Place of Employment	
Advocate	1
Entrepreneur	1
Youth Adolescent Policy Division	1
Youth Information Centre	1
Ministry of Education	1
Youth Innovation Centre-MOEY	1
Health Centre	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>

*Table 2. Place of Employment*

Respondents' Position	
Youth Empowerment Officer	3
Executive Director	1
Youth Club Aide/Assistant	2
Community Health Aide	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>

*Table 3. Respondent's position*

According to the employee demographic data, participants represented various government-run youth programmes around the island. Approximately 43 per cent of the respondent identified themselves as being from Youth Empowerment Officers as their function is defined by Jamaica's Youth Innovation Centre - engage and foster youth empowerment and development through leveraging resources, capacity building, Programme implementation, management of Youth Information Centres (YICs) and Youth Access Points (YAPs), networking, multi-sector collaboration.<sup>30</sup> 29 per cent of participants identified themselves as Youth Club Aides. Youth Club Aides/Assistant (YCAAs) are individuals trained by the government-run organization to provide inactive youth clubs island wide with technical and administrative support. YCAAs also assist in the development of strategies for the club's growth and sustenance. Importantly, YCAAs are required to collaborate with their clubs on fundraising initiatives and community projects.<sup>31</sup> The remaining 28 per cent respondents represent senior level youth centre management and community health aide. Youth workers are generally encouraged to reflect on their work, actively try to reinvent their activities, and seek inspiration from other initiatives and structures.

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<sup>30</sup> (Centre)

<sup>31</sup> (Centre, Forty-Seven Youth Club Assistants Trained)

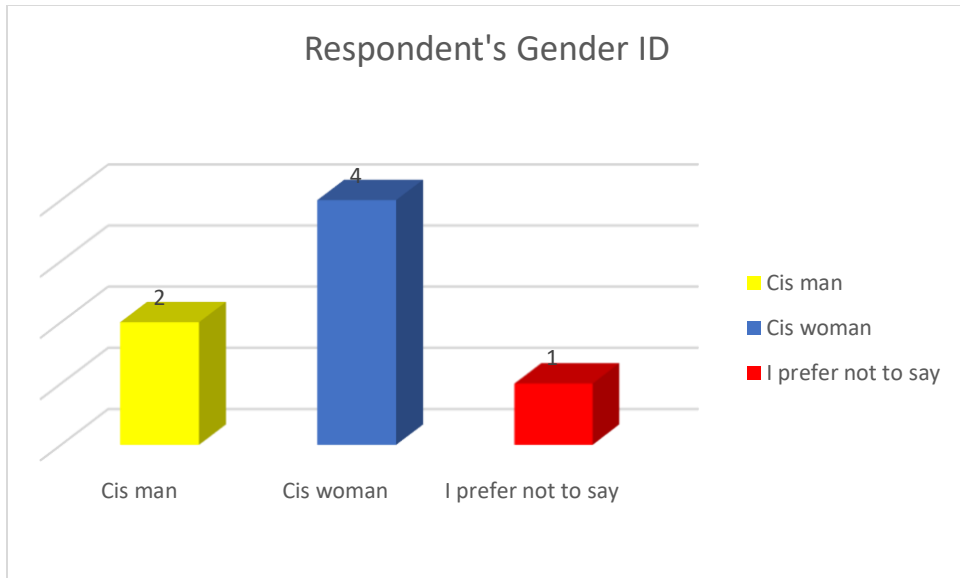


Figure 2. Respondent's Gender ID

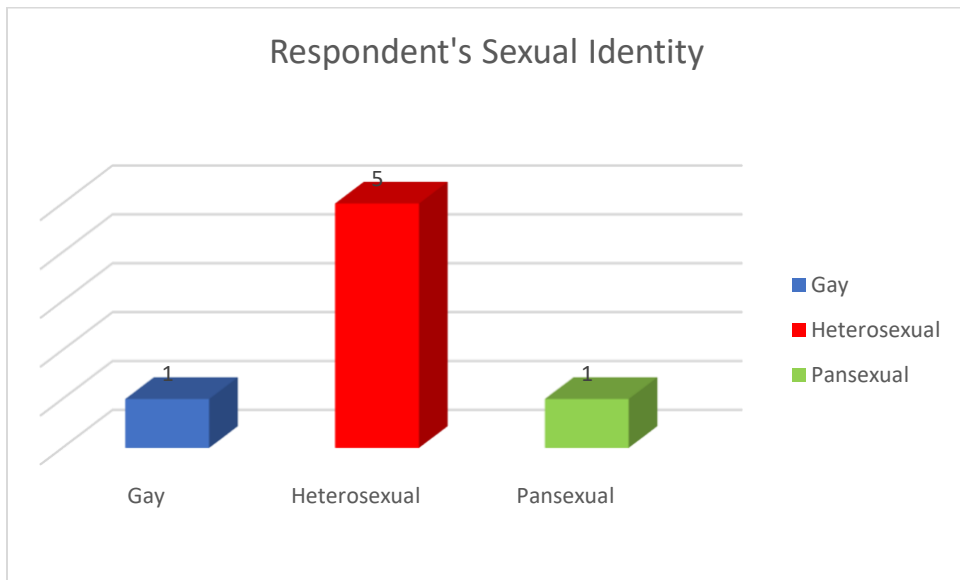


Figure 3. Respondent's Sexual ID

According to the data, 57% of staff in government-run youth spaces are cishet women (women who were assigned female at birth), 29% are cishet men (men who were assigned male at birth), and 14% prefer not to disclose their gender identification. The data also shows that among the respondents 71 per cent

identified as heterosexual, 14 per cent as gay and 14 per cent as pansexual. While the data lacks a sizable difference, it still shows that diversity does exist within employees of government-run programmes.

Respondents with disabilities	
Yes	1
No	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>

Table 4. Number of Respondents with Disabilities

Type of disability	
Mental (Bi-Polar, Chronic Depression, Anxiety)	1
None	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>

Table 5. Type of Disability

The results showed that most employee participants were without disability with only 14 per cent have a disability (mental - bipolar, autism, depression etc.). The category of disability was used as a control measure of inclusion and diversity. Persons living with disabilities (PLWDs), like LGBT+ people, face marginalization and prejudice. For PLWDs discrimination is due to their inability to function without some type of accommodation, a phenomenon known as ableism. Ableism can be defined as the discrimination of and social prejudice against people with disabilities. The researchers acknowledged that, while there are significant variations in how both groups are marginalized, it was crucial to examine how employees treated both marginalized groups. Another noteworthy factor to highlight is the intersectionality of both groups. As McRuer and Mallow wrote “Sex and disability are if not antithetical in the popular imagination,

then certainly incongruous” Disabled persons are regularly de-gendered and desexualized in popular culture as well as academia.<sup>32</sup>

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## EMPLOYEE INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

The purpose of this section is to assess the respondents' training experience, inclusion understanding, and application of what they have learnt.

Respondent’s opinion on diversity and inclusiveness training	
<b>It was very useful</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Somewhat useful</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>It was not very useful</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>

*Table 6. Respondent’s opinion on diversity and inclusion training*

Table 6 shows the overwhelming positive response to training on inclusion and diversity with 85 per cent of participants found the training very useful, while 15 per cent found it somewhat useful. Employees found that they were able to utilize lessons from the training to do the following:

*“Helping others understand that it’s natural.”*

*“They brought people from the community and that opened our eyes to how they feel and how we should accommodate them. Hearing from the LGBT+ people was an important part of the training. I was able to identify persons from the community and deal with them more inclusively.”*

*“Don’t judge a person by their appearance.”*

Through the training employees were able to relate to LGBT+ users of youth centres.

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<sup>32</sup> (Egner)

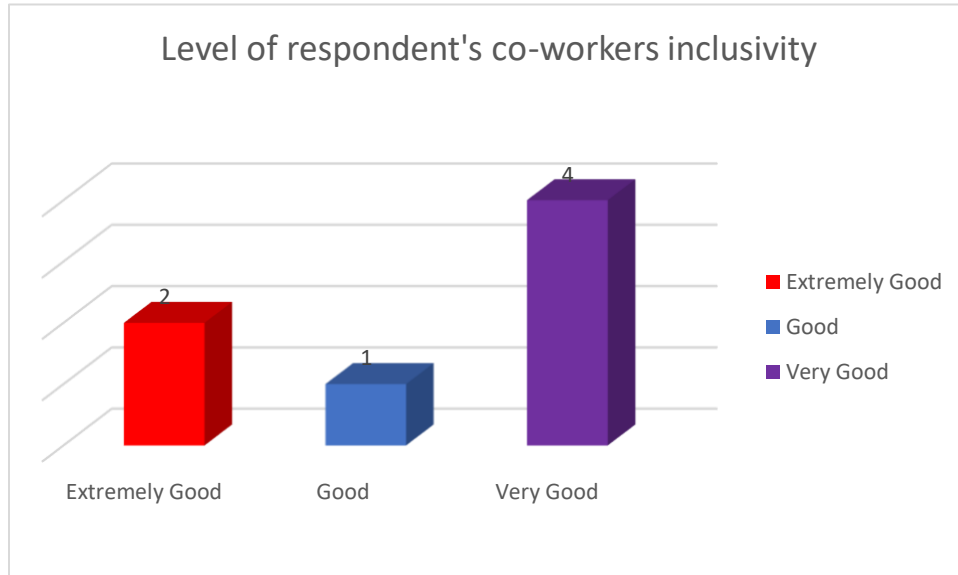
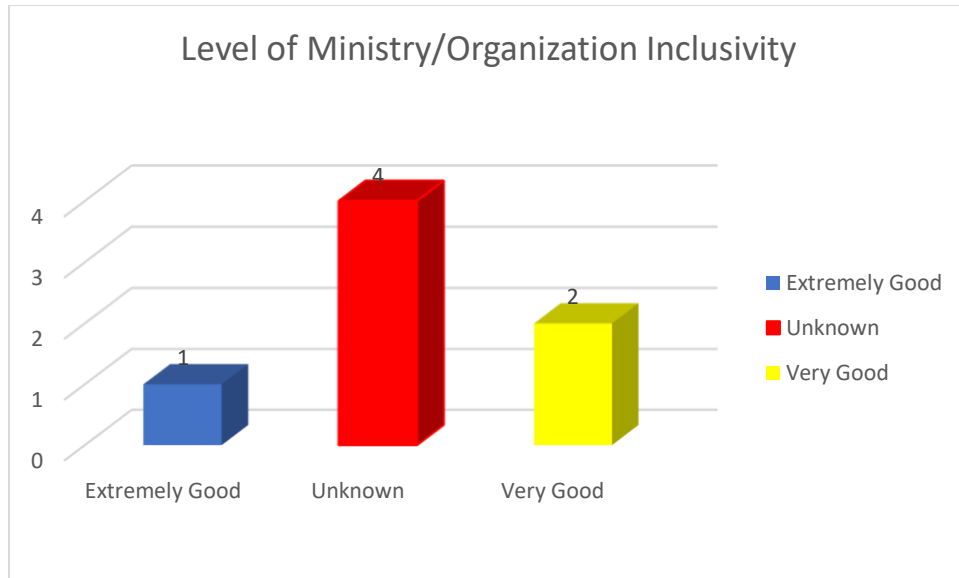


Figure 4. Level of co-workers' inclusivity

The data indicates whether staff have observed LGBT+ inclusive actions among their colleagues. 57 per cent of participants observed very good inclusivity among staff, 29 per cent said staff members were extremely good at being inclusive, while 14 per cent said staff inclusivity was good. It is important to note that persons working in an environment that they find comfortable will produce some amount of bias in their response. In other words, where there is employee comradery persons are less likely to report negatively on their fellow co-workers actions – this speaks to persons acting in a socially desirable manner within a group setting or that individuals' tend to over-report socially desirable personal characteristics and to underreport socially undesirable characteristics.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> (Arnold, Feldman and Purbhoo)



*Figure 5. Level of Ministry/Organization inclusivity*

With the above-mentioned report bias, data shows that while inclusivity was measured high among employees this was not the case across organizations. The lack of inclusivity is shown with 57 per cent reporting that they did not observe inclusive action on the part of their organization. As highlighted by one participant that:

*“Process dealing with ministry is challenging.”*

This indicates that while efforts are being made to reach staff members there is still a lack of inclusive action on an operational level. For example, the following Figure 6 below demonstrates that while some employees are aware of the EYJ help line, there is a still a considerable lack of knowledge with 57 per cent admitting to not knowing about it.

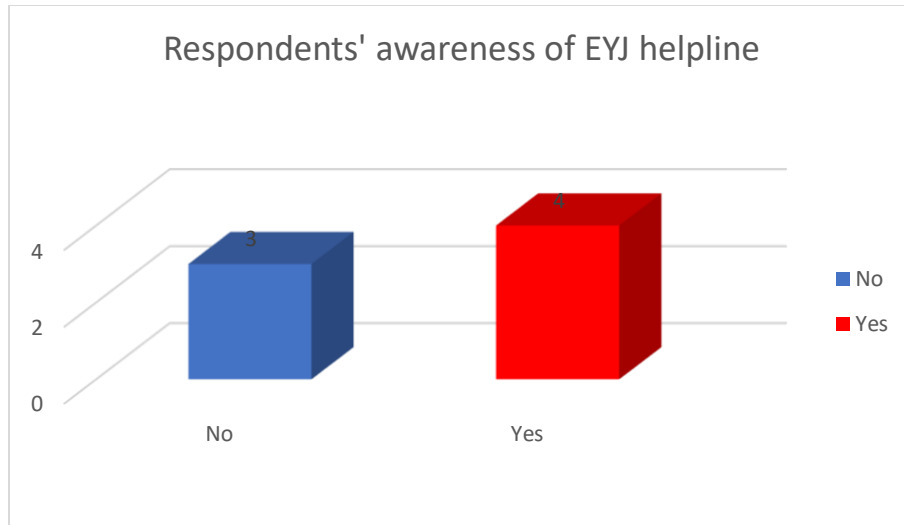


Figure 6. Awareness of EYJ helpline

However, those aware of the helpline reported that they rarely share it and do so social media. The following response speaks to circumstance in which they share the helpline:

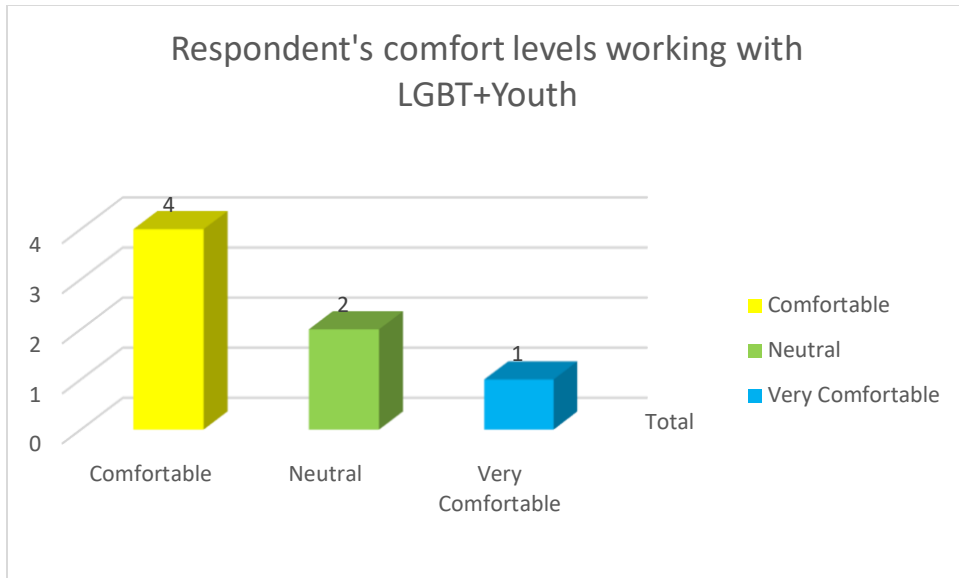
*"I share the helpline on social media platform."*

*"Have not shared extensively - send it in a WhatsApp group"*

*"Shared it with one person."*

*"I shared it directly with people who are having certain issues".*

While government-run youth centres employ many young people who possess a more inclusive approach, Jamaica's overall culture towards LGBT+ persons still permeates governmental ministries.



*Figure 7. Respondents' comfort levels working with LGBT+ Youth*

In relation to LGBT+ acceptance, young people (those who identify as heterosexuals) of today are more open to inclusion and diversity. Across social media and observing social justice initiatives young persons are more willing to identify themselves as allies to the LGBT+ community. This observation matches the findings of the study that shows that 57 percent of employees comfortable working with LGBT+ person who utilize the centres.

## YOUTH IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

### YOUTH DEMOGRAPHY

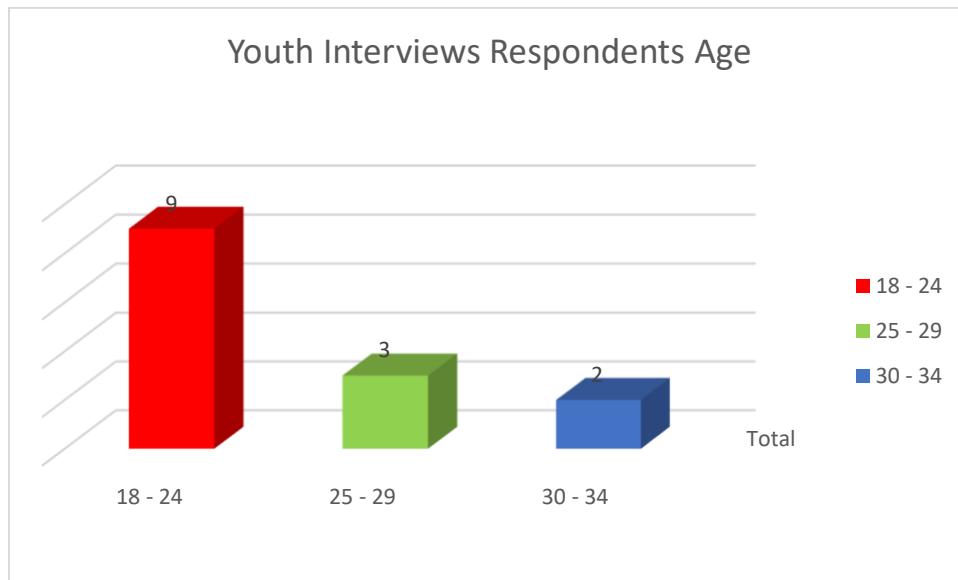


Figure 8. Age of respondents

Participants ranged in age from 18 to 30. 64 per cent of participants were between the ages of 18 to 24, 21 per cent were between the ages of 25 to 29, and 14 per cent were between the age of 30 to 34. All respondents had participated in youth programmes– which informed the age range choice that does not reflect the official youth age range of 15 to 29 years.

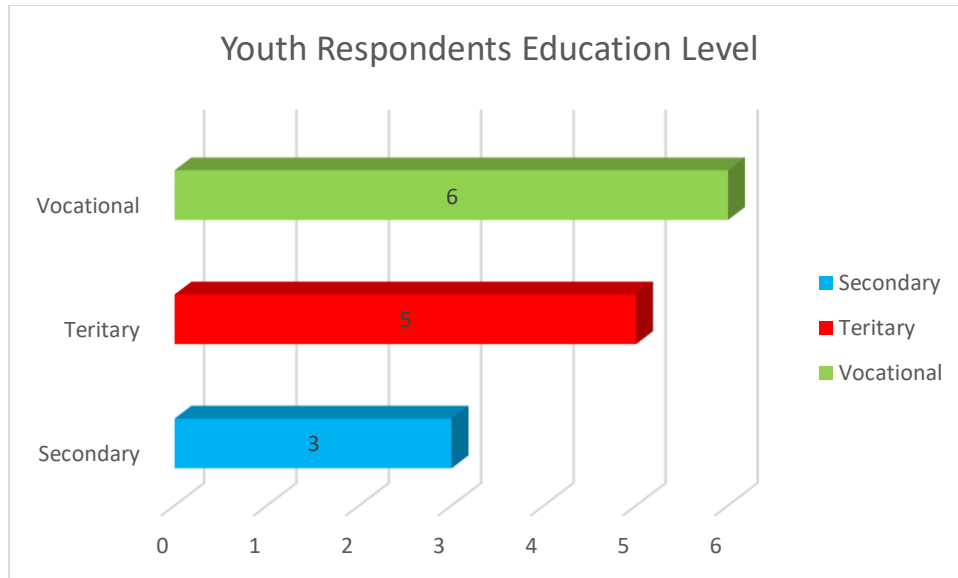


Figure 9. Education level of Youth Respondents

The education level of participants varied between secondary, tertiary and vocational (skilled). 43 per cent secondary; 36 per cent tertiary and 21 per cent vocational. Majority of the vocational were part of HEART TRUST a government-run training programme.

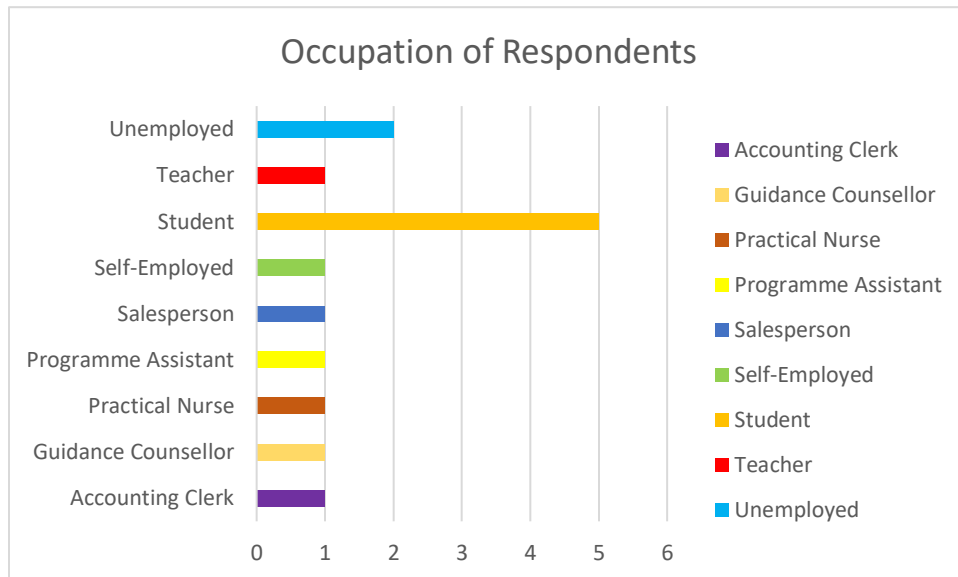


Figure 10. Occupation of Youth Respondents

Of the 14 participants, 36 per cent were students. 29 per cent of the participants were unemployed and the remaining participants 35 per cent were civil servants and held administrative positions. Most users of youth centres in Jamaica often utilize the technological services provided. The ability to access the Internet is one of the most important factors in the use of computers today.<sup>34</sup> However, while internet use among Jamaican youth is primarily for social engagement on blogs and other social media sites<sup>35</sup> a large number of youth centre users use the internet café for academic pursuit. As stated by one participant:

*“It could open on weekends because that’s a major drawback, especially during the pandemic curfew and having school work to do.”*

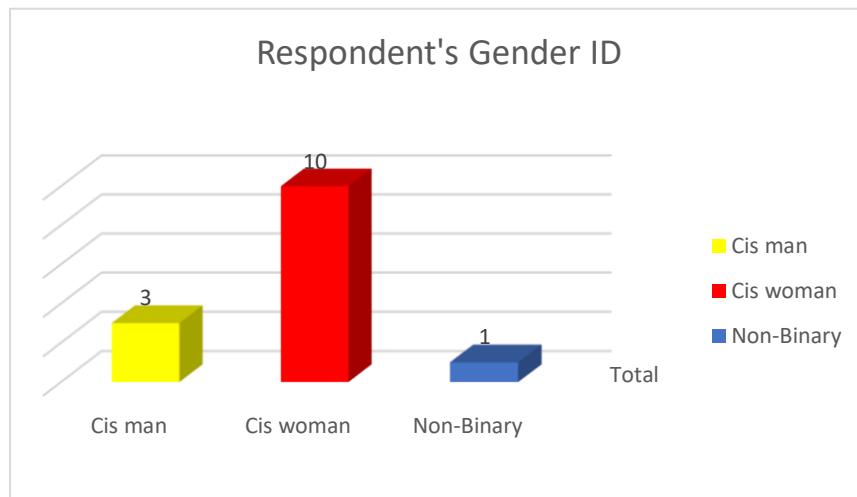


Figure 11. Respondent's Gender Identity

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<sup>34</sup> (Mitra)

<sup>35</sup> (Daley Morris)

Collectively, the gender identity breakdown of this study sample is: 71 per cent participants classified as cisgender women; 21 per cent cisgender man and 7 per cent identified as non-binary. No other gender identity was represented in the study.

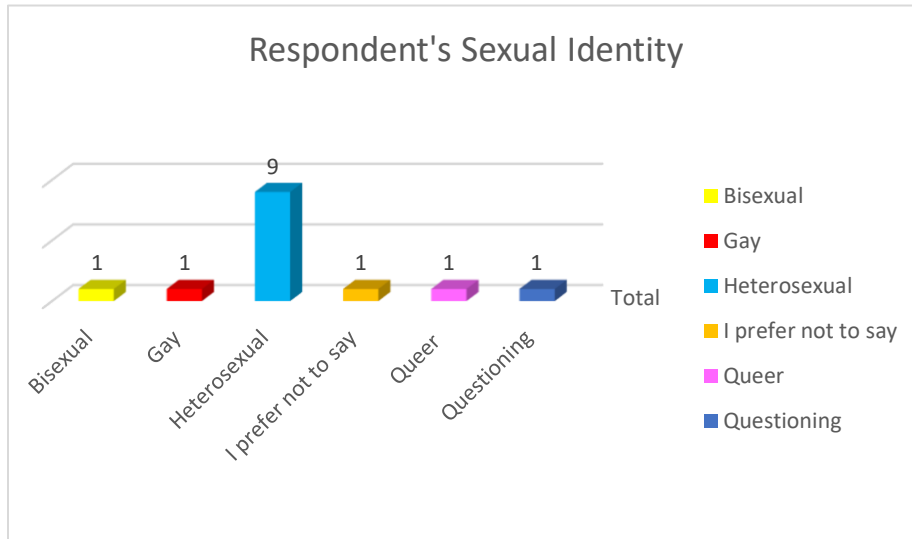


Figure 12. Respondent's Sexuality ID

Sexual identity had more variations with 65 per cent participants self-identifying as heterosexual; 7 per cent as bisexual; 7 per cent as gay; 7 per cent as queer; 7 per cent as questioning (unsure of sexual identity) and 7 per cent preferred not to disclose their sexuality.

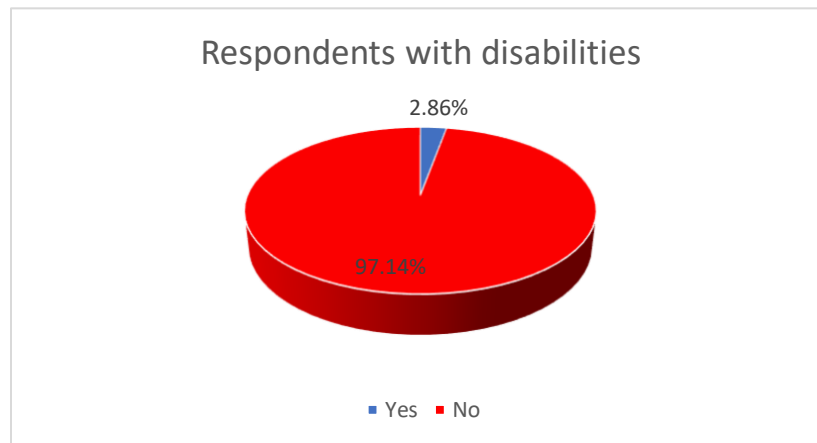


Figure 13. Percentages of respondents with disabilities

Types of disabilities	
Visual	2
Other	2
None	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>

Table 7. Type of Disability

Four participants lived with disabilities. 14 per cent were visually impaired but all were able to function effectively on their own. 14 per cent also reported disabilities but declined to disclose their disabilities, while majority 71 per cent did not live with any form of disability.

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#### YOUTH INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

Which government-run facilities/programmes have you engaged with?	
HEART Trust	5
Youth Information Centre	4
National Youth Service	3
Youth Arm of Political Party	1
Youth Job Fair	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>

Table 8. Government-run facilities/ programmes engagement

Participants of the study have engaged with one or more of the aforementioned youth agencies, centres and programmes. For the purpose of the study Table 8, represents the last place participants engaged with a total of 36 per cent of the youth participants having been students of the HEART Trust; 29 per cent

were users of Youth Information Centre; 21 per cent were users of the National Youth Service and the remainder 14 per cent equally splits between political party programme and youth job fairs often hosted by educational institutions which are governed by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information.

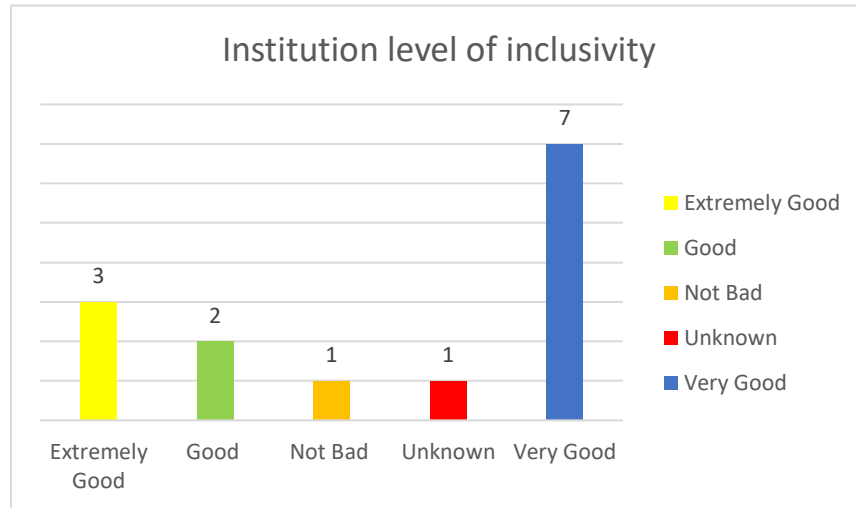


Figure 14. Level of Institutional Inclusivity

Figure 14 illustrates the perception of the level of inclusivity of LGBT+ persons by users of the institution/agency/programme. 50 per cent of the participants found inclusivity ‘very good’; 21 per cent rated inclusivity to be ‘extremely good’; 14 per cent rated inclusivity as ‘good’ and the remainder 14 per cent rated ‘not bad or unknown’. Participants offered explanations to support their perception with following:

*“I saw where persons were interacting with people even if they were different gender and social life. I didn’t see much discrimination.”*

*“The persons who work there are friendly. They cooperate with you. They encourage you. They have small discussions and they (LGBT+ persons) are involved.”*

The majority of participants' interactions with staff members were the driving forces in their positive training programme participation. This is illustrated in Figure 15.



Figure 15. Level of Staff Inclusivity

29 per cent of respondents rated staff members being inclusive in their treatment of all programme participants ‘extremely good’ and ‘very good’. 21 per cent rated staff ‘good’ as well as 21 per cent rated ‘not bad’. An overall poor attitude among employees was noted as a persistent problem:

*“Most of them know how to talk to people. Some of them the attitude is stink.”*

*“I found most of the staff okay. There were a few persons who had attitude problems.”*

However sensitization and training was especially useful, even if it was not facility-wide:

*“Even having one member of staff who is very good makes a big difference.”*

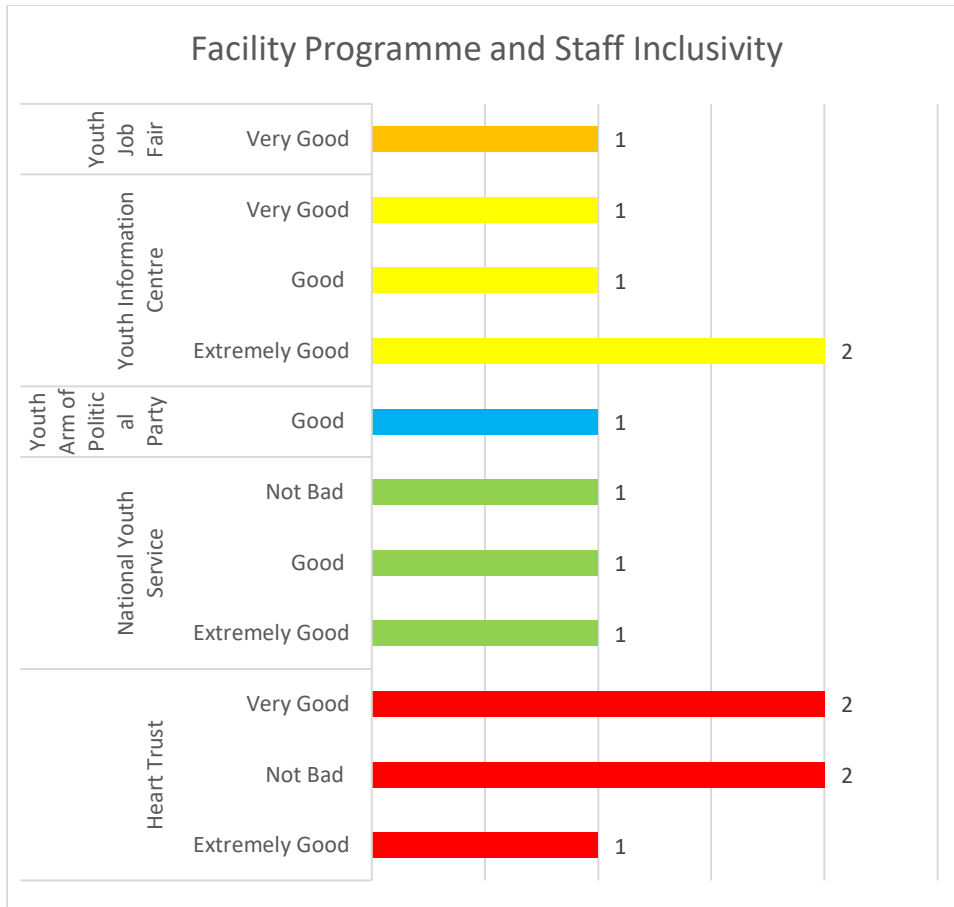


Figure 16. Facility/Programme and Staff Inclusivity

The cross tabulations shows that Youth Information Centres were the most inclusive of LGBT+. However, HEART Trust had the poorest employee attitude towards members of the LGBT+ community. The inconsistency in behaviour among employees can be linked to Jamaica's homophobic society as a whole and, perhaps, the lack of a clear diversity and inclusion policy at the institution. As stated in the introduction, Jamaica's legal and social systems condone and support homophobia to varying degrees. As a result, it is unsurprising that individuals of the workforce have demonstrated homophobic tendencies from time to time, and do not equate it with a lack of professionalism.

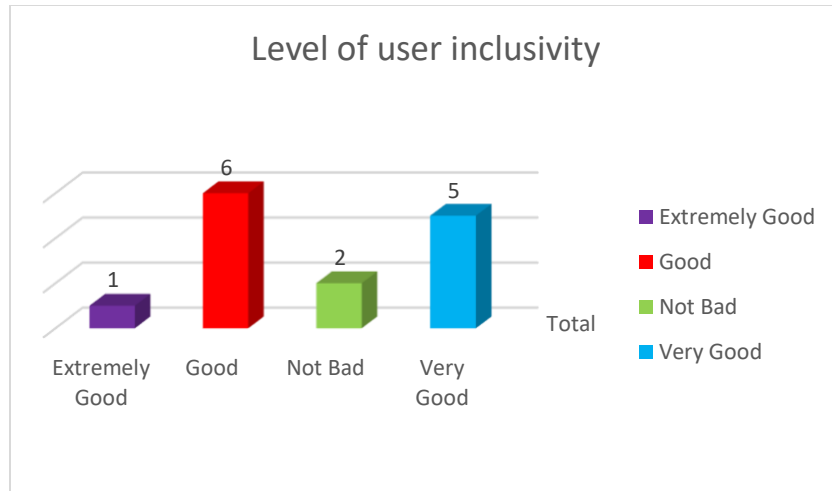


Figure 17. Level of User Inclusivity

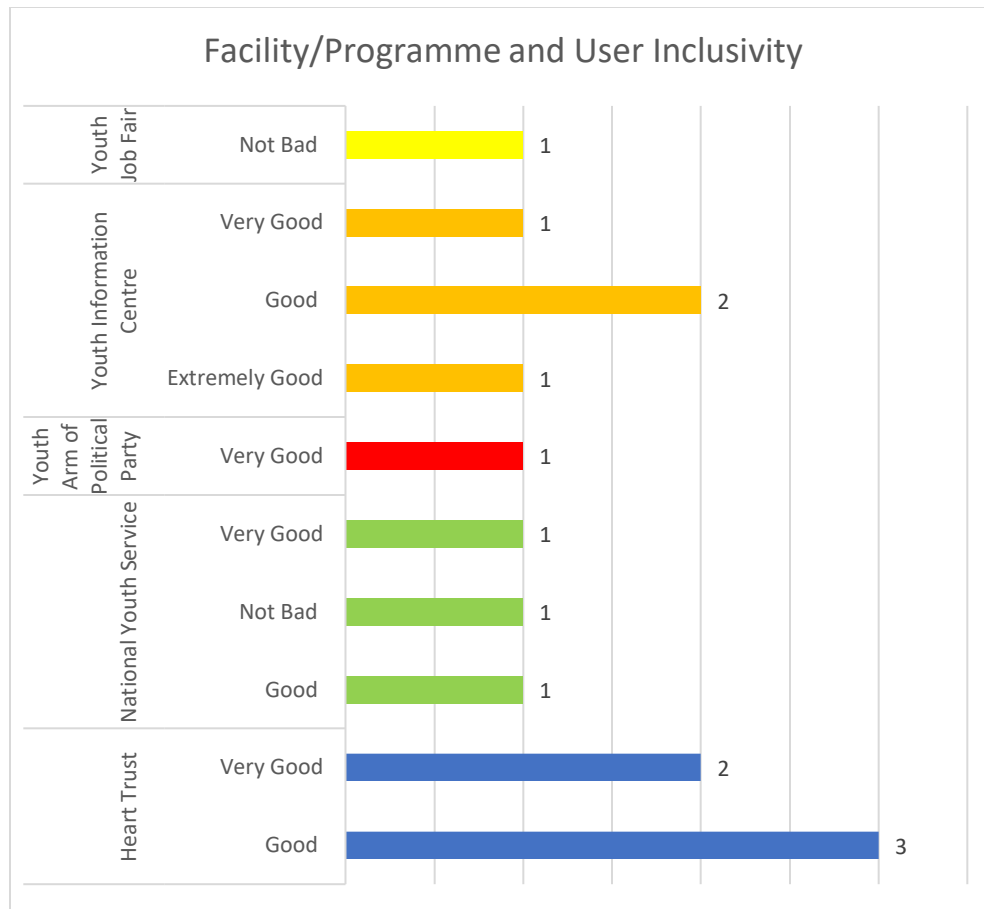
The data indicates that user inclusivity was higher as most participants rated their experience with fellow participants as ‘good’ - 42 per cent and ‘very good’ – 35 per cent, ‘extremely good’ - 7 per cent and ‘not bad’ - 14 per cent. Participants stated:

*“The inclusivity of the young people depends on what they come there to do but the staff usually integrates everybody well.”*

*“I think most persons welcomed LGBT+ users.”*

*“Never saw them engage with any. But probably they wouldn’t respond well. Some of the LGBT+ people might be in hiding and not feel comfortable. The straight people – it depends. Some of them don’t have a positive mindset and not all are welcoming to LGBT+. Some nuh have no problem. Some are like me – everybody have a life and choice, it’s up to them what they want to be.”*

*“Personally, I would say it’s good interaction. About 3 weeks ago we were having convo with some young ladies who identify as a male. We were trying to understand why they think what they think. I then realised they have reasons beyond it and there’s no need to treat them differently. They are the same as heterosexual. Everybody has rights. We include them, we have convos etc.”*



*Figure 18. Facility/Programme and User Inclusivity*

LGBT+ people confront discrimination and abuse in all regions and at all stages of personal advancement. In participating in training, awareness and sensitization programmes LGBT+ people are mostly required to conceal their sexual orientation and gender identity. The cross tabulation shows that programme/facility users found that HEART Trust was the most inclusive. This could be attributed to the length of their regular programmes that allows persons to build longer and stronger connections with each other. For example:

*“Some people would engage them in convo and speak to them and become their friends.”*

However, please note that most respondents from the HEART trust identified as cisgender heterosexuals.

Nonetheless, participants from the HEART Trust noted:

*“I saw where persons were interacting with people even if they were different gender and social life. I didn’t see much discrimination.”*

One participant noted that he had never witnessed an interaction between non-LGBT+ service users and LGBT+ youth but, based on the views that had been expressed, he suspected the response would be mixed:

*“Some and are respectful to them but only when necessary, otherwise the non-LGBT+ youth need their own space”.*

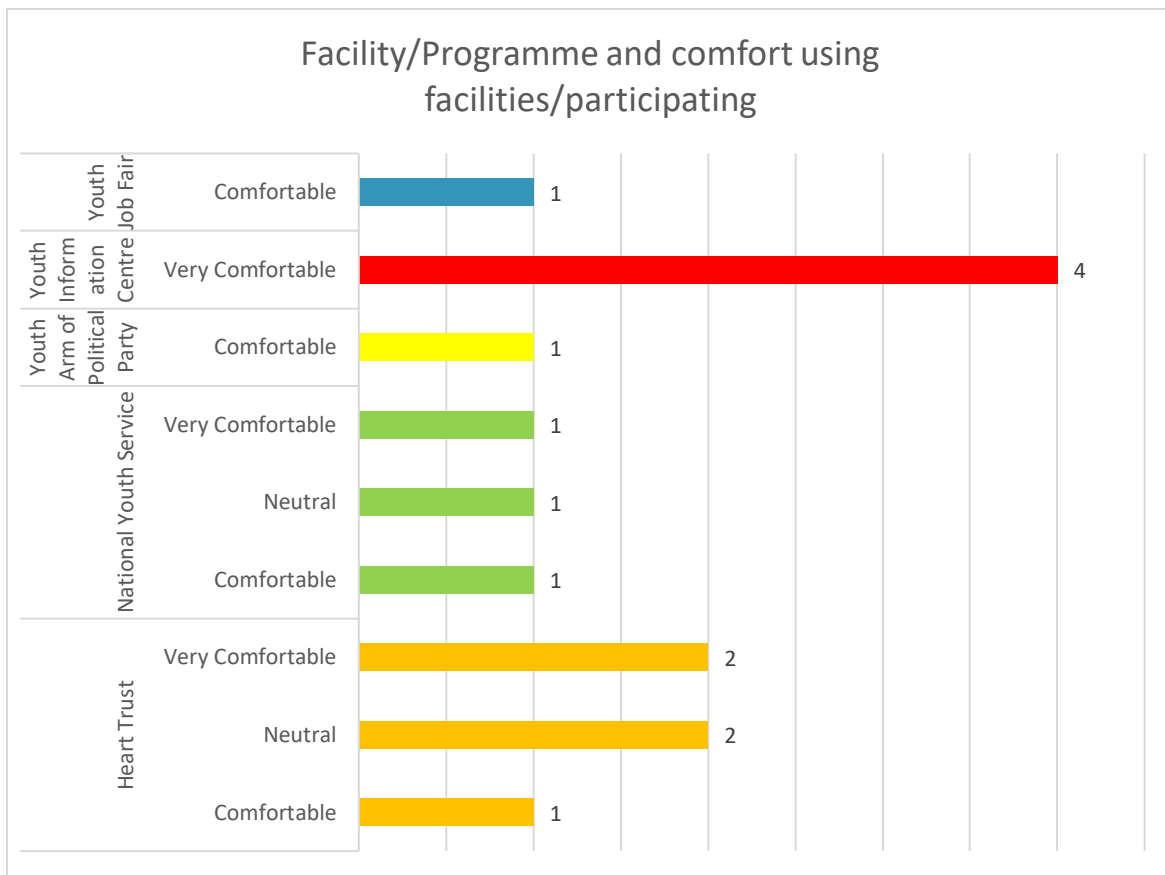


Figure 19. Facility/Programme and comfort in using facilities/participating

Users of the facilities were primarily satisfied, as seen in Figure 17. The data indicates that the most comfortable users were those of the Youth Information Centre with 29 per cent and seconded by HEART

Trust/NSTA with 14 per cent. Other facilities evenly ranged from between very comfortable to comfortable. Participants stated:

*“Ideal environment to complete task because it is very quiet and someone is always there to offer advice or help.*

*The equipment is available and staff is helpful.”*

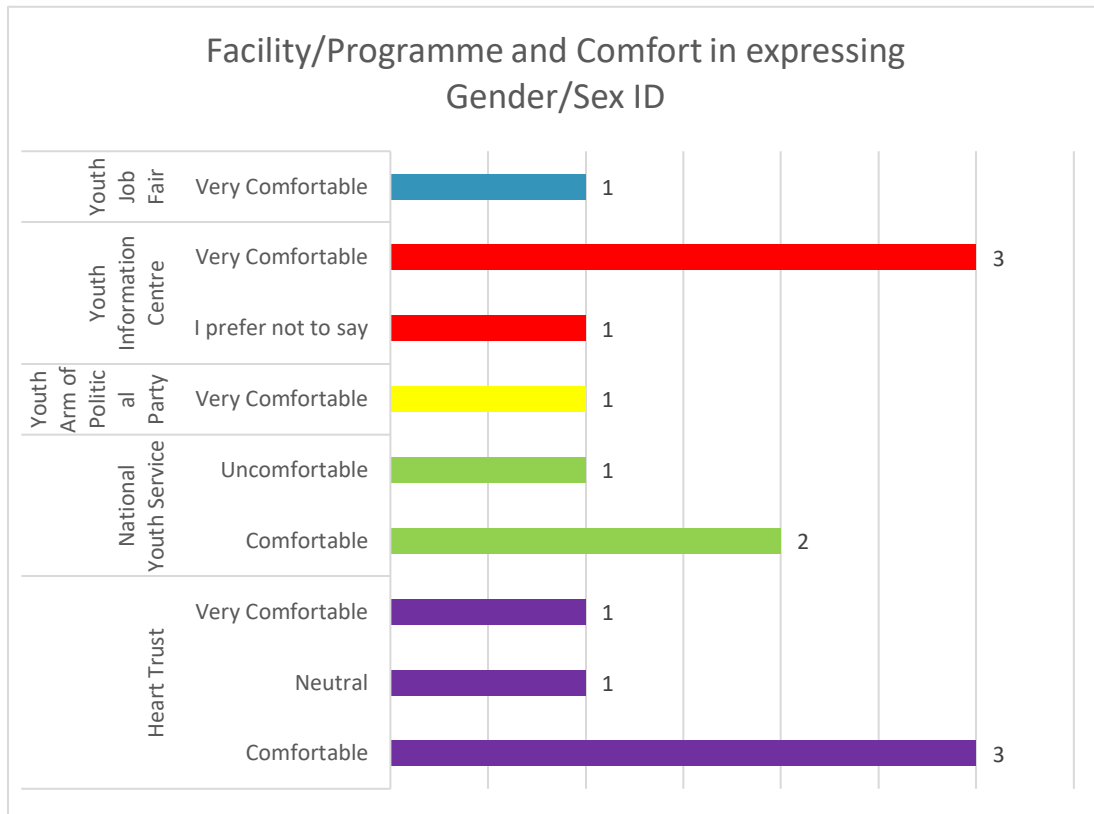


Figure 20. Cross Tabulation of Facility/programme and comfort of expressing sex orientation/gender ID

The data shows that users were very comfortable in expressing the gender and sexuality identity at Youth Information Centres, while HEART Trust made them comfortable. All other facilities appeared to provide a comfortable to neutral environment. As stated by participants:

*“I am comfortable when persons do not discriminate. Sexual orientation should not be used to determine giving service”*

While most respondents have stated they were very comfortable with expressing their sexuality and gender identity while using the facilities, it is important to note that majority of the respondents do identify as both heterosexuals and cisgender – both of which are accepted heteronormative which outside of the LGBT+ community is the most accepted.

One LGBT+ Youth had the following to say about his experiences at HEART:

*They will treat us less fortunate sometimes. They will look at us different sometimes. It doesn't bother me because this is who I am. I just hold my space hold my own. Just work and go home".*

Centres that employed persons who were from the community or who were sensitised to the community, through training sessions or previous employment at LGBT+ friendly organizations, were considered more comfortable by LGBT+ youth.

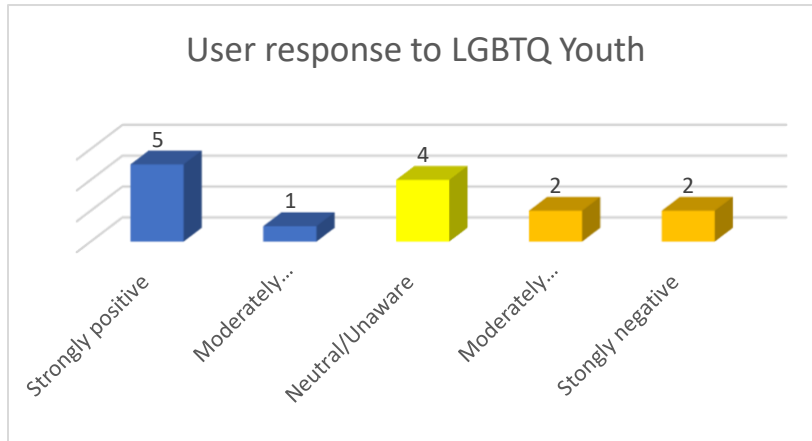


Figure 21. User response to LGBT+ Youth

One LGBT+ user of a facility with an LGBT+ staff member had the following to say:

*Based on my perspective – I am a part of the LGBT+ club – when I go there, they welcome me and make me feel appreciated. They don't show any face they don't treat us less than others."*

The data indicates that most users of the facilities had either a strong positive response or a neutral response. The purpose of the programme factors in greatly, as the aim was to develop a sense of comradery among users of the facilities and the institutions. The programme also created a safe space for LGBT+ persons to voice their opinion and to be an active participant.

Of note were some apparent differences in responses to LGBT+ people based on the gender:

*“A few persons would say they prefer lesbians to gays. I would ask why since it’s the same. The guys would say they can’t stand the gay men, but they would love to see a lesbian making out. But some of the girls would have loved the gay man...they want a gay best friend. But the boys would not have.”*

## SUMMARY OF IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Overall majority of participants in this area of the study regarded the programme they attended to be beneficial. Prior to their programme involvement, the majority appeared to have had an inclusive mind-set, which might be attributed to many public awareness and sensitization activities across multiple media networks and social media engagement. The majority of interviewees identified as heterosexual, however when asked, **'what makes you comfortable or uncomfortable in expressing your sexual orientation and/or gender identity?'**; they all demonstrated awareness of their privilege as a heteronormative conforming or presenting person with quotes like the following:

*“Well, heterosexuality is the most accepted in Jamaica, so I never feel in danger to express that in one way or another. I am not shouting it from the rooftop but any indication of my preference does not put me at risk unlike LGBT+ persons.”*

Members of the LGBT+ community responded by recognizing that, while Jamaica is progressing toward acceptance and inclusion, and public spaces are becoming more diverse, the country is still not where it needs to be:

*“Jamaica is not yet a place for LGBT+ people. I would want them to let our voice be heard.”*

In order for Jamaica to be considered inclusive or to rid itself of the label of being one of the world’s most homophobic destinations much work is needed. When participants were asked **‘what could be done to make government-run facilities/programme more inclusive to LGBT+ youth?’** some of the responses were:

*“Employ more experts in counselling and psychologist for advice is needed. While the staff is good they are not fully equipped to handle certain situation.”*

*“I feel the programmes are fairly open now and anybody can sign up so it’s more about encouraging LGBT+ people to come into the programme.”*

*“It would be good for them to be sensitized because some individuals do not understand sexual orientation.”*

*“The need to educate them more about LGBT+ issues – both the staff and the young people. The young people feel like from the staff lick out dem haffi lick out too. From the leaders say ‘tun leff’ den everybody tun leff.”*

In essence the overall consensus can be summed up with the following participant statement:

*“The programme was very good. Youth feel more comfortable among other young people. If they have more LGBT+ youth using the facility or programme they may feel more comfortable disclosing their sexuality.”*

# SURVEY FINDINGS

## EMPLOYEE ONLINE SURVEY

The employee survey was completed by persons who currently or in the past have worked or volunteered in government run youth spaces or programmes including Youth Information Centres, Youth Employment Programmes and Job Fairs, Youth Clubs and Organisations that fall under one of the government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). The survey aimed to gather information about diversity and inclusion in government run youth spaces: their level of inclusivity to LGBT+ persons and persons living with disabilities.

## EMPLOYEE DEMOGRAPHY

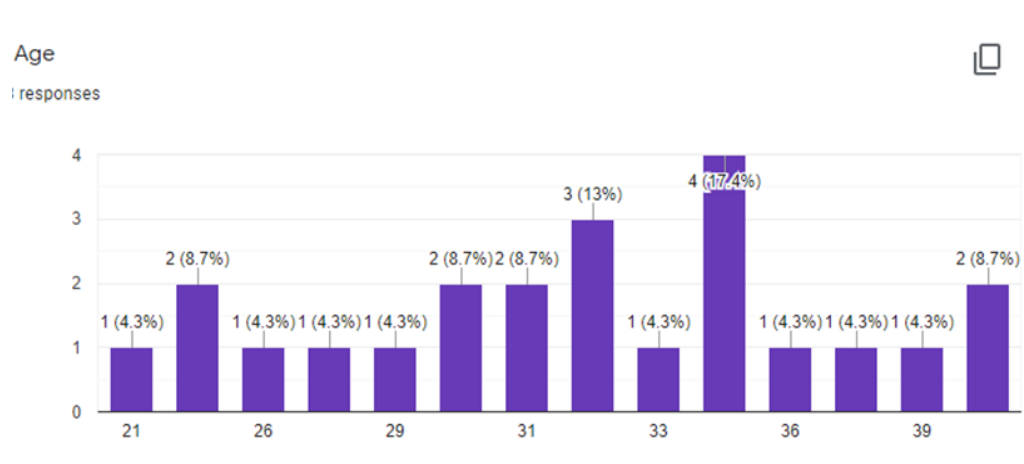


Figure 22. Shows the age of respondents who are employed to MDAs

A total of 23 participants completed the Employee Online Survey with an age ranges of between 20 and 40 years. The highest age was 35 years with 17.4% (n=4). The second highest fell was 32 years with 13% (n=3). Participants ages 22 – 25, 30, and 40 years 8.7% each (n=2) and the remaining participants 4.3% each (n=1).

Level of education  
responses

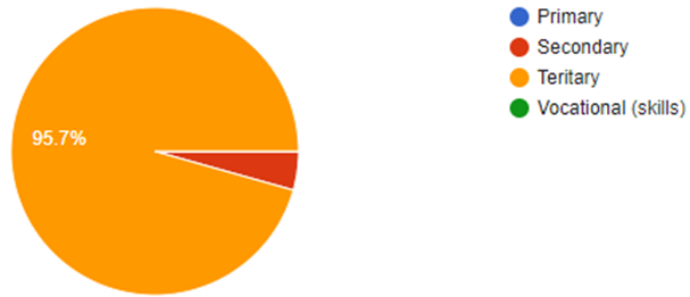


Figure 23. Shows the education level of respondents

A total of 95.7% of participants were educated at the tertiary level 4.3% had accessed up to secondary level of education. No other level was represented in the survey.

Resident Parish  
responses

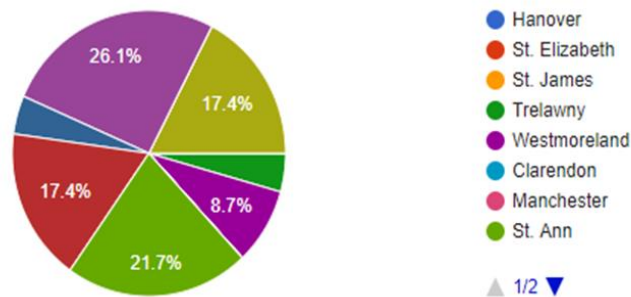


Figure 24. Shows the Jamaican parishes that respondents reside

According to the findings, a total of 7 out of 14 parishes were represented in the survey. The highest represented was Kingston with 26.1% (n=6), and second St. Ann 21.7% (n=5). Other parishes were St. Andrew with 14.4% (n=4), St. Catherine also with 14.4% (n=4), Westmoreland 8.7% (n=2), Trelawny 4.3% (n=1) and St. Mary 4.3% (n=1).

### How would you describe your gender identity?

responses

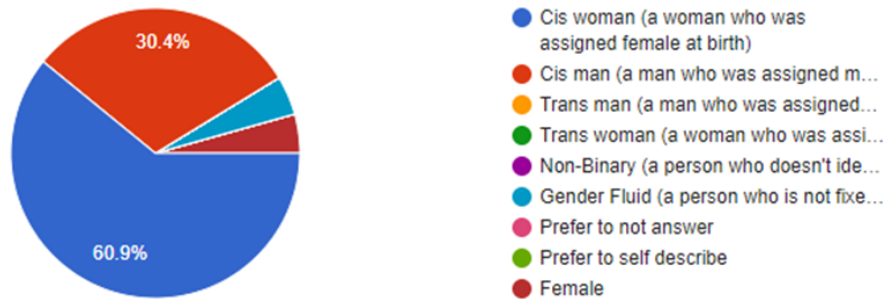


Figure 25. Shows the gender identity of respondents

A total of 60.9% (n=14) participants identified as cis women and 30.4% (n=7) as cis men. 4.3% (n=1) identified as trans man while 4.3% (n=1) self-identified as trans woman. No other gender identity was represented.

### How would you describe your sexual identity

responses

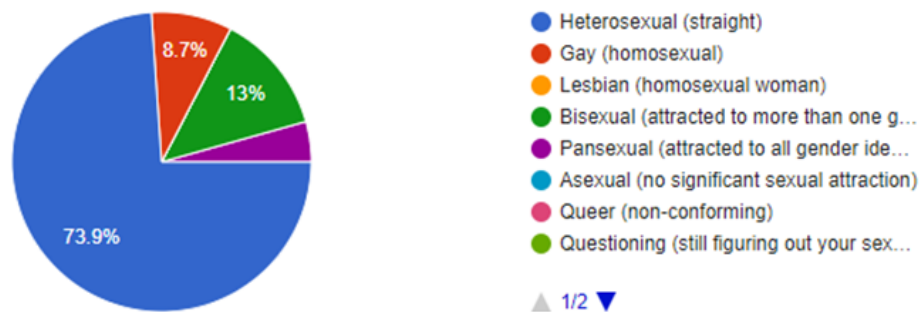


Figure 26. Shows the sexual identity of respondents

A total 73.9% (n=17) identified as heterosexual, 13% (n=3) as bisexual, 8.7% (n=2) as gay, and 4.3% (n=1) as pansexual. No other sexuality was represented.

Do you live with a disability? (deaf, visually impaired, wheelchair bound, limited mobility, amputee, intellectual disability, learning disability etc)

responses

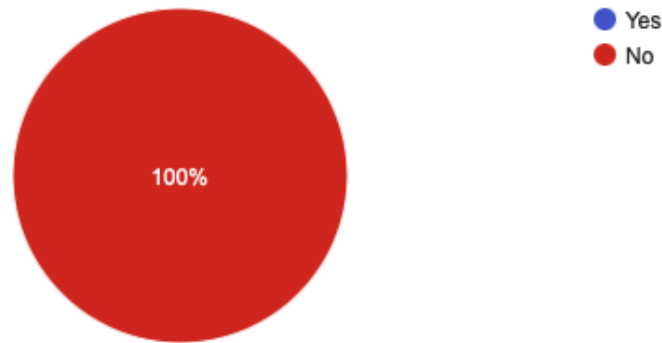


Figure 27. Shows disability status of respondents

None of the respondents stated that they lived with a disability. Persons Living with Disabilities (PLWDs) were chosen as the control group because PLWDs, like members of the LGBT+ community, face marginalization and discrimination. Both groups face discriminatory systems based on heteronormative and ableist normativity.

---

## JOB SATISFACTION & ORGANIZATION CHANGE

The purpose of this section is to understand the work environment of government-run ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs). This section analyses the relationship between employee and job satisfaction and the organization's inclusion of LGBT+ persons. Employee satisfaction has a significant impact on organizational success, which includes the success of training programmes aimed at adapting to social changes that will have an impact on internal and external clients.

How many years have you been with the organisation/ministry?

responses

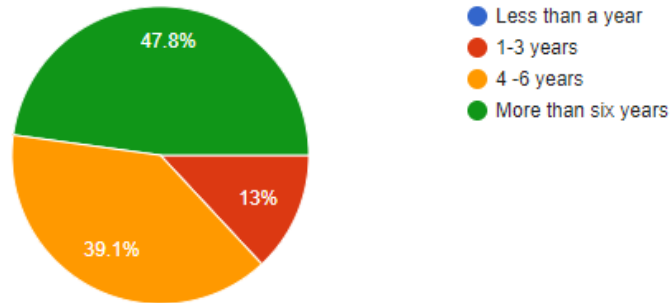


Figure 28. Shows the years of respondents' employment at government-run organizations

Most participants in the survey worked over six years at their government-run MDA - 47.8% (n=11). Other participants worked at their MDA for 4-6 years 39.1% (n=9) and 1 – 3 years 13% (n=3). Persons who have worked in a job for over three to four years are likely to have experienced significant organizational transformation. As training, sensitization, and awareness programmes promote organizational transformation, long-term employees may be more prepared to help measure the impact of such programmes.

. I have the tools and resources I need to do my job.

responses

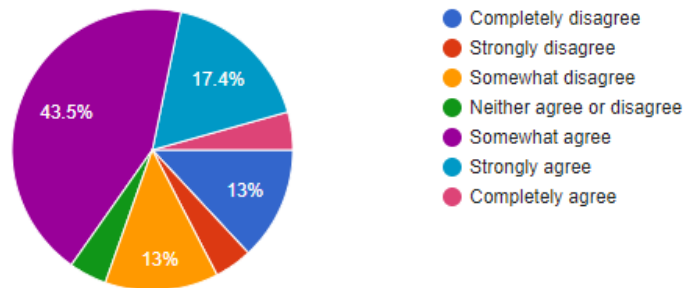


Figure 29. Shows how well employees/respondents were equipped with resources to complete their jobs

According to the data, only 4.3 % (n=1) completely agreed that they were provided with adequate tools and resources to carry out their duties; while 17.4 % (n=3) strongly agreed that they were sufficiently equipped with tools to carry out their duties. Most employees 43.5 % (n=10) were reasonably equipped with the tools needed to do their duties – nonetheless, this showed that employees were deficient, as organizations failed to meet the full labour demands. The remaining 34.6 % (n=9) all disagreed with the statement. The research shows that government-run organizations lack the tools and resources needed for employees to accomplish their jobs efficiently. This conflict affects all job levels and departmental tasks, and it has a significant impact on the organization's/programme's success.

I am aware of the advancement opportunities that exist in the organisation for me.  
 responses

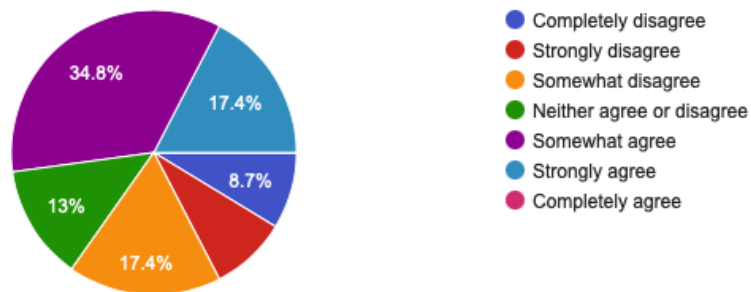


Figure 30. Shows respondents awareness of professional opportunities available through their employees

An employee's longevity at an organization often provides them with more opportunities for professional development. Given that the majority of survey respondents had been working for more than three years across the MDAs, the following speaks to their knowledge of professional development opportunities: 34.8 % (n=8) indicate that they are somewhat aware, 17.4 % (n=4) respond that they are definitely aware of opportunities, and 8.7 % (n=2) respond that they are absolutely aware of advancement opportunities made available by the organization. However, 13% (n=3) were ambivalent, presumably indicating that not

all opportunities were made known to them or that they had not made inquiries, and 8.7% (n=2) strongly disagreed, showing a lack of communication of opportunities.

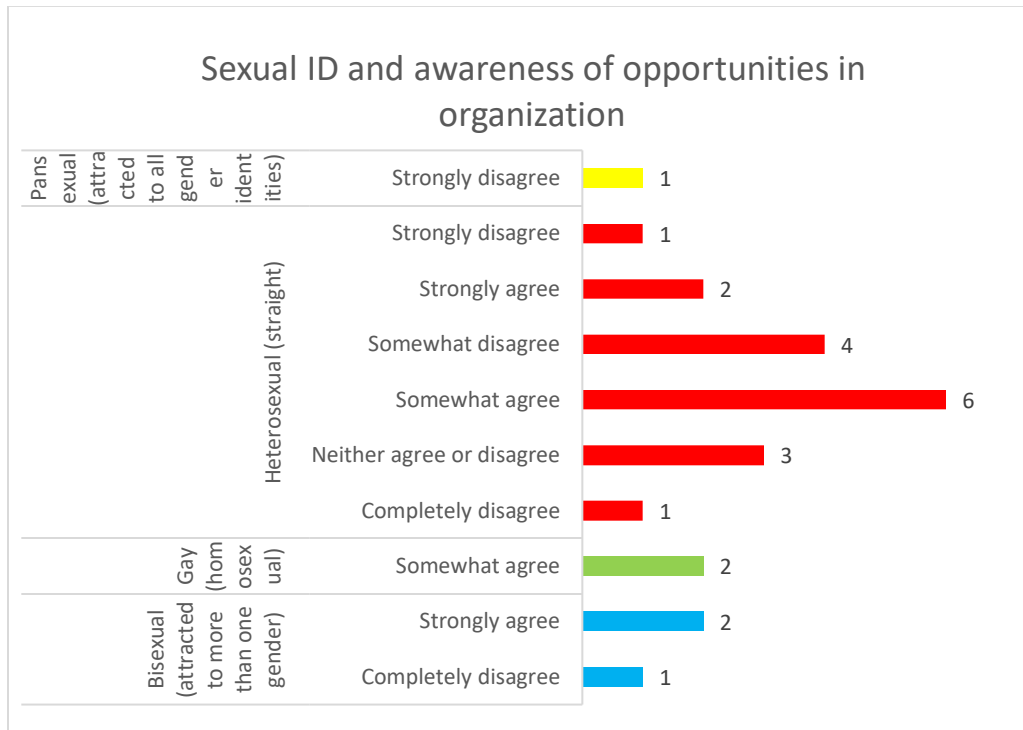


Figure 31. Shows cross tabulation of respondents' sexual identity and awareness of professional opportunities

Only 33.3 % (n=2) of the six participants who identified as LGBT+ said they were unaware of opportunities. As a result, the findings demonstrate no significant difference in awareness of opportunities between LGBT+ persons and heterosexual people.

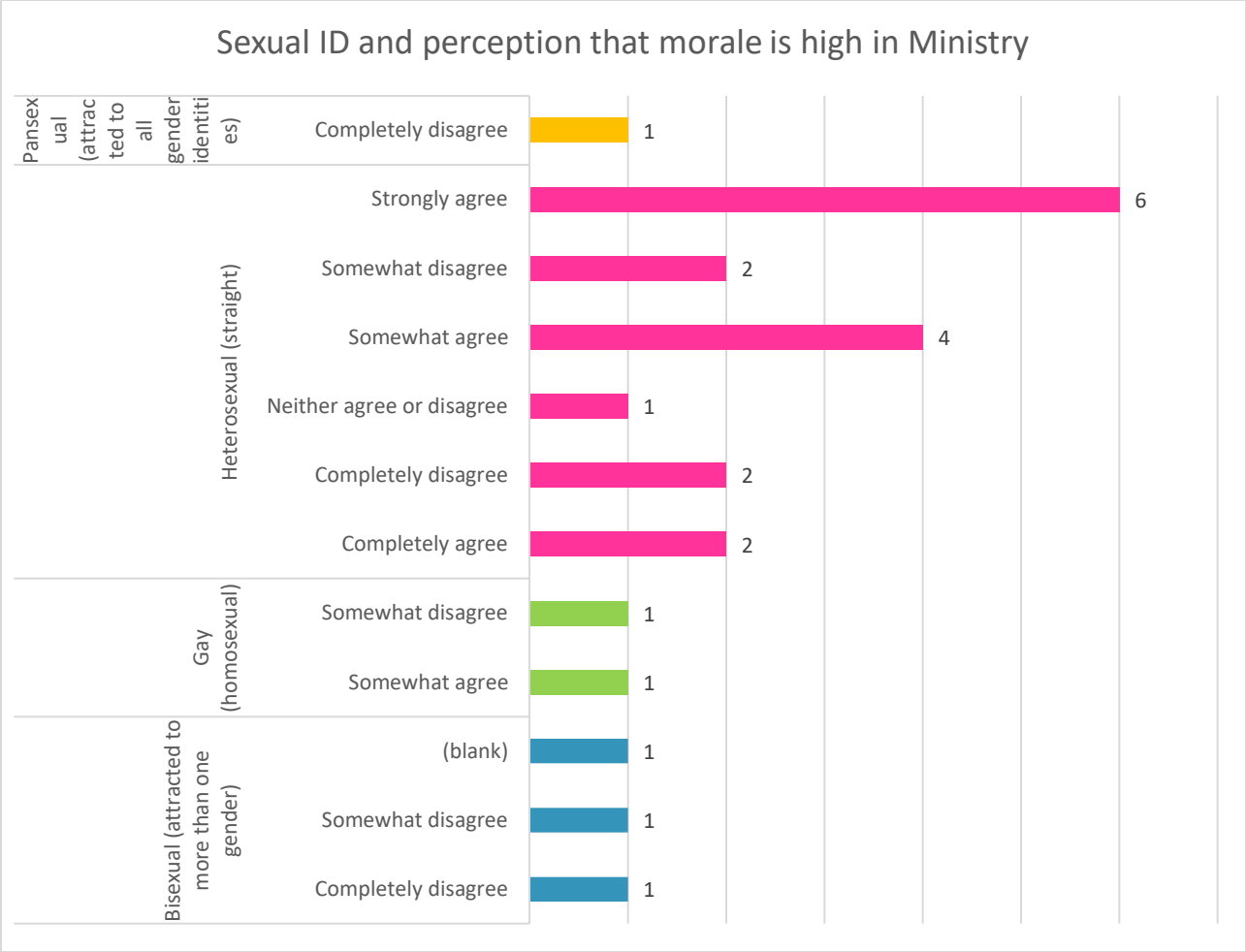


Figure 32. Shows cross tabulation of respondents' sexual identity and perception of organization morale

66.6 % (n=4) out of the six LGBT+ participants indicated that the morale in their respective government-run place of employment was low. 16.7% (n=1) somewhat agree to the statement while 16.7 % (n=1) declined to respond. A total of 29.4 % (n=5) out 17 heterosexual participant also indicated that the morale of their place of employment was low, while 70.6 % (n=12) indicated that the morale was high.

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

EDI (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion) can be defined as ensuring fair treatment and opportunity for all. How people feel about diversity, inclusion and equity inside the workplace can have an impact on employee engagement and organizational performance.

Have you participated in an inclusivity and diversity training or sensitisation programme?  
responses

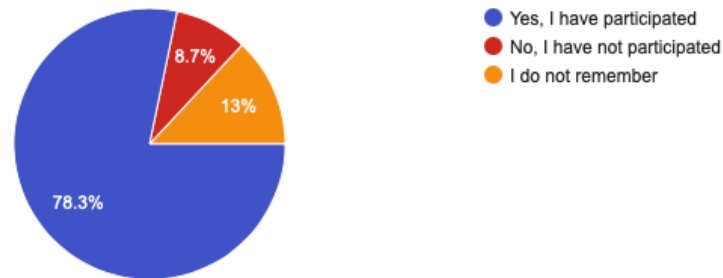


Figure 33. Shows respondents participation in inclusion and diversity programmes

A total of 78.3 % (n= 18) of the survey respondents said they have participated. 8.7 % (n=2) said they have not and 13 % (n=3) respondents could not recall participating in an inclusivity and diversity programme.

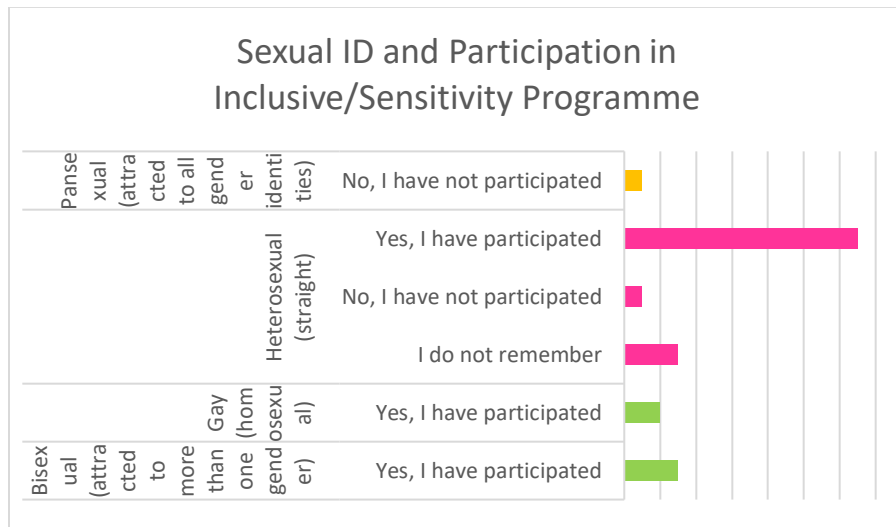


Figure 34. Shows cross tabulation of respondents' sexual Identity and participation in an inclusion and sensitization programme

Figure 34 indicates that majority of the heterosexual respondents did participate, while only one LGBT+ respondent had not. All respondents who do not remember participating were heterosexuals.

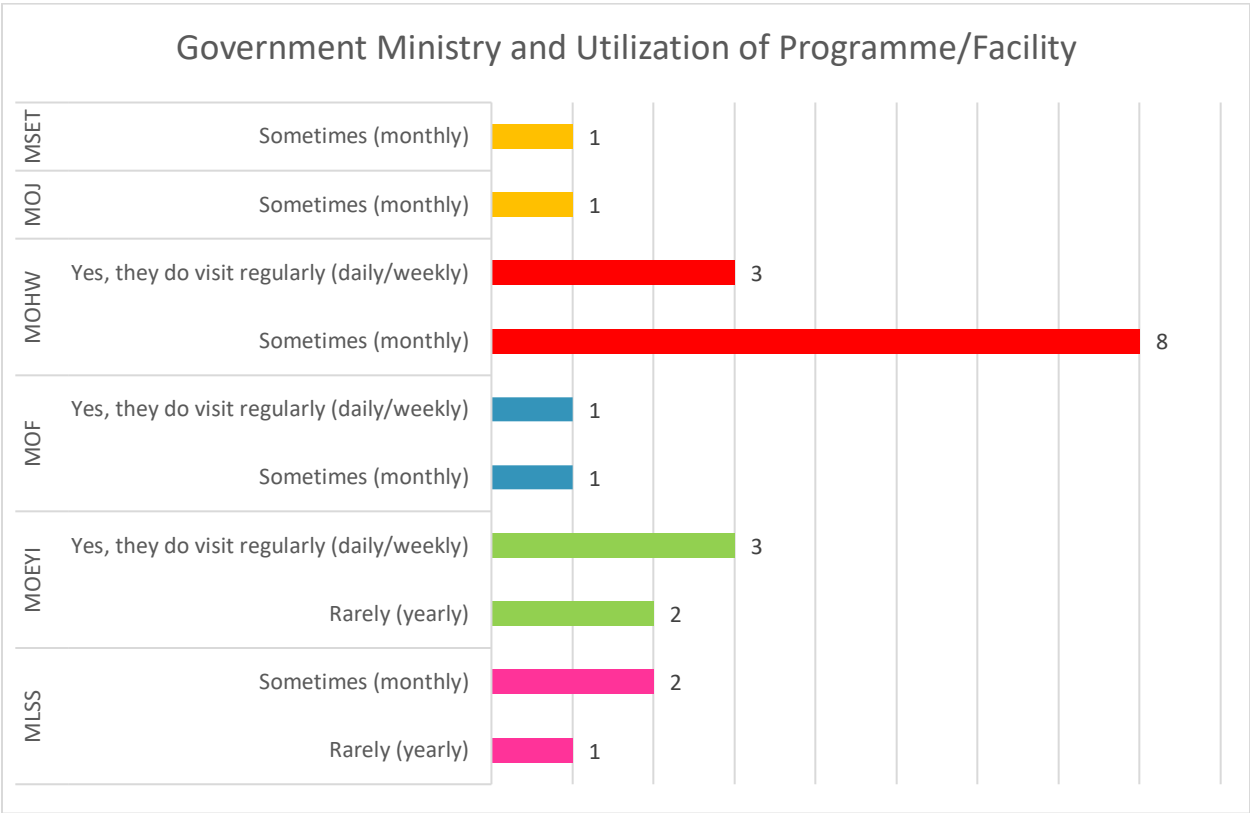


Figure 35. Shows how often LGBT+ persons visit each government ministry

The data shows that the Ministry of Health and Wellness is the most frequently visited by LGBT+ persons, with a total of 34.7 % (n=8) monthly visits and 13 % (n=3) weekly visits. This could be due to a number of medical and non-medical factors, including the MOHW’s engagement of MSM and trans women as key populations in Jamaica’s HIV response. However those factors were not within the purview of this study. The second most visited was Ministry of Education, Youth and Information with 13 % (n=3) weekly visits and 8.7 % (n=2) yearly visits. As it relates to yearly visits, outside of direct school related matters the

general population (persons within and outside of the LGBT+ community) may have little need to visit the ministry itself. The Youth Innovation Centres – which are affiliated with the MOEYI may account for the daily visits. The third most visited is Ministry of Labour and Social Security with 8.7 % (n=2) indicating monthly visits by LGBT+ persons and 4.3 % (n=1) yearly visits. The two remaining Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology were not visited much by LGBT+ persons.

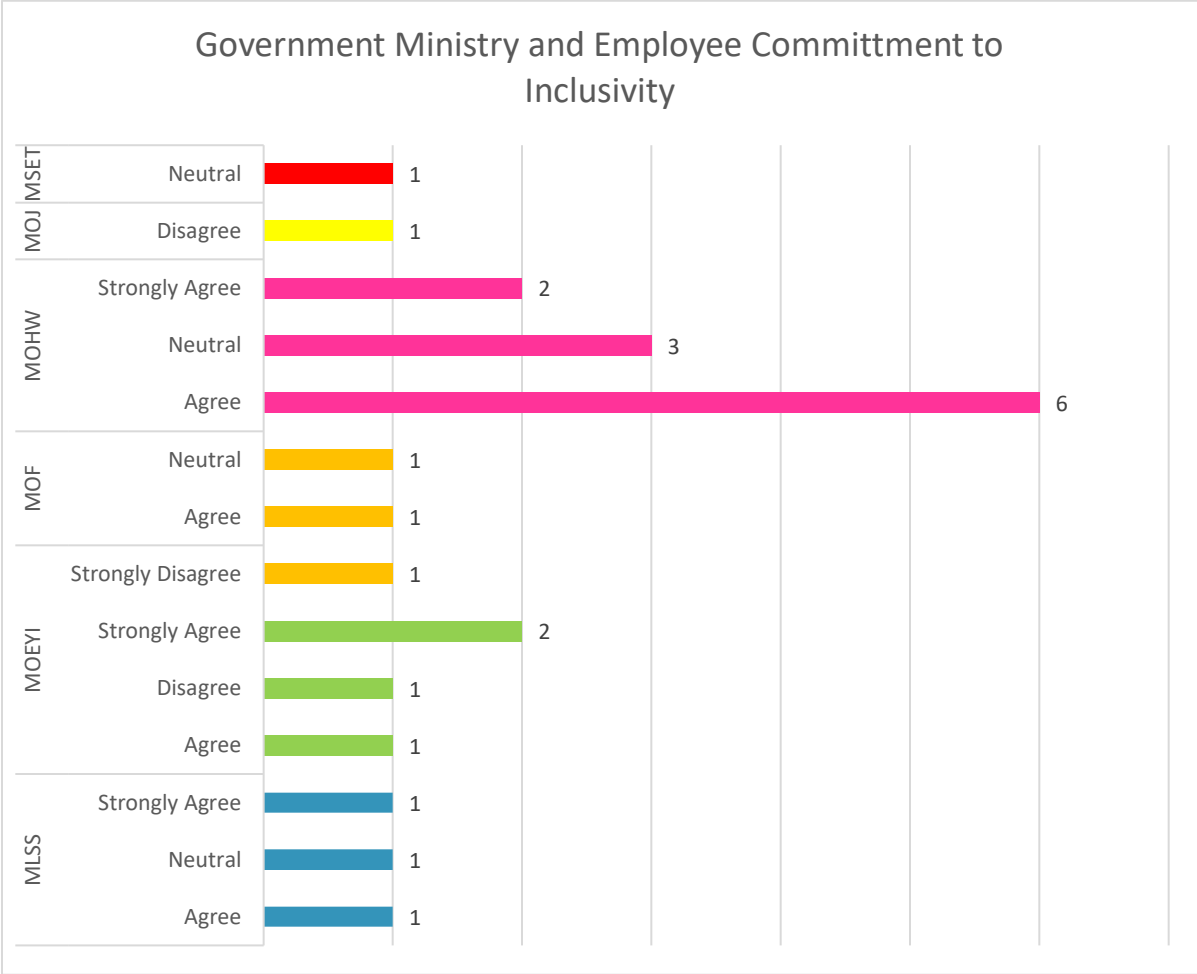


Figure 36. Shows employees who are perceived to be committed to LGBT+ Inclusion

The data shows that 60.9 % (n=14) of the respondents do find that their fellow co-workers were open to a more inclusive ministry. A total of 26 % (n=6) of the respondents felt that their co-workers took a neutral approach to inclusion. This means that they may be open to inclusive changes, however, their attitudes

would be best measured after implementation of any change backed by organizational policies and sanctions. While 13 % (n=3) respondents did not think their co-workers were committed to a more inclusive work environment.

Have you promoted the Equality Youth Jamaica (EYJ) helpline?  
responses

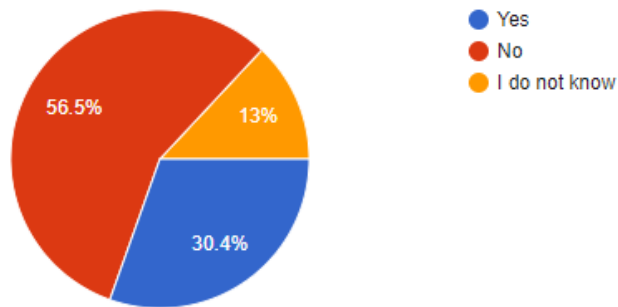


Figure 37. Illustrates the number of respondents who have shared the helpline

In relation to the Equality Youth Jamaica (EYJ) helpline the data indicates that most participants were aware of the helpline with only 13 % (n=3) out of the 23 respondents not knowing of the helpline. The data shows that 56.5 % (n=13) knew about the helpline but did not share it and 30.4 % (n=7) did share the helpline.

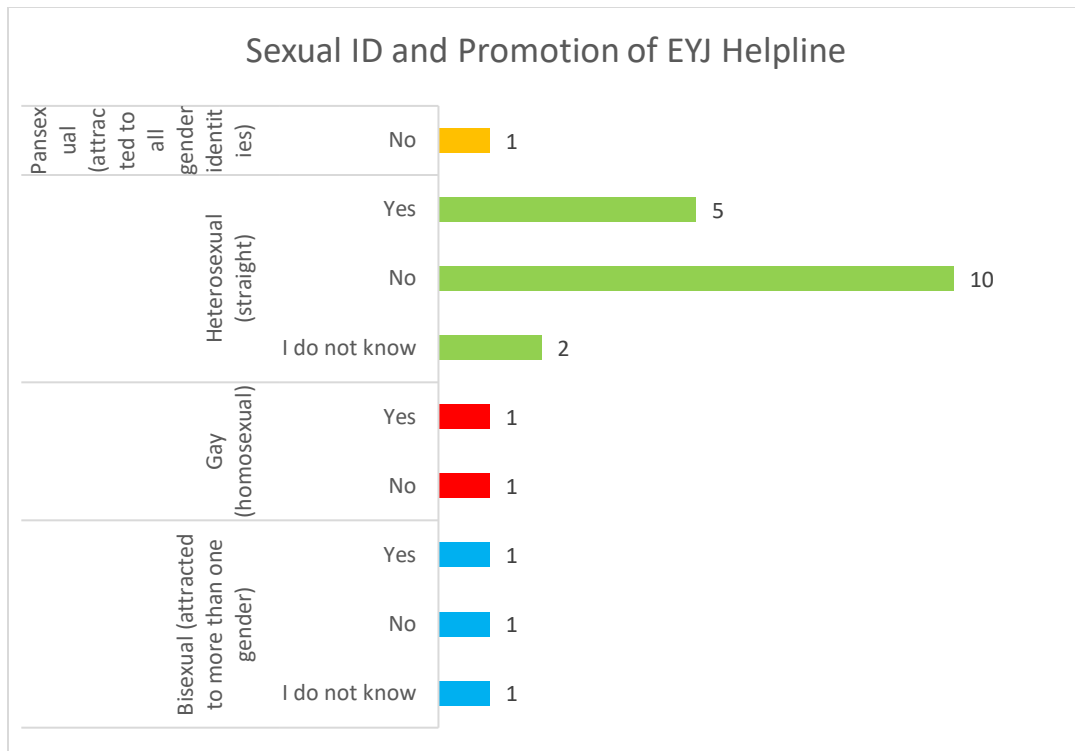


Figure 38. Shows sexual identity of respondents who shared the helpline

The data shows that 21.7 % (n=5) heterosexual respondents shared the helpline only 8.7 % (n=2) from the LGBT+ community did the same. Overall 56.5 % (n=13) of respondents did not share the helpline and the remaining 13 % (n=3) did not know about the helpline.

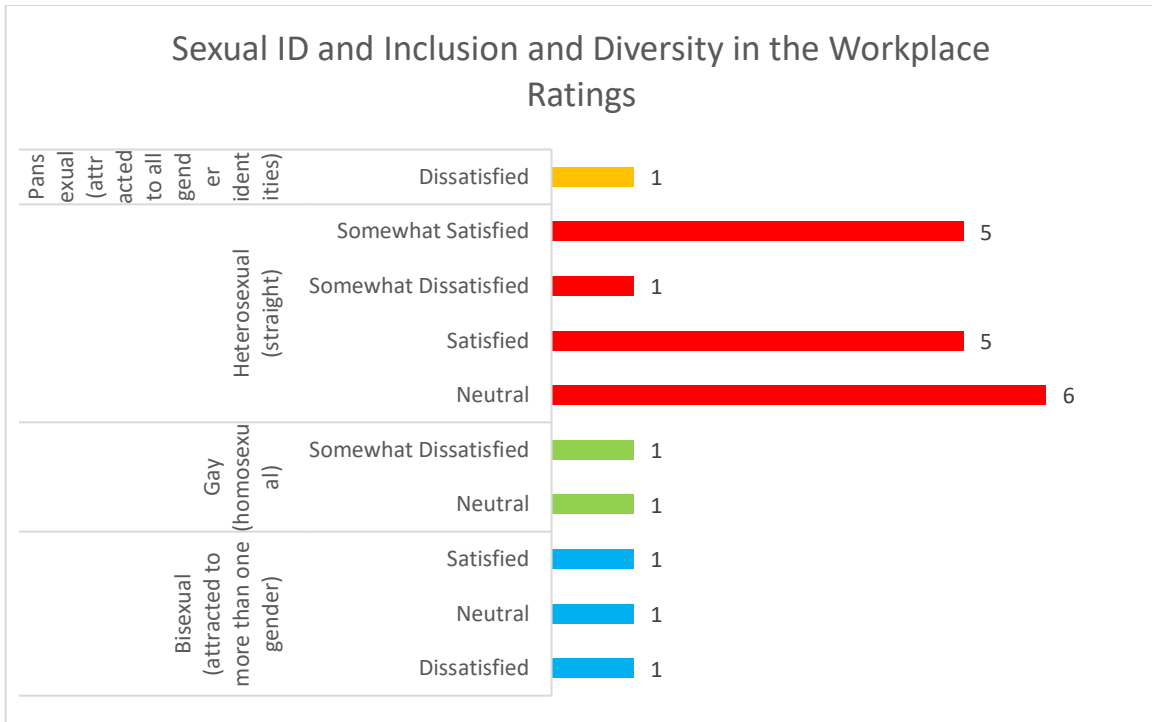


Figure 39. Shows respondents sexual identity and their inclusivity and diversity rating of their workplace/ministry

The data shows that mostly heterosexual respondents 21.7 % (n=5) were satisfied with the level of inclusion and diversity however, equally 21.7 % (n=5) were somewhat satisfied. This could indicate that these individuals were part of awareness and sensitivity training who were able to conclude that more could be done to foster inclusion. Only 4.3 % (n=1) of the LGBT+ persons were satisfied the level of inclusion and diversity. 13 % (n=3) of the respondents all of which are LGBT+ persons were dissatisfied with the inclusion and diversity of their respective ministry, while 8.7 % (n=2) respondents both LGBT+ persons indicated that improvements could be made by rating their workplace levels as neutral. Both bisexual and gender fluid persons had experienced workplace discrimination based on their sexual orientation and gender identity.

## YOUTH ONLINE SURVEY

This survey was completed by a total of 21 persons aged 18-32 years who utilised government run youth spaces or programmes or who have used them in the past. These spaces included Youth Information Centres, Youth Employment Programmes and Job Fairs, Youth Clubs and Organizations that fall under one of the Government Ministries Departments or Agencies etc. The survey aimed to gather information on diversity and inclusion in government run youth spaces: their level of inclusivity to LGBT+ persons and persons living with disabilities.

### YOUTH DEMOGRAPHY

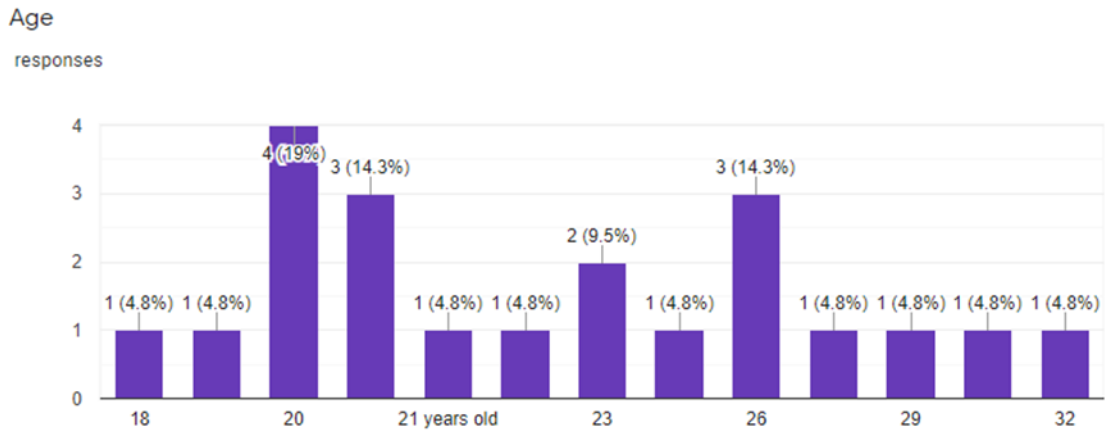


Figure 40. Shows the ages of the respondents to the youth online survey

The Youth Online Survey was completed by 21 respondents ranging in age from 18 to 32 years. The average age was 20 years, with 19% (n=4) being under the age of 20. The next highest age groups were 21 and 26 years old, at 14.3 % (n=3). Participants aged 23 years accounted for 9.5 % (n=2) of the total, with the remaining participants aged 18-19, 21-22, and 27–32 years accounting for 4.8 % (n=1).

### Level of education

responses

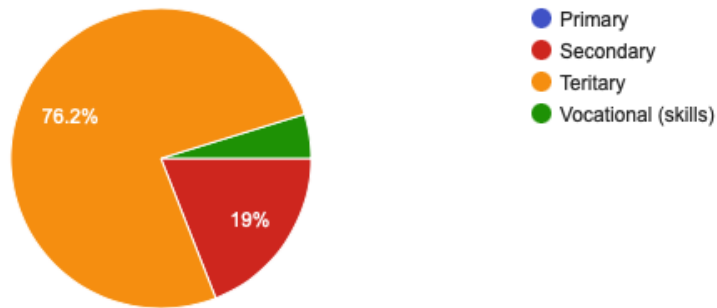


Figure 41. Shows the education level of the respondents to the youth online survey

According to the data 76.2 % (n=16) have completed or are currently enrolled in university education, 19 % (n=4) have completed secondary education, and 4.8 % (n=1) have completed or are currently enrolled in vocational education.

### Resident Parish

responses

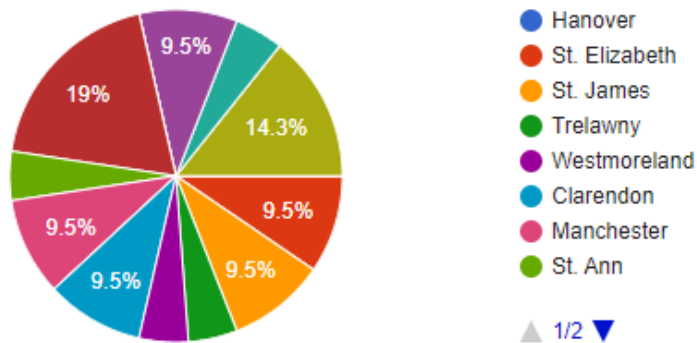


Figure 42. Shows the residing parishes of respondents to the youth online survey

According to the data, eleven of Jamaica's fourteen parishes were represented, implying that all seven regions, as defined by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Information, were represented. St. Mary, Hanover, and St. Thomas were the parishes that were not represented.

Region in which you took part in a government run youth programme:  
responses

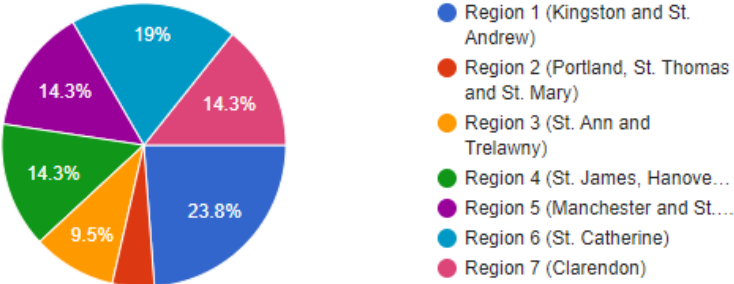


Figure 43. Shows the regions that respondents took part in government-run youth programme

According to the data, respondents were able to engage in government-run programmes in all MOEYI Regions. Region 1 (Kingston and St. Andrew) had the most programme participant respondents with 23.8 % (n=5); Region 2 (Portland, St. Thomas and St. Mary) had 4.8% (n=1) programme participants; Region 3 (St. Ann and Trelawny) had 9.5 % (n=2); Region 4 (St. James, Hanover, Westmoreland) had 14.3 % (n=3); Region 5 (Manchester and St. Elizabeth) had 14.3 % (n=3); Region 6 (St. Catherine) had 19 % (n=4) and Region 7 (Clarendon) had 14.3 % (n=3).

Which of the following best describes you:  
responses

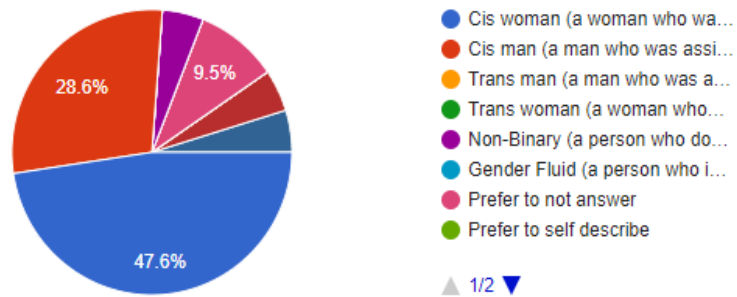


Figure 44. Shows the gender identity of the survey respondents' youth online survey

According to the data 52.4 % (n=11) respondents identified as a cis woman, 28.6 % (n=6) respondents identified as a cis man, 9.5 % (n=2) respondents preferred not to say while 4.8 % (n=1) identified as non-binary and 4.8 % (n=1) identified as trans man.

How would you describe your sexual identity  
responses

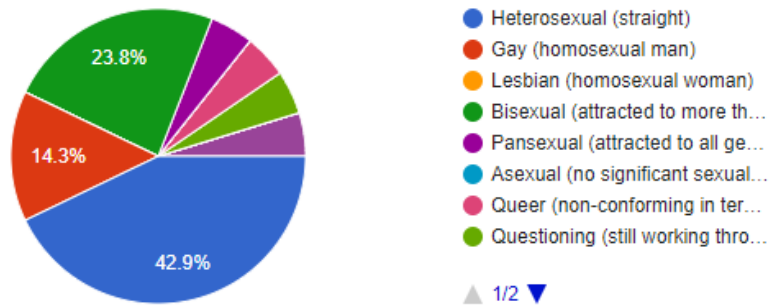


Figure 45. Shows the sexual orientation of respondents of the youth online survey

According to the data 42.9 % (n=9) identified as heterosexual, 23.8 % (n=5) identified as bisexual, 14.3 % (n=3) identified as gay, 4.8 % (n=1) identified as pansexual, 4.8 % (n=1) identified as queer, 4.8 % (n=1) and 4.8% (n=1) were questioning their sexual orientation.

Do you live with disability? (deaf, visually impaired, wheelchair bound, limited mobility, amputee, intellectual disability, learning disability etc.)

responses

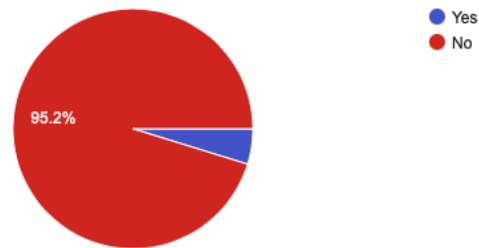


Figure 46. Shows the how many respondents had disabilities to the youth online survey

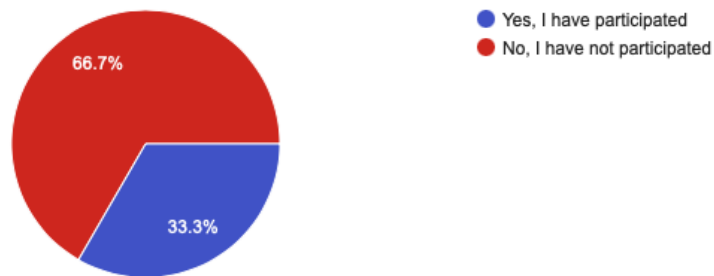
Most respondents do not live with any disabilities. Only 4.8 % (n=1) respondents lived with a physical disability (asthma).

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## YOUTH EXPERIENCE AND FACILITY ASSESSMENT

This section allowed for youth to provide feedback on the attitudes and practices within government run youth focused programmes and facilities, so as to gain a better understanding of the level inclusivity in these spaces.

Have you participated in an inclusivity and diversity training or sensitisation programme?  
responses



*Figure 47. Shows the number of youth respondents who have participated in inclusivity & diversity programmes*

According to the data majority of the respondents' to the youth online survey did not participate in any form of inclusion and diversity programme. A total of 66.7 % (n=14) responded no while 33.3 % (n=7) responded yes.

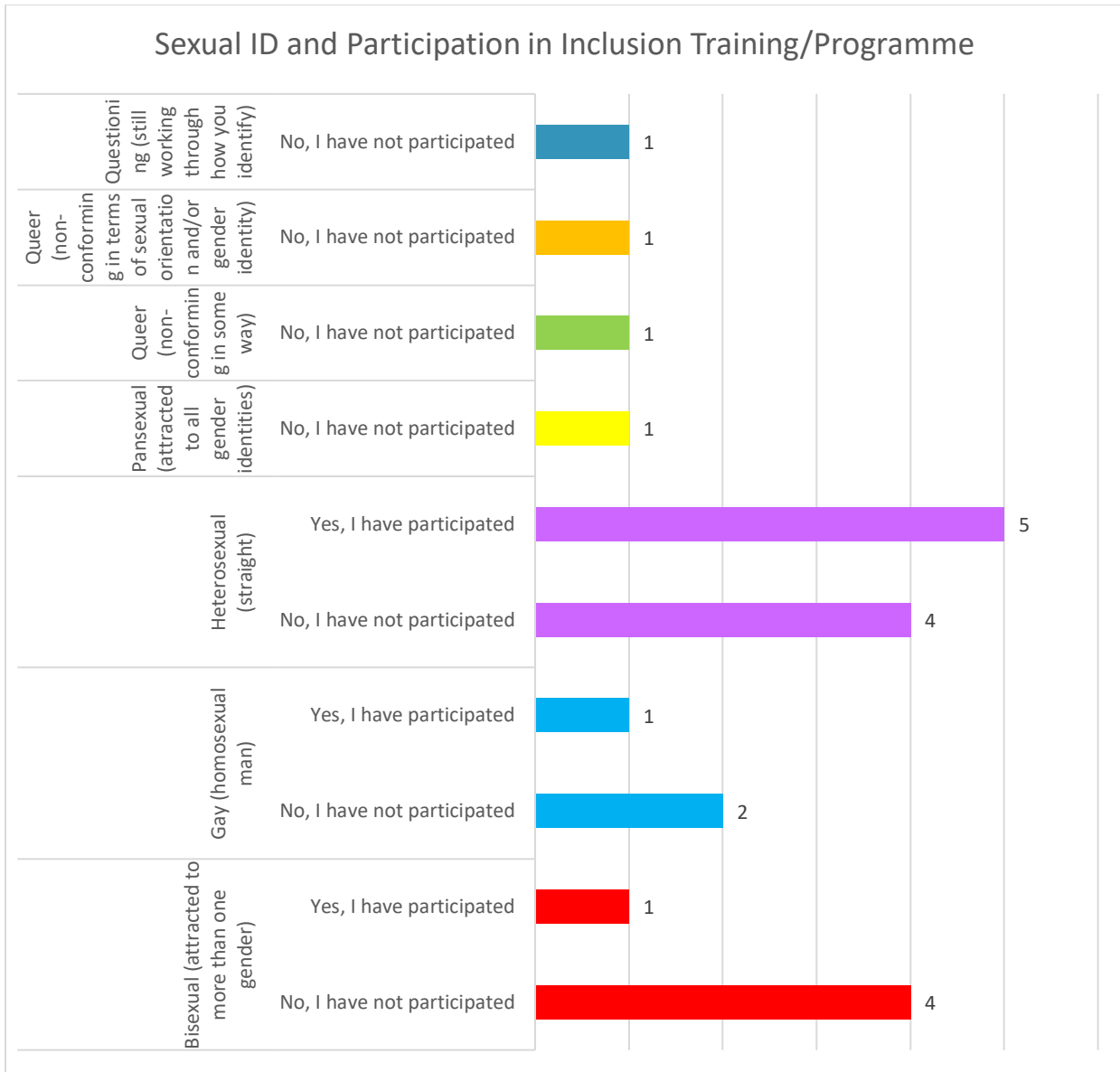


Figure 49. Shows cross tabulation of respondents' sexual identity and participation in inclusive training programme

The data shows that most respondents 23.8 % (n=5) in inclusion and diversity programmes were heterosexuals while 4.7 % (n=1) was gay and 4.7 % (n=1) was bisexual.

How often do you take part in a government run youth programme ( Youth Centres or MOEYI, Employment Training, Summer Employment Programme etc)?

responses

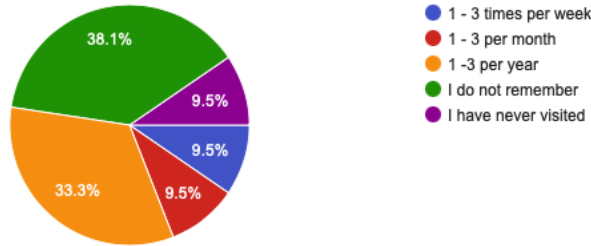


Figure 50. Shows respondents frequency of participation in other government-run youth programme

While the majority of respondents (38.1 % (n=8)) cannot recall how frequently they have participated in government run youth programmes, 33.3 % (n=7) said that they participate in programmes annually or every three years. 9.5 % (n=2) on a monthly and weekly basis.

If, you do take part in a government run youth programme (Youth Centres or MOEYI, Employment Training, Summer Employment Programme etc) how satisfied were you with the service?

responses

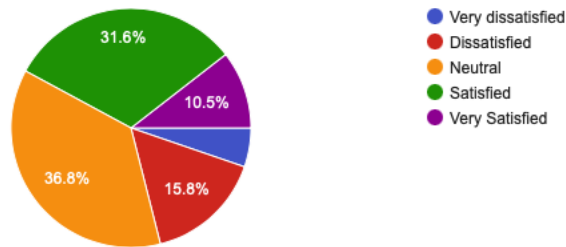


Figure 51. Shows respondents satisfaction level with the government-run youth programme

According to the results, 36.8 % (n=7) of respondents were neutrally satisfied with the programmes in which they participated — in other words, the programme may be improved. 31.6 % (n=6) of respondents were satisfied; 10.5 % (n=2) were dissatisfied; 15.8 % (n=3) were very dissatisfied; and 5.3 % (n=1) were very dissatisfied.

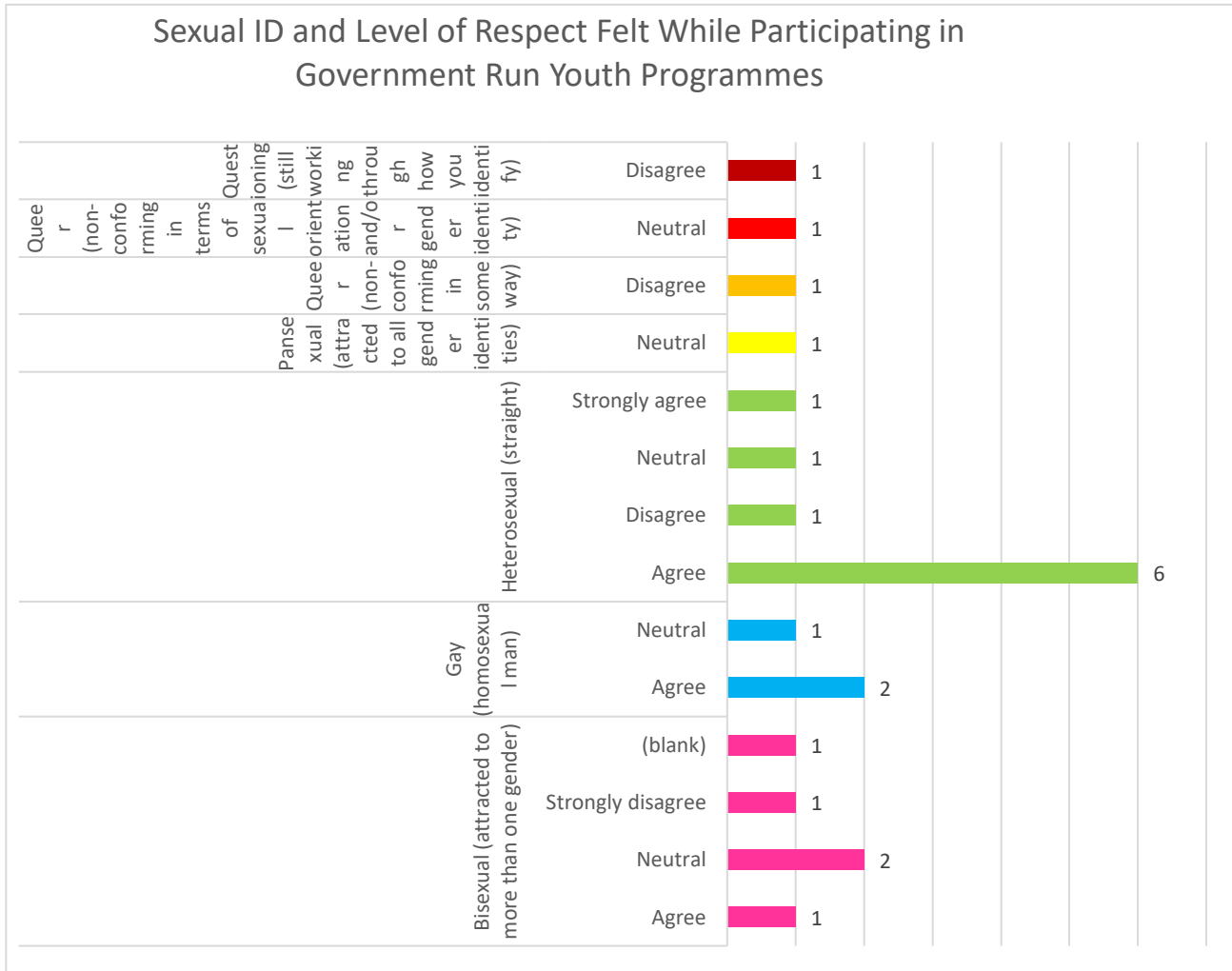


Figure 52. Shows the level of respect respondents felt while participating in youth programme

According to the data, 41% (n=5) of the 12 LGBT+ survey respondents felt ambivalent about the level of respect they received while participating in government-run youth programmes. 17% of LGBT+ respondents (n=2) disagreed and 8% (n=1) strongly disagreed that they felt respected. With only one exception, the majority of heterosexual respondents agreed or felt neutral about being respected.

## INCLUSIVITY, DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY

This section captures how youth feel about diversity, inclusion, and equality in government run youth programmes: how safe they felt participating and their perception of **employees and other users.**

Do you feel safe taking part in government run youth programmes?  
responses

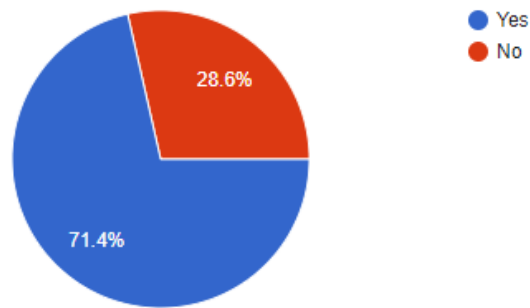


Figure 53. Shows how many respondents feel safe participating in government-run youth programmes

The results show that 71.4 % (n=15) respondents found safety in government-run youth programmes, while 28.6 % (n=6) did not.

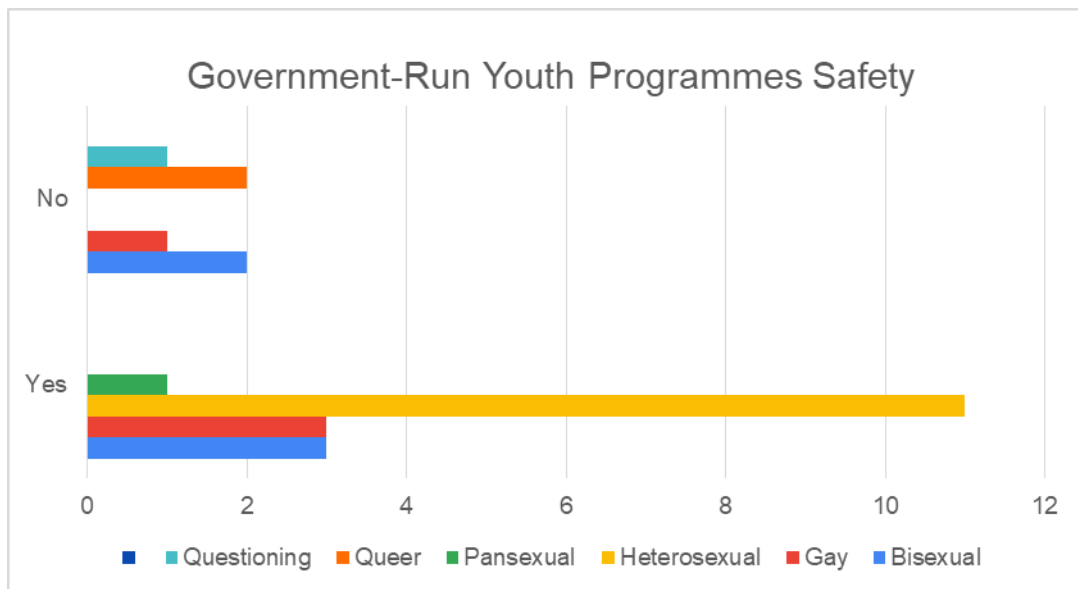


Figure 54. Shows respondents who felt safe participating in government-run youth programmes

According to the findings, all (n=11) heterosexual respondents felt safe engaging in government-run youth programmes. However, the majority of their LGBT+ counterparts did not feel the same way, with 40% (n=2) of (n=5) bisexual respondents reporting that they did not feel safe; 33.3 % (n=1) of (n=3) gay respondents reporting that they did not feel safe; and both queer (n=2) and questioning (n=1) respondents reporting that they did not feel safe. The single pansexual respondent (n=1) reported feeling safe; 60% (n=3) of bisexual respondents reported feeling safe, and the remaining (n=2) gay respondents reported feeling safe.

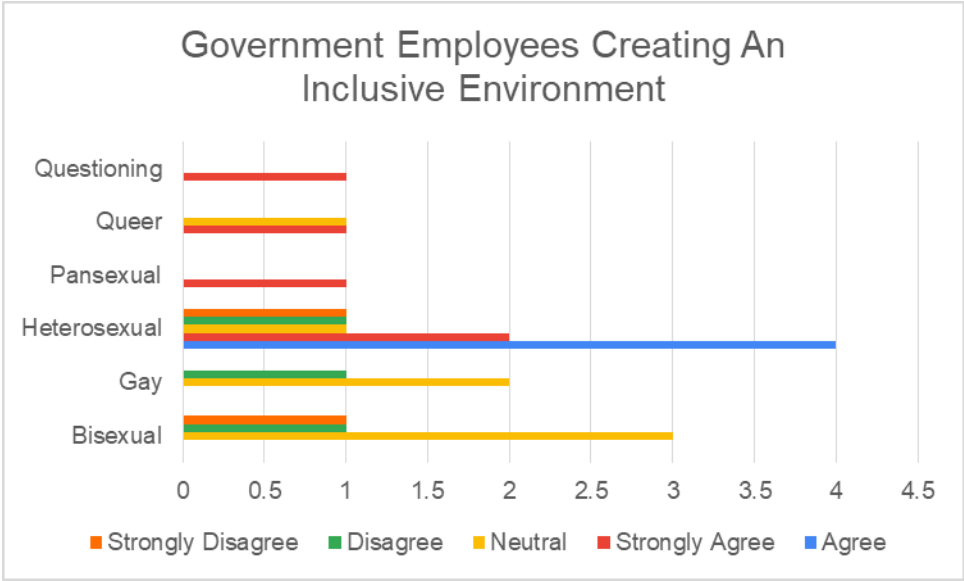


Figure 55. Shows respondents who feel that government employees are interested in creating an inclusive environment

Most respondents felt that employees of government-run youth spaces were interested in creating a more inclusive environment.

Employees at my government run youth programme demonstrate a commitment to creating an inclusive environment (meaning one where everybody feels safe and important)

responses

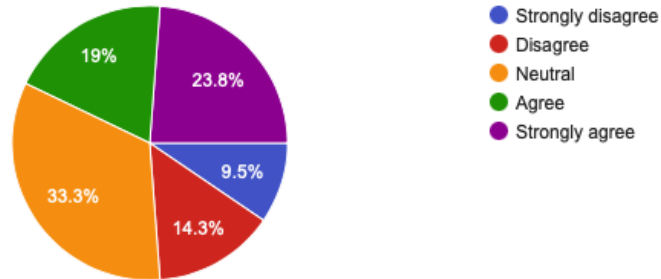


Figure 56. Shows respondents who felt that employees were interested in creating an inclusive environment

According to the data 33.3% (n=7) of respondents felt that employees were somewhat interested in creating a more inclusive space; 23.8% (n=5) strongly agreed; 19% (n= 4) agreed. Of the 14.3% (n=3) who disagreed with the statement – the majority were LGBT+ youth. 9.5% (n=2) strongly disagreed, one of which was also an LGBT+ person.

Do you feel that government run youth programmes are accommodating to the needs of LGTB+persons?

responses

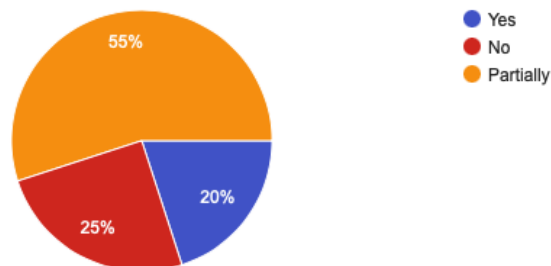


Figure 57. Shows how respondents felt about government-run youth programmes being accommodating to LGBT+ persons

Most respondents 55% (n=11) felt that the programmes were partially accommodating to LGBT+ persons. 25% (n=5) felt that the programmes were not and 20% (n=4) felt the programmes were accommodating.

Generally the findings indicate that there is more work to be done for programmes to be accommodating to LGBT+ youth – a view that is corroborated by cishet users as well.

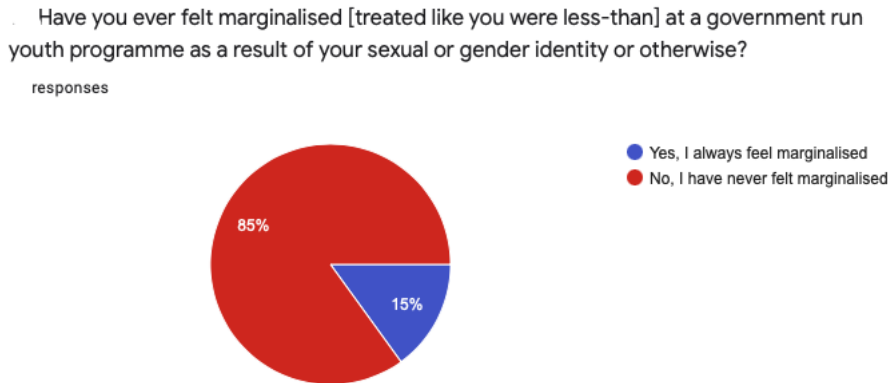


Figure 58. Shows respondents who have felt marginalized at a government-run programme

Most respondents 85 % (n=17) said they did not feel marginalised at government-run youth programmes, while 15 % (n=3).

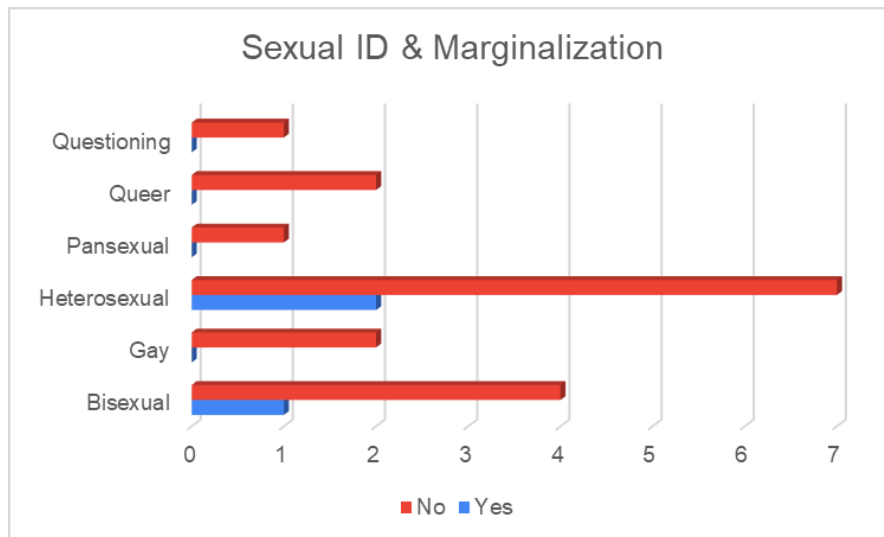


Figure 59. Shows respondents by sexual identity and feeling marginalized

According to the findings only one LGBT+ person had felt marginalised based on their sexual identity while two heterosexual respondents had felt marginalized. The LGBT+ respondent shared that they had to hide

their identity. Another respondent felt that their bisexuality was less damaging than – for instance – being homosexual or Trans but when they were with a woman they were often marginalised.

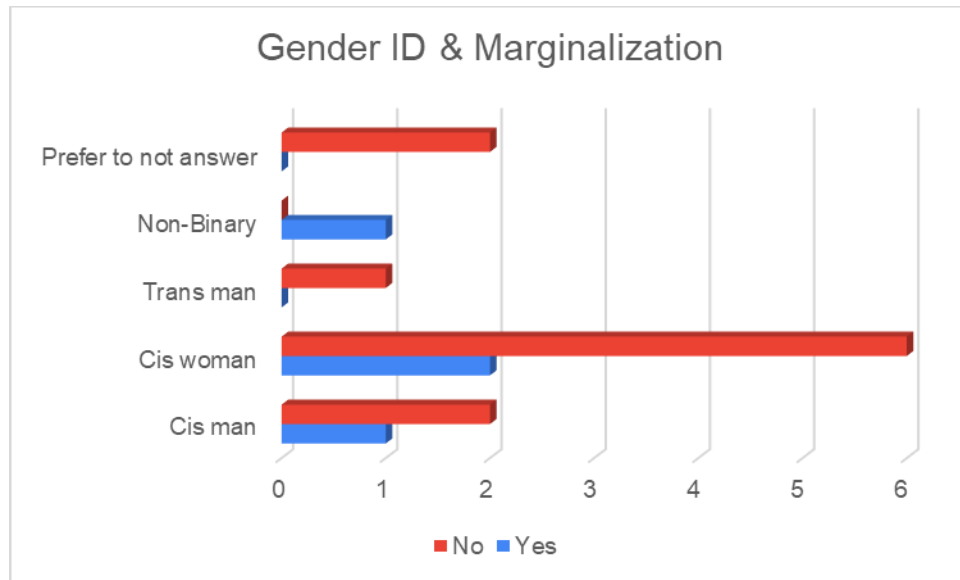


Figure 60. Shows gender identity and marginalization

According to the findings, the most marginalized group were cis women with (n=2) respondents feeling marginalized within government-run youth programmes. The results also showed that the only non-binary person did feel marginalized.

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#### DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT

This section was designed to help understand the different types of discriminatory harassment, whether verbal or physical, that denigrates or shows hostility toward an individual because of his or her race, colour, gender, national origin, religion, age, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation.

. If I had a concern about harassment and/or discrimination, I know  
 ere to make my complaints about government run youth programmes.  
 esponses

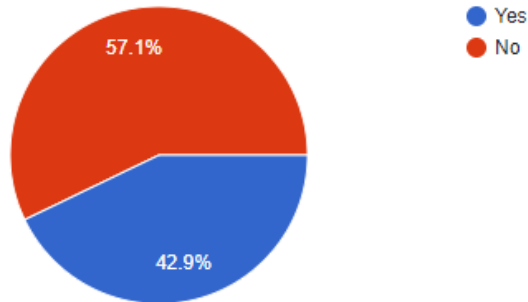


Figure 61. Shows respondents awareness of where to complain about discriminatory harassment

According to the data, 57.1 % (n=12) respondents did not know where to make a complaint in the event that they experienced discriminatory harassment while 42.9 % (n=9) did know. 75% (n=6) LGBT+ participants did not know where to make a report.

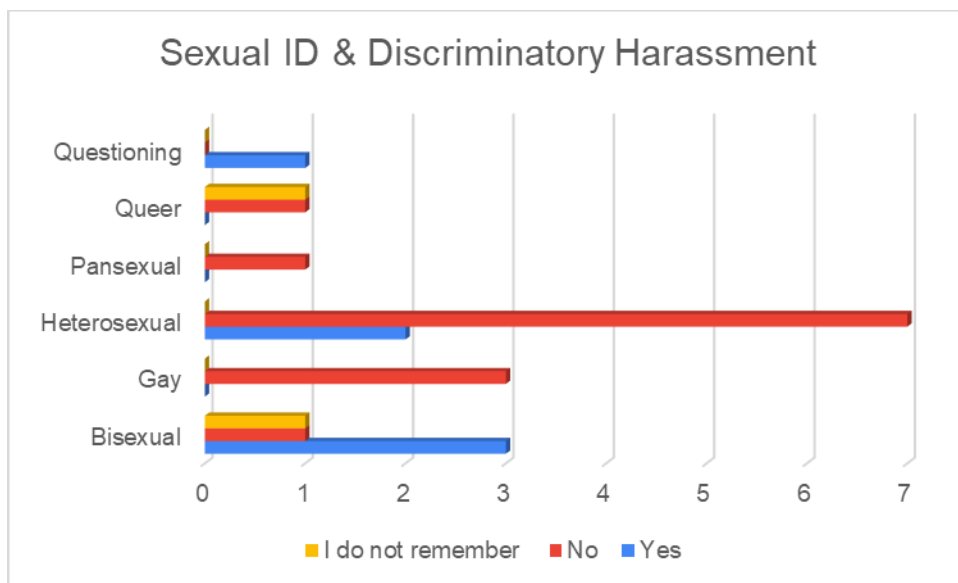


Figure 62. Shows respondents sexual identity and their experience of discriminatory harassment

According to the data (n=3) bisexuals respondents and (n=1) questioning respondent had experienced discriminatory harassment – this was most affected demographic in the study. Heterosexual respondents (n=2) also said they experienced discriminatory harassment.

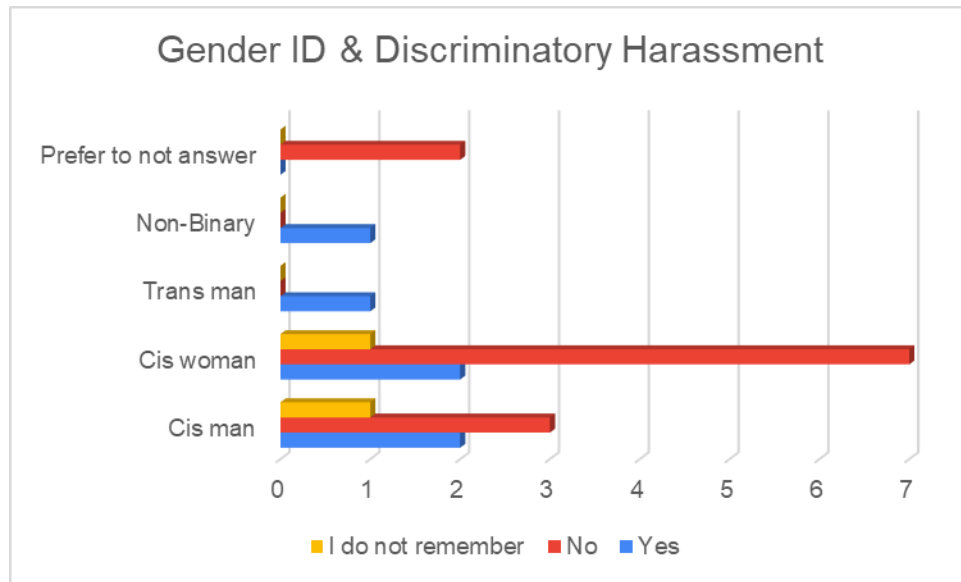


Figure 63. Shows respondents gender identity and their experience of discriminatory harassment

The data shows that both cis men and cis women experienced discriminatory harassment. According to the data (n=2) cishet men respondents and (n=2) cishet women respondents experienced discriminatory harassment.

21. I trust the people at the government run youth programme would take my concerns seriously.

21 responses

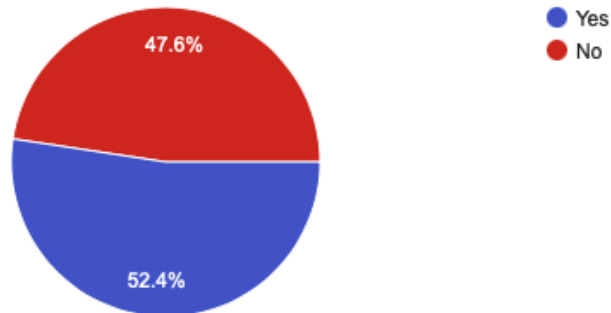


Figure 64. Shows respondents who trusted government-run youth programme to take complaint seriously

According to the findings, 47.6 % (n=10) of respondents believed their reports of discriminatory harassment would be taken seriously, whereas 52.4 % (n=11) did not. These findings indicate that more has to be done to ensure the safety of LGBT+ persons and their counterparts, as well as the establishment of trust in government-run places when dealing with any sort of internal discriminatory harassment. About half of LGBT+ respondents did not think their reports of discriminatory harassment would be taken seriously. About 30% (n=6) of survey respondents had experienced hurtful, embarrassing or unwelcome comments while participating in government run youth programmes. Of that number 50% were LGBT+ youth which accounts for 38% of LGBT+ respondents overall.

# DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## DISCUSSION

The overall goal of this post-assessment study was to determine the difference in knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) towards LGBT+ inclusivity and diversity in Jamaican government institutions namely: Ministry of Education, Youth, and Information (MOEYI) and Youth Information Centres (YIC) that participated in awareness and sensitization programmes spearheaded by JFLAG. The two main objectives of this study was to examine the extent to which government-based programmes have become more inclusive and diverse since JFLAG's intervention and to assess the extent to which government-run youth spaces have become inclusive for LGBT+ youth. The findings of the study indicated that inclusion and diversity training programmes have been successful in spreading awareness and shifting perspectives of government employees. However, the findings highlight the necessity for ongoing awareness campaigns, as there is still a lot of work to be done inside government-run youth spaces to make them more inclusive and diverse.

One of the most important findings is that discriminatory harassment within government-run facilities can still go unreported and unchecked because the majority of respondents did not know where to go if they were a victim. This is especially true for LGBT+ persons, who already experience significant discrimination both within and outside of the workplace, which is exacerbated by Jamaica's homophobic culture. The data shows that both the transgender and non-binary respondents reported that they faced discriminatory harassment. Respondents shared their thoughts on why they were harassed:

*I am political so I will not conclude that all my reasons are about my presumed sexuality. What it does is highlight the gaps the system is leaking. No one should be discriminated against.*

*There's always snickering and side eyes when people find out that I'm not a cis man. If one person has my information, it's quickly spread and the attitude towards me changes. Afterwards I'm addressed with she/her pronouns in a way that feels condescending. I went to one summer employment thing once, and never went back to any government run youth programme because of this.*

However, cis-gender respondents shared their stories and thoughts on why they were harassed:

*After graduating from university, I was placed at a certain secondary institution as a part of a graduate experience programme. I was the youngest at the time and I did not look my age but everyone knew I was graduated from university. A member of staff who I sometimes worked with often gave menial tasks and asked multiple times if I had the credentials to be working there. In one instance she asked if I had any subjects.*

The findings on marginalization also speaks to Jamaica's homophobic culture which was expressed by respondents to the youth online survey:

*They will say they are included us but the little things that would show that they are sensitized proves otherwise. Misgendering, the use of language to be specific in how they say my life style is wrong when my life style is going to the youth club quarterly. I would go more often but oh well. No accommodations are being made for my presence. Long story short they haven't done their research or it coming from the wrong place.*

While this study did not examine gender-based marginalization with a focus on women, it is important to note that gender-based marginalization in government-run spaces have been a long standing issue. This was further explained by respondents with the following:

*It is not only because I'm LGBT+ but because I'm a woman, because I grew up in an inner city, because I'm a woman politician. The system is not equally yoked.*

*I will not say 'never', but if I had to choose an option from above, it would be that one because I'm a bisexual woman - and my sexuality is not as socially scandalised as homosexuality or the trans experience. I have however experienced countless marginalisation when I am with a woman.*

These findings shows the importance of government led initiatives in the fight for equality, inclusion and diversity for LGBT+ persons.

The assessment of the outcome of the government-run youth programmes gives hope to victims of marginalization and discrimination as the findings show that participants found value in the training. Table 6 shows the results of the employee in-depth interview analysis. Employee responses to diversity and inclusion training revealed that 85% of participants regarded the training to be very valuable. This was further backed by the findings that employees noticed LGBT+ inclusive actions among their co-workers.

The youth in-depth interviews revealed that the staff acted professionally towards the majority of young people, but there were complaints from members that some staff members displayed attitudinal problems as explained by a participant:

*“Most of them know how to talk to people. Some of them the attitude is stink.”*

Most complaints came from HEART Trust participants who reported the poorest employee attitudes towards members of the LGBT+ community. However, users of the facilities were primarily satisfied across the board.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING LGBT+ INCLUSION

Youth participants made the following recommendations for how to improve LGBT+ inclusion in government run youth programmes. The recommendations around training and sensitization were echoed by staff members when asked about making government ministries, departments, and agencies more inclusive to LGBT+ persons.

## **TRAINING AND SENSITIZATION**

1. An increase in the training for government workers on the treatment of both LGBT+ youth and youth living with disabilities.
2. Training and sensitization work with Directors and other high ranking staff members in government ministries, departments and agencies

## **AWARENESS RAISING**

3. An increase in the availability of LGBT+ information at government-run facilities. A large number of Jamaicans, do not know much about the LGBT+ persons including the meaning of the different identities and the lived experiences of LGBT+ persons.
4. Public awareness campaigns built around the acceptance of LGBT+ people.
5. Making posters and other material pertaining to LGBT+ issues more visible within government run youth spaces.

## **CULTURAL SHIFTS**

6. Create spaces for conversations about Jamaica's social culture – in particular those that allowed LGBT+ persons to speak for themselves to folks outside of the community. Online and in-person webinars, workshops and fora were recommended.
7. Revise Jamaica's approach to dress codes which are archaic and trap people in sex specific expectations.

## **EMPOWERMENT AND INTENTIONAL INCLUSION OF LGBT+ YOUTH**

8. . Include a security guarantee for LGBT+ participants in government run youth spaces. LGBT+ persons often fear for their safety as by participating in training programmes or being users of government-run facilities there lies danger in revealing their sexual and gender identities.
9. Greater involvement of LGBT+ youth in activities at government run youth programmes.
10. Empower LGBT+ youth to believe they deserve a space in the programmes and to overcome internalised stigma that creates barriers to participation.
11. Reduce biases in use of language and communication to make spaces more inclusive.

## **STAFFING AT GOVERNMENT RUN YOUTH PROGRAMMES**

12. Increase the number of trained counsellors who are sufficiently equipped to handle LGBT+ issues that may arise in government-run facilities, with emphasis on youth spaces.
13. Hire and intentionally promote more LGBT+ persons in government run youth spaces to increase representation for LGBT+ youth users as well as build a culture of inclusivity.

## CONCLUSION

Discrimination against LGBT+ youth is an ongoing issue in families, places of work and communities. In government run youth spaces, LGBT+ youth experience varying levels of inclusion impacted by their gender identity; the organization through which they are accessing services; the presence of trained or un-trained staff; and the presence of LGBT+ or ally employees.

The exclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT+) employees in the workplace is also a recurrent concern for public administration; it reflects the likely treatment of LGBT+ clients who seek services from those organizations. In Jamaica there is still more work to be done both for LGBT+ youth and staff in government MDAs.

The effort required to enable inclusion and diversity in businesses is contextual, and at the organizational level, this means building an atmosphere in which employees from varied backgrounds and ways of thinking can interact constructively. One must also evaluate where social categories overlap at the micro-level, since this represents many intertwining systems of privilege and oppression at the macro-level inside social institutions.

Overall, the study's findings suggested that inclusion and diversity training programmes were effective in raising awareness and modifying perceptions among government personnel. The findings, however, emphasize the importance of continued awareness initiatives, as there is still much work to be done inside government-run youth spaces to make them more inclusive and diverse.

The findings of the study have emphasized the importance of government led initiatives in the fight for equality, inclusion and diversity for LGBT+ persons within government-run organizations.

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