

## Anti-Discrimination Laws Protecting LGBT People

Cora Butcher-Spellman<sup>1</sup>

This study seeks insight into the reasons behind the mixed opinions of LGBT issues in order to help leaders of the LGBT movement communicate with members of the community who have either dynamic or ambivalent attitudes towards LGBT issues. Anti-discrimination laws regarding members of the LGBT community have cycled through voter ballots for the past several years with mixed results. It is interesting that people have such varied opinions of LGBT issues and perhaps more progress could be made if we knew how people come to have their opinions of these issues. This study specifically attempts to answer the research question: How do people decide to vote for or against legislation regarding people of the LGBT community?

The study has been done through a survey in order to collect a large amount of varied information quickly. The survey begins with demographic questions including gender, religion, race, year in school, and age. The survey also includes definitions for the terms 'LGBT' and 'The Fourteenth Amendment.' In the survey, there are six five-point Likert scale questions ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The Likert scale questions are as follows:

'I think all people should be treated fairly when applying for loans, jobs, and housing contracts:'

'I think the LGBT subgroup is protected by the 14th Amendment (quoted above):'

'I would be unlikely to vote for a candidate who supports LGBT legislation:'

'I would be unlikely to vote in favor of amending current local legislation to include the LGBT subgroup:'

'I think all people are already treated fairly in public accommodations and when applying for loans, jobs, and housing contracts:'

'I feel most people in this community would be unlikely to vote in favor of LGBT legislation:'

The open-ended questions are as follows:

'How do you feel about LGBT legislation?'

'Is it ever acceptable to turn LGBT people away from public accommodations, housing contracts, or employment? If yes, explain.'

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<sup>1</sup>Communication Department

Missouri Southern State University

Joplin, MO 64801

[ButcherSpellmanC001@mymail.mssu.edu](mailto:ButcherSpellmanC001@mymail.mssu.edu)

The results of this study have successfully given much insight to the opinions of the participants. The means and standard deviations of the Likert scale questions and the modal responses to the open-ended questions indicate that the majority of participants feel neutrally and even ambivalent towards many aspects of the LGBT movement. The data also found correlations between Likert scale questions which suggests that participants have compartmentalized some of the concepts relating to LGBT issues. When comparing religious demographic groups and the scaled questions, the biggest difference in opinion comes from within religious groups as opposed to between religious groups. This is contrary to most previous literature and the somewhat common notion that religious people are generally opposed to LGBT rights. This study also found no connection between race or gender and attitudes towards LGBT rights which is also contradictory to most previous research on this topic. In response to the second open-ended question asking whether discrimination against LGBT people would ever be okay, 66% of people said such discrimination is never acceptable. Meanwhile 25% of participants said that it is acceptable if the LGBT people were 'disruptive' or 'obscene.' No participants responded with religious reasoning for discrimination which is interesting because compromises between religious rights and LGBT rights are often the difference between success and failure of passing LGBT anti-discrimination laws (Brantley, 2015). Overall, these results have been interesting to me and I plan to continue researching this topic more in the future.