

## **Methodology Example – Survey**

This thesis uses quantitative research design through survey research to analyze in detail. We explored both homosexual and heterosexual attitudes about same-sex marriage. To examine adult students' opinions toward same-sex marriage, this thesis focuses primarily on the students of CPP campus. CPP is a public university located in Pomona, California. It is a part of the 23-member California State University system.

The university has an enrollment of nearly 24,000 students, and it is the second largest California State University in the United States (CPP, 2015). CPP is an ethnically and culturally diverse university; it has over 1,000 international students. Some countries include Asia, Mexico, Russia, Morocco, and Zimbabwe. According to the Advocate College Guide for gay and lesbian students, CPP is a very gay and lesbian friendly campus; it has been named one of the best campuses for gay and lesbian students. The university offers a Pride Center for gay and lesbian students and multiple gay/lesbian clubs for students and faculty members, which offers the opportunity to students to openly express themselves without any judgment from their peers. CPP has remained a campus full of diversity for each individual.

Age and visibility of homosexuality are critical components of acceptance of same-sex marriage; therefore, we examine these as our primary dependent variables. Of the available surveys, we specifically expect that both age and visibility of homosexuality will have a direct effect on whether or not an individual positively supports same-sex marriage because age effects who has been visibly exposed to homosexuality and visibility of homosexuality promotes same-sex marriage support.

We expect to find a direct significant association between visibility of homosexuality and positive attitudes toward same-sex marriage. An individual who has been exposed to homosexuality through visibility will be more likely to accept than those who have not been exposed. With visibility of homosexuality being one of the main variables examined, we attempt to shine light on the direct significance by using Pearson's Chi-Squared testing, which uses the probability of less than .05 to be considered significant. This analysis will show direct significance between the two factors.

We also expect to find direct significance between age and acceptance of same-sex marriage. Individuals who are of younger generations will have a positive correlation in increased levels of support for same-sex marriage. This is because we believe that as older generations are less exposed to homosexuality, the less likely they are to support same-sex marriage. In our analysis of age and acceptance of same-sex marriage, we will find direct significance by using Pearson's Chi-Squared testing.

### *Design of Study*

This study explored many different attitudes toward same-sex marriage on the CPP campus. For the first portion of the survey in Appendix A, we wanted to find out more information about our participants and their demographics. This research was in the form of an on-campus study and utilized the following items and measures: a simple survey that included demographic questions, questions to show if the student had been visibly exposed to homosexuality, attitudes toward same-sex marriage, and few questions regarding gay/lesbian rights. These items and measures are described in greater detail below.

## *Participants*

Participation criteria included CPP students, age of at least 18, and the ability to read and write English. This study was open to both heterosexual and homosexual students because it was important for us to assess all sexual orientations to find out who actually supports same-sex marriage. Though it was important for us to understand that heterosexuals were the majority of students who typically do not approve same-sex marriage, we considered homosexuals as well to focus on their beliefs and attitudes toward this topic. Moreover, our primary focus were heterosexual attitudes.

Through a convenience sample, which allows us to gather a diverse amount of surveys across the campus, we were able to survey 102 students. 100% of the participants met the criteria of being a CPP student, 18 and older, and the ability to read and write English. The sex distribution was 58% men and 42% women.

The sample size was a bit diverse in regards to race. There were almost an even distribution of ethnicities. The most of the survey identified as Hispanic ( $n=29$ , 28.4%), followed by both Caucasian and African American each with an equal distribution ( $n=26$ , 25.4%), and Asian/Pacific Islander ( $n=21$ , 20.5%). Participants ranged in age from 18-30+.

In regards to sexuality, majority of the sample size identified as heterosexual ( $n=93$ , 91%), homosexuals ( $n=6$ , .05%), prefer not to answer ( $n=2$ , .2%), and none of the above ( $n=1$ , .009%). Here in our sample, we received mostly heterosexual attitudes and very few homosexual.

Most participants identified as single ( $n= 74$ , 72.5%), followed by married, ( $n= 21$ , 20.5%), divorced ( $n=4$ , 3%), widowed ( $n=3$ , .02%). Since the most of our students were between ages 18-21, we expected a majority of participants to be single.

The sample had a low range of income. This could possibly be because we were taking a convenience sample of undergraduate students on campus. More than half of the sample earned less than \$10,000 annually. The second highest income level was \$10,000 to \$19,000 (17%). Approximately 89% of the sample earned an annual income of less than \$70,000,

### *Procedure*

Participants were recruited for this study by in-person recruitment. Each recruitment session was held in the same spot, over the course of one week. The sessions were held in the same spot on the same days for accurate data collection. All in-person recruitment were done by myself with a brief description of the study. Those who agreed to complete the survey were given the survey, a pen, and a clipboard. Those who did not wish to complete the survey had the opportunity to decline participation prior to accepting the survey in hand. At the end of the survey, student were thanked for their participation, but were not offered any incentive for participation. The complete survey required approximately 7 minutes to complete.

We asked demographic information. Participants were given a few questions in regards to their background to assess their basic demographic information including: gender, age, marital status, race, income, and sexual orientation.

We measured participants' visibility of homosexuality with gays or lesbians by asking "Do you know anyone that is attracted to their same-sex?" and "How many

homosexuals do you know?” The scale ranged from 0-16+, which allowed participants to identify how many homosexual individuals they knew. Since the one main focus of this thesis is visibility of homosexuality, it was important to establish visibility of homosexuality in the survey. This was to measure and examine whether or not someone had been visibly exposed to any gay or lesbian people in their lives. We also looked into social interaction through media by asking “Have you ever watched a television show that included a gay or lesbian individual?” Television exposure is a method of visibility of homosexuality, and it was important to find out had participants ever been exposed to homosexuality through media portrayal.

Ranging on a scale from *extremely acceptable* to *extremely unacceptable*, participants were asked “how they felt about same-sex marriage?”. We were able to examine attitudes toward same-sex marriage by asking how participants felt toward same-sex marriage. Additionally, we asked “Do you agree with the laws and privileges that have been approved on same-sex marriage?” We were primarily focused on attitudes toward acceptance of same-sex marriage, and found this question to be extremely relevant during our examination.

The statements section of the survey were used as an additional way to determine attitudes toward homosexuals. There were a few questions regarding opinions toward gay/lesbian rights. Each participant answered the question ranging from *extremely acceptable* to *extremely unacceptable*. We were then able to consider which questions to compare in our Pearson’s Chi-Squared testing for analysis. The survey is located in Appendix A.

In the results section of this thesis, selected findings will illustrate the key relationships under examination in this study. The selected findings will illustrate two patterns: through visibility of homosexuality, participants were more prone to acceptance. And second, participants who were not exposed to visibility of homosexuality, were not supportive of same-sex marriage. In the following results section, these surveys are examined in great detail. Furthermore, the results section will show the results of the Pearson's Chi-Squared test run for probability, and will then demonstrate the findings and their significance.