

Assessment of the Latino Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Community of Santa Cruz County

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Executive Summary

In winter 2008, Triangle Speakers conducted a survey of the Latino Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender (GLBT) community in Santa Cruz County. This survey is one component of a larger process through which Triangle Speakers' new merged partnership with the Diversity Center, seeks to accomplish a variety of objectives, including identifying needs for expanded services for the Latino GLBT people; and making service providers more aware of the needs and issues identified by the Latino GLBT community. The demographics, experiences, and viewpoints of the 131 Latino GLBT individuals who completed the survey are represented in this report.

Demographics

- Most participants identify as women (50%) or male (42%). A much smaller proportion identified as male to female (2%), female to male (5%), and transsexual (1%).
- The majority of participants identify themselves as “gay” (34%) or “lesbian” (29%). Just under one-fourth (23%) of participants identify themselves as “bisexual,” and just over one-tenth (13%) identify as “homosexual.”
- Forty-seven percent (47%) of the respondents were Bilingual (Spanish and English speakers), followed by monolingual English speaking respondents (34%) and monolingual Spanish speaking respondents (19%).
- Approximately half (54%) of participants rent or own a home. Monolingual Spanish speaking respondents were more likely not to have permanent living arrangements.

GLBT Identification and Visibility

- Most respondents became conscious of their sexual orientation in their teen years.
- Close to half (45%) of Latino GLBT respondents don't feel very comfortable with their sexual orientation, while a little more than half (54%) are “very comfortable” with their sexual orientation.
- Respondents were proportionally more open about their sexual orientation with “friends” (92%), followed by “professors/teachers” (83%), and their “siblings” (77%).

Challenges an Discrimination

- Half (50%) of the respondents reported experiencing discrimination due to their sexual orientation, followed by nationality (44%), skin color (43%), dress (39%), and gender (33%). Lesbian respondents (43%) were proportionately more likely to experience sexism
- Discrimination due to nationality or skin color was more prevalent among monolingual Spanish speaking respondents.
- Over all, most respondents reported experiencing discrimination in a public space other than work, educational setting, or home.

Social Activities and Support

- Three-fourths (75%) of respondents reached out to “friends” for support when they faced challenges pertaining to their sexual orientation, followed by their “partner” (29%), and “siblings” (27%).
- However, four-teen percent (14%) of respondents had never solicited any type of support from individuals. And thirty-eight percent (38%) of monolingual Spanish speaking respondents never solicited any type of support from individuals when they faced challenges pertaining to their sexual orientation.
- Approximately half (46%) of respondents reported “never” soliciting support from institutions such as churches, educational settings and community agencies. Bisexual (57%) and monolingual Spanish (73%) speaking respondents were more likely not to solicit support from institutions.

Volunteering & Civic Engagement

- Half (50%) of the respondents reported volunteering their time in community activities in the last three months.
- Two-fifths (44%) of participants reported contributing money to charitable causes. Monolingual Spanish speaking (76%) respondents were less likely to donate money.
- Forty-eight percent (48%) of participants reported being interested in creating a “support group”, and 36% were interested in creating a “leadership/activist” group. However, 30% of all participants reported not being interested in volunteering.

INTRODUCTION

Santa Cruz County has a reputation for being a tolerant community, yet verbal harassment and physical attacks on Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) people continue both in private and public circles. Triangle Speakers core program is designed to create a safe community for GLBT people – safe from violence, harassment and demeaning attitudes; and to promote personal health and self-esteem among GLBT people, particularly youth who are the most vulnerable to violence and self-destructive behavior.

Although outreach in the GLBT community is a critical first step, Triangle Speakers cannot speak or provide all of the experiences and ongoing reinforcement that GLBT individuals need in order to become vibrant community members. To strengthen and provide continued support to the entire GLBT community, Triangle Speakers partnered with the Diversity Center of Santa Cruz County. For almost 20 years, the Diversity Center has provided support, resources, referrals, and social opportunities for the GLBT community in Santa Cruz. With the completion of the merger, both organizations are now in a position to become a true county-wide organization, serving the full diversity of Santa Cruz County by embarking on a plan to expand our accessibility, inclusivity, and outreach to the Latino GLBT community.

As individuals who experience multiple oppressions due to their ethnicity, language, sexual orientation and gender, Latino GLBT individuals in Santa Cruz County remain marginalized, isolated and underserved. Hence, Triangle Speakers and the Diversity Center has focused on expanding outreach services to largely Latino populated areas of the county, Watsonville being one of the largest. In December 2001, Triangle Speakers initiated its Latino GLBT Outreach Project through partnerships with grassroots GLBT groups in the Watsonville community. With its high percentage of Mexican immigrants, the Watsonville community reflects both the cultural and socio-political diversity of the Monterey Bay area.

As a merged organization, Triangle Speakers and the Diversity Center will retain and strengthen the Latino GLBT Outreach Project. The goal of the Latino GLBT Outreach Project is to bring culturally focused GLBT services and educational programs to the forefront of the Watsonville community.

Latino GLBT Outreach Program – Long Term Goals

- The Latino GLBT community will see the Diversity Center as part of their community.
- Latino GLBT community members will be inspired to act and join volunteer activities provided at the Diversity Center.
- Latino GLBT individuals will feel supported and less isolated, and become healthy members of our community.

The Latino GLBT Outreach Program will fulfill Triangle Speakers' and the Diversity Center's strategic goals of creating safe spaces and Latino GLBT individuals free of fear and isolation by developing culturally relevant programs. Through the Latino GLBT Outreach program, young GLBT people, adults, community organizations and families will develop a stronger awareness about the needs of the Latino GLBT community. And as a result, Latino GLBT individuals will take the next steps in becoming active and effective volunteers and members in the Diversity Center's activities.

Latino GLBT Outreach Program - Research Questions

1. What are some of the barriers and needs of the Latino GLBT community in Santa Cruz County?
2. Do Latino GLBT individuals experience aggression or discrimination?
3. If and when Latino GLBT individuals need support, what institutions or individuals do they reach out to?

To answer these questions, Triangle Speakers conducted its second Latino GLBT Needs Assessment in February 2008. Triangle Speakers staff worked with *M&L Consulting* to develop a survey with the purpose of studying the issues confronting the Latino GLBT community. The survey will provide Triangle Speakers and Diversity Center with an initial measure against which they can compare future survey results, and assess change over time. The following data were collected from this survey:

- Demographics
- GLBT Identification and Visibility
- Challenges and Discrimination
- Social Activities and Support
- Volunteering & Civic Engagement

Methodology

The primary tool of data collection for this study included one custom-designed survey: self-administered survey of self-identified GLBT Latino individuals living in Santa Cruz County. The goal of this survey was to collect information from Latino GLBT participants to understand their needs and experiences as GLBT individuals. The data will act as a guide for Triangle Speakers and the Diversity Center's merged organization to design and implement targeted community-based Latino GLBT programs in the cities of Santa Cruz and Watsonville. The following describes the survey instrument, sample of participants, and data analysis procedures, as well as limitations and strengths of the survey methods.

Survey Instrument

In collaboration with volunteers, staff, and independent consultant, *M&L Consulting*, Triangle Speakers developed a survey instrument to gather information pertinent to the study goals.

1. What are some of the barriers and needs of the Latino GLBT community in Santa Cruz County?
2. Do Latino GLBT individuals experience aggression or discrimination?
3. If and when Latino GLBT individuals need support, what institutions or individuals do they reach out to?

The instrument included questions in the following areas:

- Demographics
- GLBT Identification and Visibility
- Challenges and Discrimination
- Social Activities and Support
- Volunteering & Civic Engagement

Although the survey consists of primarily closed-ended questions, most questions also include an open-ended line item to allow respondents to write in answers. Once the survey was drafted, it was pilot tested both in English and Spanish with a variety of individuals.

Sample

Triangle Speakers distributed the survey using a "snowball" or "convenience" sampling technique, in which surveys are distributed through a network of individuals and volunteers. To make the survey accessible to the monolingual Spanish-speaking community, the survey was translated to Spanish, and outreach volunteers were bilingual in Spanish and English. Triangle Speakers sent multiple copies of the survey to a wide variety of social spaces, nonprofit organizations and

grassroots groups that Latino GLBT individuals frequented, such as Francos, Dakota, The GLBT Youth Task Force, LyLya, Salud Para La Gente, SOMOS GLBT and the Santa Cruz AIDS Project. Triangle Speakers also posted the survey on the internet via SurveyMonkey for potential participants to complete online. Approximately, 15% (N=20) of surveys were collected via SurveyMonkey. The sampling approach effectively yielded a total of 131 surveys for analysis.

Data Analysis

Survey data were entered into Microsoft Excel, and then downloaded into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for cleaning, coding, and analysis. The design of analysis was a descriptive, the data analysis depicted the overall frequencies and percents of each survey question. Note that due to rounding some figures may exceed or come short of 100%. The final analysis is descriptive, where data aims to highlight the basic needs and issues confronting the Latino GLBT community.

Cross-tabulations were performed on survey data by sexual orientation and language. It is important to note that when a cross-tabulation is preformed, only those respondents for whom information on the variable of interest is available can be included. For example, if a respondent does not provide his/her sexual orientation, that person is not included in the sexual orientation cross-tabulation. Therefore, the number of respondents included in a cross-tabulation will often be less than the overall number of respondents who completed the survey.

Limitations

The primary limitation to this study is that we do not know precisely how well the group of community members who responded to the survey represents the overall population of Latino GLBT individuals in Santa Cruz County. The findings contained herein are biased by the characteristics and experiences of those individuals who chose to respond. The sample appears to be biased because it almost exclusively represents English Speaking participants; few Spanish-speaking participants are represented, despite Triangle Speakers efforts to find and interview them. In addition, there is a very small sample of respondents who identified as Transgender (male to female or female to male). Triangle Speakers and the Diversity Center plan to continue further investigations with these groups, either through focus groups or key informant interviews.

Strengths

This survey represents a significant effort to quantify the characteristics and experiences of the Latino GLBT members living in the Santa Cruz County. Since the Latino GLBT community in Santa Cruz County is under-studied, this survey can make an important contribution to this field of social research. While the snowball sampling procedure introduces biases that cannot be fully known, the overall number of individuals who responded is strong, providing us with confidence in the results.

Participant Demographics

The below charts offered an overview of the characteristics of respondents to this survey, including age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, education, language, income, and length of residency in the United States.

Most participants identify as women (50%) or male (42%). A much smaller proportion identified as male to female (2%), female to male (5%), and transsexual (1%). In terms of sexual orientation, the majority of participants identify themselves as “gay” (34%) or “lesbian” (29%). Just under one-fourth (23%) of participants identify themselves as “bisexual,” and just over one tenth (13%) identify as “homosexual”, a smaller proportion identifies with “other” sexual orientations (11%). Additionally, 3% of participants identify as “heterosexual.”

These sexual orientation categories do not imply particular gender identifications. For example, both female and female-to-male (FTM) transgender participants identify as “lesbian.” Both female and male participants, but no transgender participants, identify as “gay.” Female, male, and FTM participants identify as “bisexual.”

Figure 1. Gender

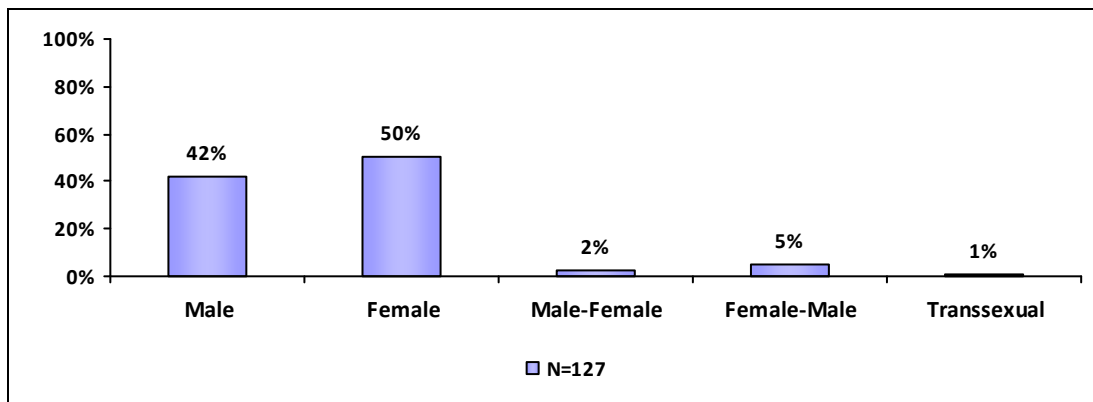
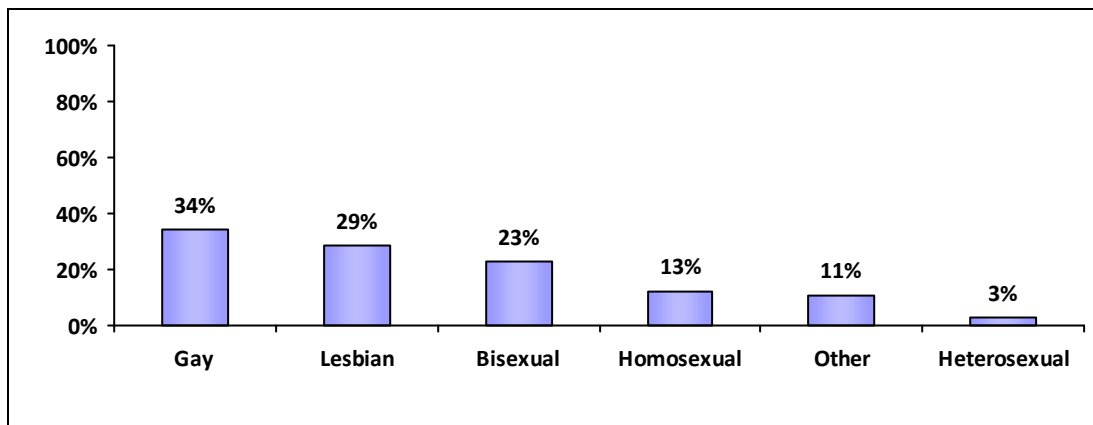


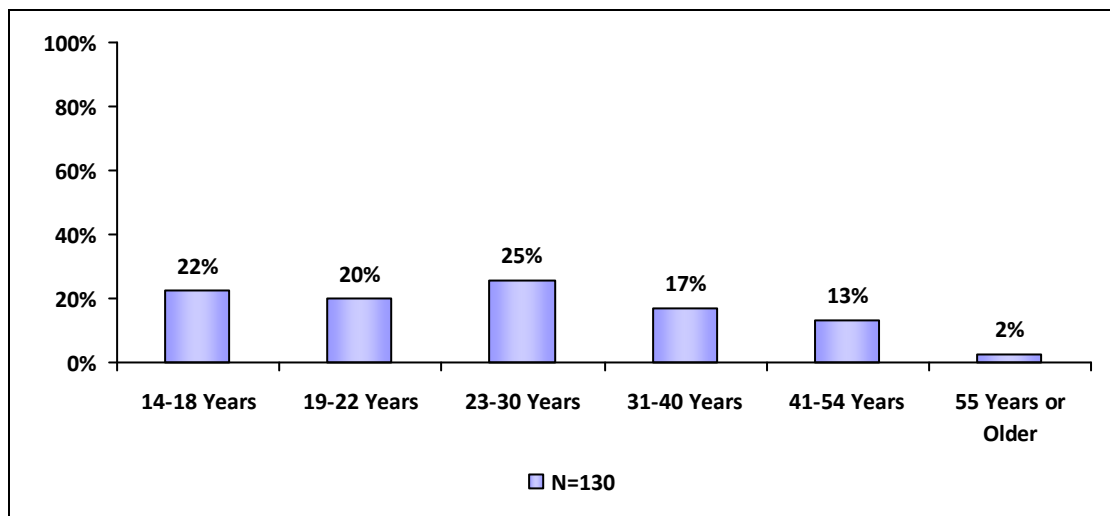
Figure 2. Sexual Orientation



Multiple response question with 128 respondents offering 144 responses.

Forty-two percent (42%) of respondents were between the ages of 14 and 22 years, another 42% were ages 23 to 40 years, and 13% were ages 41 to 54 years. A small minority (2%) were 55 years and older.

Figure 3. Age



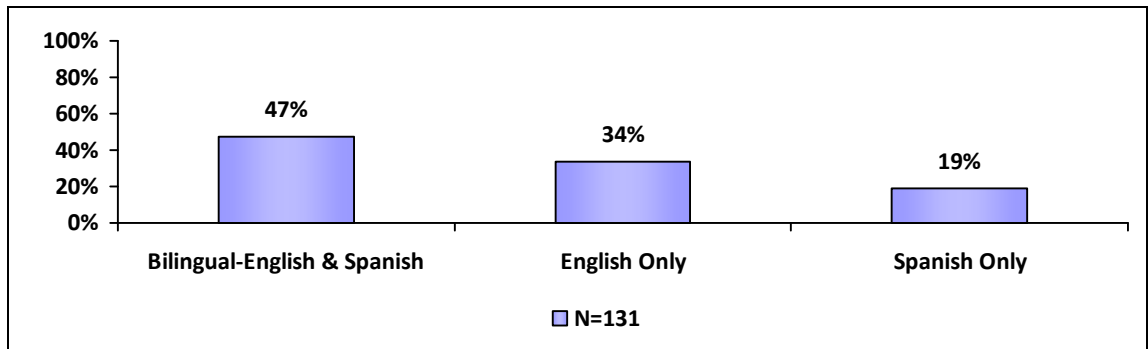
Comparison of participants by Latino ethnicities were as follows: A large amount of respondents identified as Mexican American (41%), followed by Mexican (34%), Salvadorian (9%) and Columbian (3%). Additionally, there were 13% of participants who identified with “other” Latino ethnicities.

Figure 5 reveals that approximately half (47%) of the respondents were Bilingual, speaking Spanish and English, followed by monolingual English speakers (34%) and monolingual Spanish speakers (19%). Although outreach was conducted primarily among Latino community groups, the under-representation of monolingual Spanish speakers is likely related to the lack of outreach among monolingual Spanish speaking circles.

Figure 4. Ethnicity

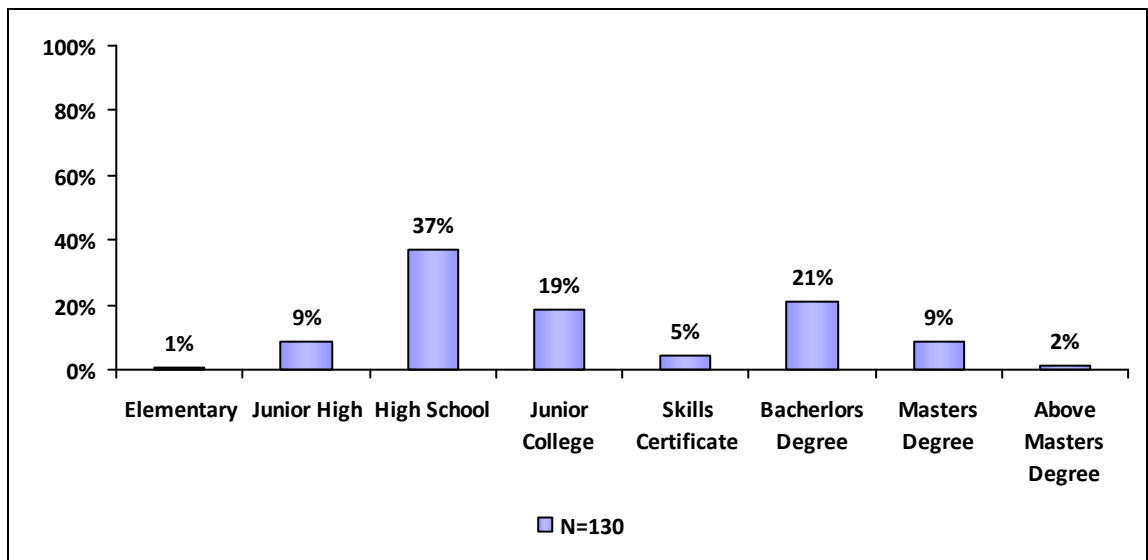


Figure 5. Language



Participants with a low level of education (47% with a high school education or less than a high school education) were over-represented in this study, in comparison with respondents that had a four-year college degree and above (32%).

Figure 6. Education



The current housing situations of participants are illustrated by Figures 7 and 8, which describe the type of housing accommodation, and the number of people with whom respondents live with. Approximately half (54%) of participants rent or own a home, while (28%) live with a parent or family member. Monolingual Spanish speaking respondents, were more likely not to have permanent living arrangements (20%), compared to Bilingual respondents (2%), and monolingual English speaking respondents.

Figure 7. Living Arrangements

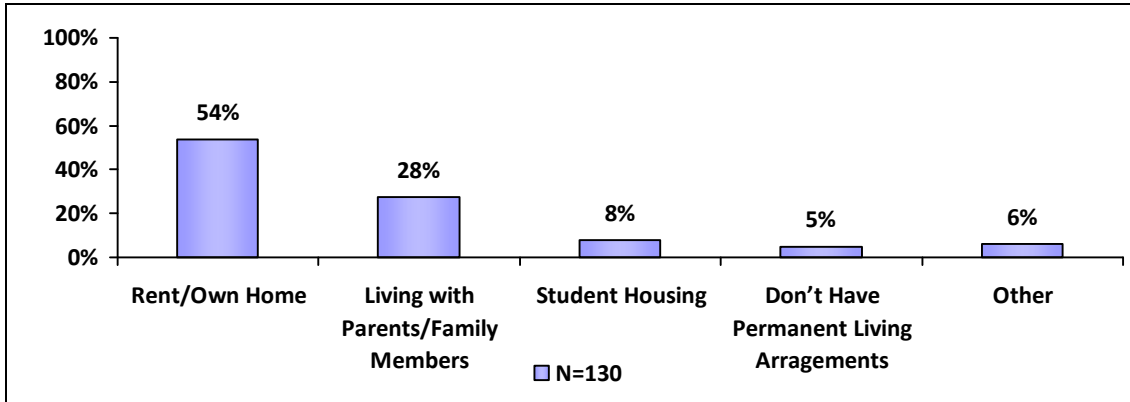
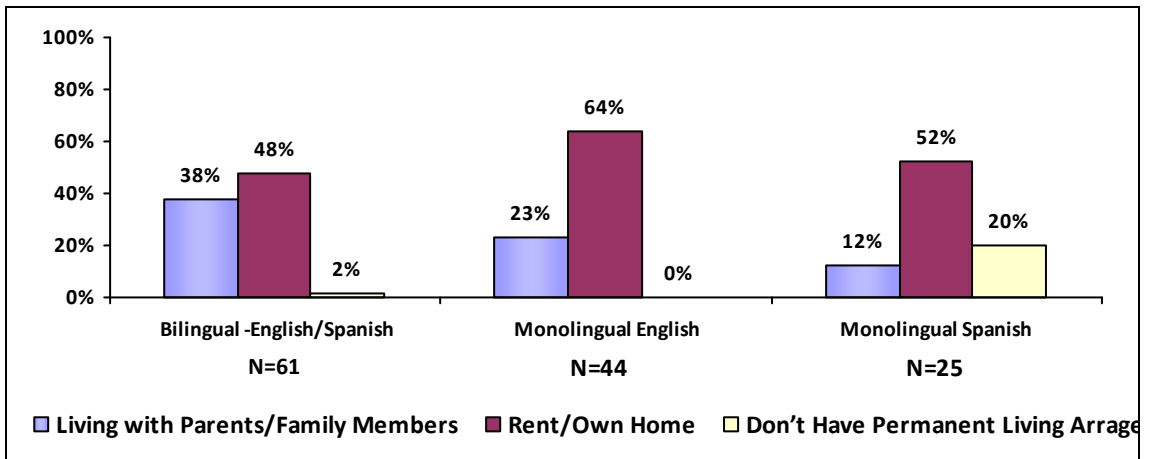


Figure 8. Living Arrangements, by Language



Most respondents (87%) live with other people, while a little more than ten percent (13%) live alone. The proportion of participants living with other people is illustrated in Figure 9.

Figure 9. Number of People Living with Respondent

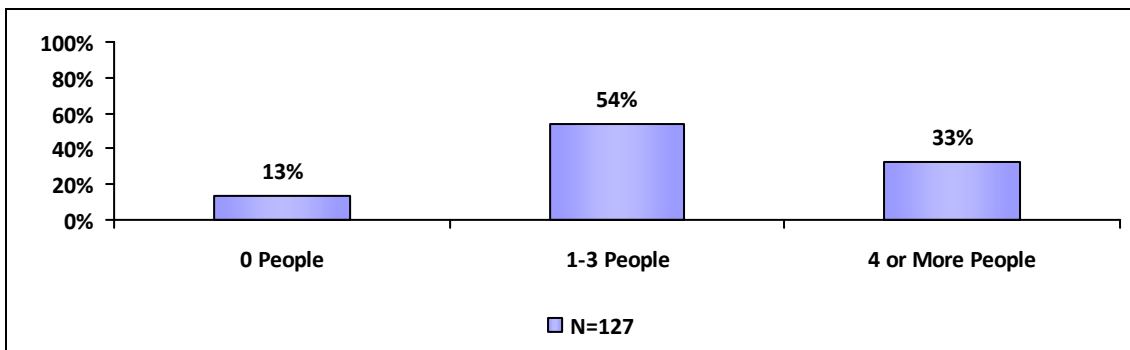
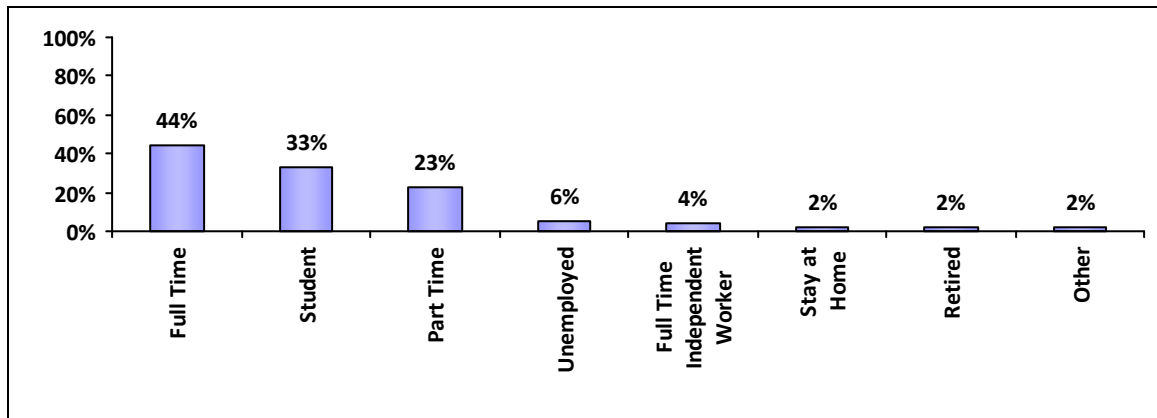


Figure 10. Employment Status



Multiple response question with 126 respondents offering 144 responses.

A large majority (73%) of participants earned between \$0 to \$29,999 in annual income, followed by six-teen percent (16%) who earned between \$30,000 to \$49,999, and (11%) who earned \$50,000 and above. Monolingual Spanish speaking respondents were more likely to earn less money annually. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of monolingual Spanish speakers earned less than \$29,000 in annual income, compared to 59% of monolingual English speakers.

Figure 11. Hours of Work Per Week

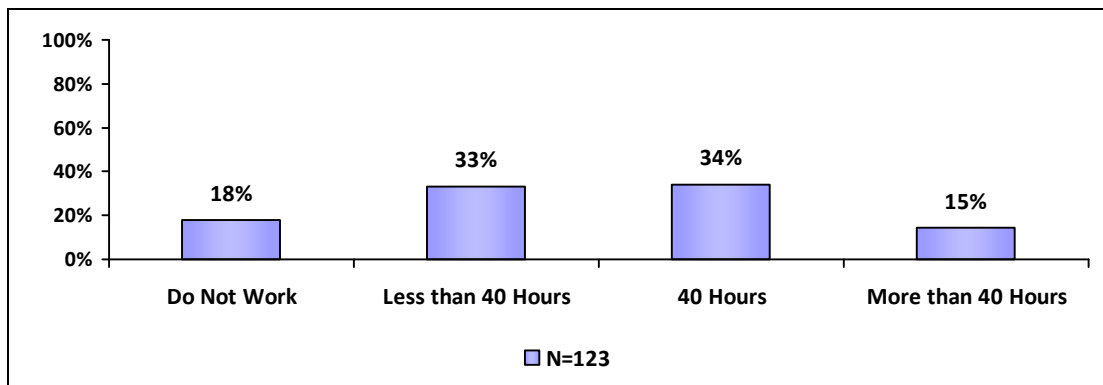


Figure 12. Income

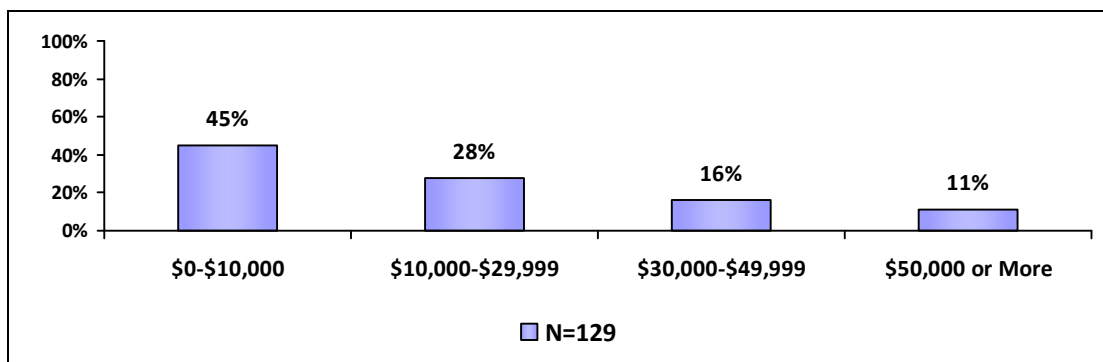
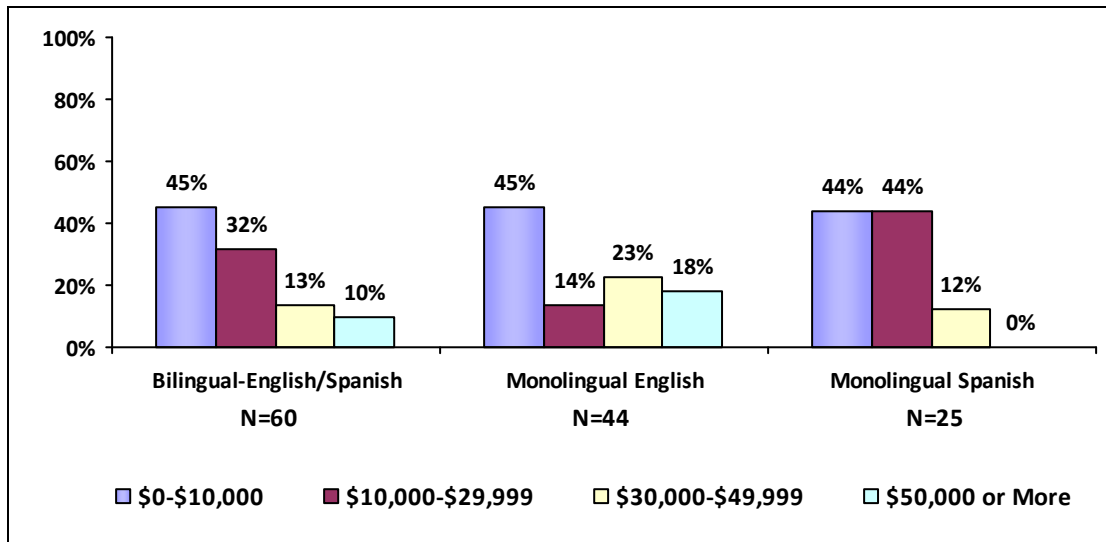


Figure 13. Income, by Language



The largest proportion of participants (49%)—reside in the Cities of Watsonville and Freedom, followed by the City of Santa Cruz (33%). A large percent of respondents were born in the USA (69%). The majority of monolingual English speaking respondents (93%) were more likely to be born in the USA, compared to monolingual Spanish speaking respondents (28%).

Figure 14. City of Residence (Top 3 Responses)

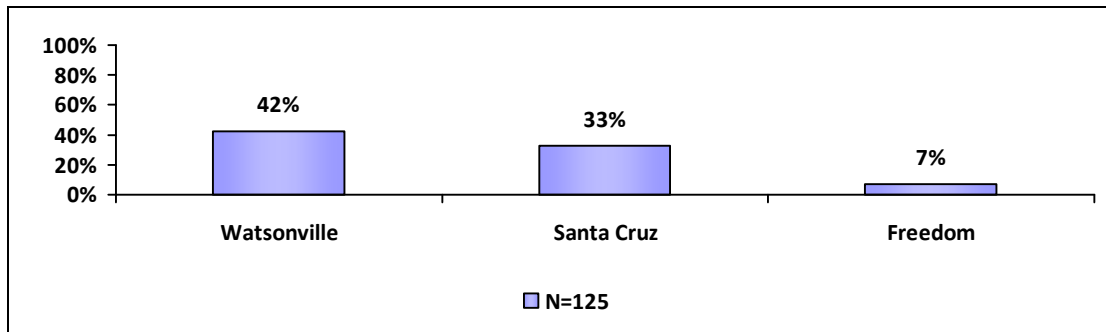
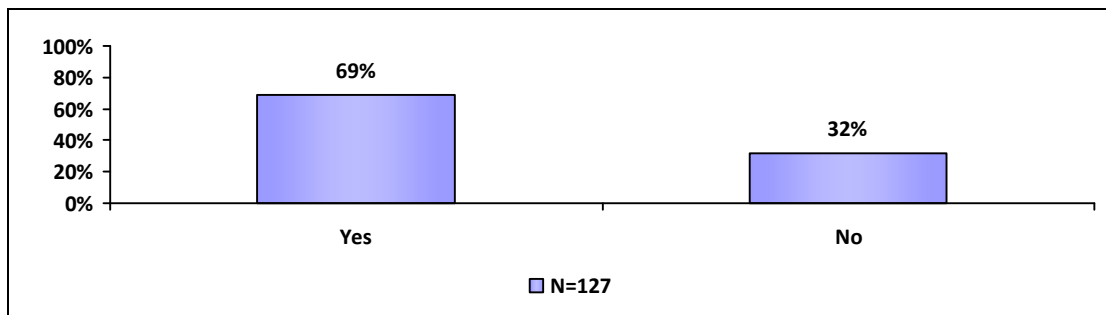
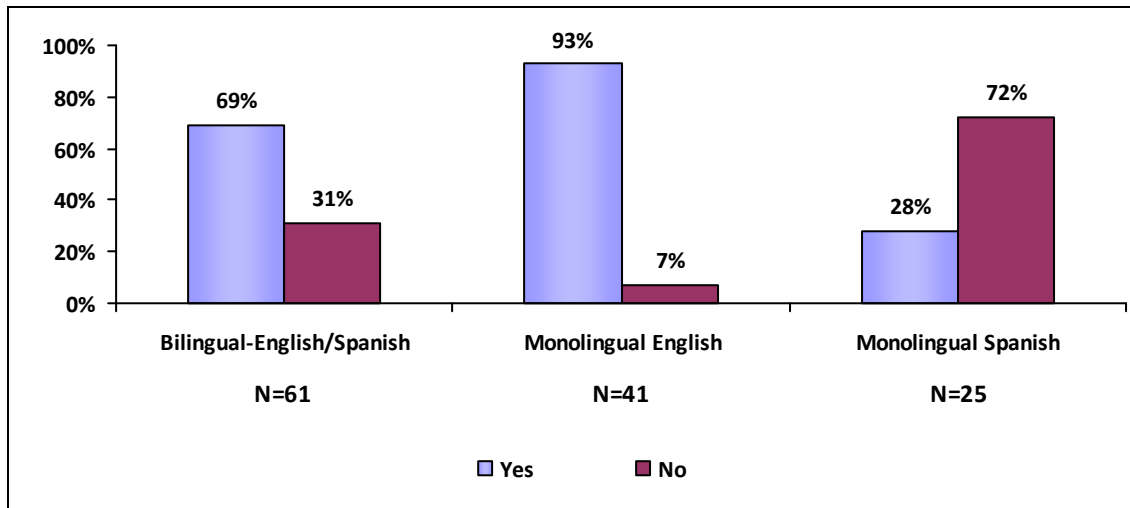


Figure 15. Born in the United States



Note: Percents may exceed 100% due to rounding.

Figure 16. Born in the United States, by Language



Summary of Demographics

The above charts offered an overview of the characteristics of respondents to this survey, including age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, education, language, income, and length of residency in the United States.

Most participants identify as women (50%) or male (42%). A much smaller proportion identified as male to female (2%), female to male (5%), and transsexual (1%). In terms of sexual orientation, the majority of participants identify themselves as “gay” (34%) or “lesbian” (29%). Just under one-fourth (23%) of participants identify themselves as “bisexual,” and just over one tenth (13%) identify as “homosexual”, a smaller proportion identifies with “other” sexual orientations (11%). Additionally, 3% of participants identify as “heterosexual.”

These sexual orientation categories do not imply particular gender identifications. For example, both female and female-to-male (FTM) transgender participants identify as “lesbian.” Both female and male participants, but no transgender participants, identify as “gay.” Female, male, and FTM participants identify as “bisexual.”

Forty-two percent (42%) of respondents were between the ages of 14 and 22 years, another 42% were ages 23 to 40 years, and 13% were ages 41 to 54 years. A small minority (2%) were 55 years and older.

Comparison of participants by Latino ethnicities were as follows: A large amount of respondents identified as Mexican American (41%), followed by Mexican (34%), Salvadorian (9%) and Columbian (3%). Additionally, there were 13% of participants who identified with “other” Latino ethnicities.

Figure 5 reveals that approximately half (47%) of the respondents were Bilingual, speaking Spanish and English. Followed by monolingual English speakers (34%) and monolingual Spanish speakers (19%). Although outreach was conducted primarily among Latino community groups, the under-representation of monolingual Spanish speakers is likely related to the lack of outreach among monolingual Spanish speaking circles.

Participants with a low level of education (47% with a high school education or less than a high school education) were over-represented in this study, in comparison with respondents that had a four-year college degree and above (32%).

The current housing situations of participants are illustrated by Figures 7 and 8, which describe the type of housing accommodation, and the number of people with whom respondents live with. Approximately half (54%) of participants rent or own a home, while (28%) live with a parent or family member. Monolingual Spanish speaking respondents, were more likely not to have permanent living arrangements (20%), compared to Bilingual respondents (2%), and monolingual English speaking respondents. Most respondents (87%) live with other people, while a little more than ten percent (13%) live alone. The proportion of participants living with other people is illustrated in Figure 9.

A large majority (73%) of participants earned between \$0 to \$29,999 in annual income, followed by six-teen percent (16%) who earned between \$30,000 to \$49,999, and (11%) who earned \$50,000 and above. Monolingual Spanish speaking respondents were more likely to earn less money annually. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of monolingual Spanish speakers earned less than \$29,000 in annual income, compared to 59% of monolingual English speakers.

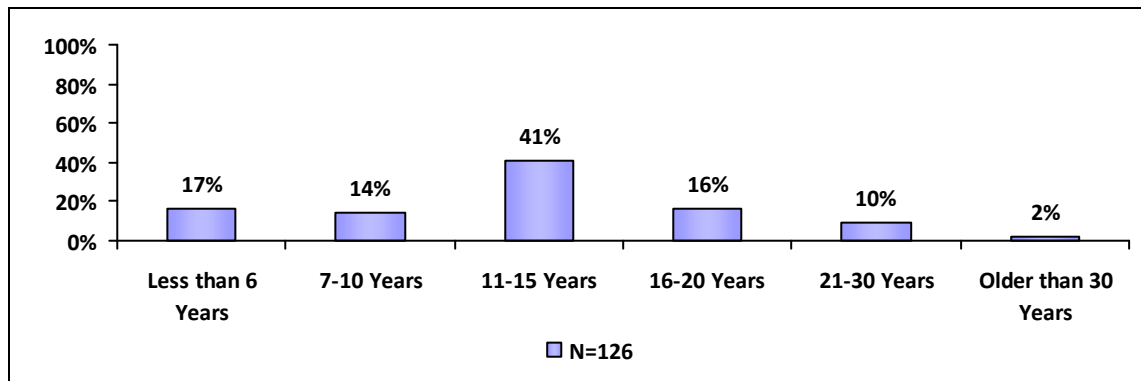
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GLBT Identification & Visibility

In this report, the identity and visibility of Latino GLBT respondents is described by the age at which respondents reported that they first became conscious of their sexual orientation, their comfort about being lesbian, gay, or bisexual and their openness about their identity with different individuals in their lives. Figure 17 displays the age at which participants first became conscious of their sexual identities. Figures 19 and 21, display participants comfort with their sexual orientation, and how these frequencies differ by sexual orientation and language.

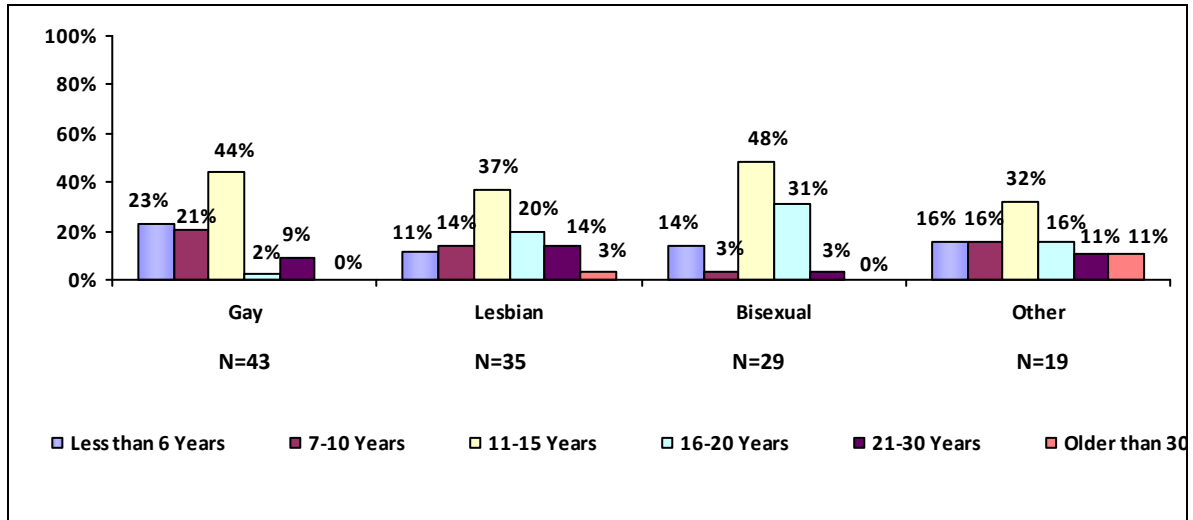
Almost one-third (31%) of respondents first became conscious of their sexual orientation before the age of 10, and the majority (41%) became conscious of their sexual orientation between the ages of 11 and 15. A little more than one-quarter (28%) became conscious of their sexual orientation at 16 years or older. These findings indicate that most respondents became conscious of their sexual orientation in their teen years, suggesting that Latino pre-adolescents and adolescents could benefit greatly from education and intervention services.

Figure 17. Age Respondent Became Conscious of their Sexual Orientation



Although forty-one percent (41%) of respondents became conscious of their sexual orientation between the ages of 11-15 years old; forty-four percent (44%) of Gay, twenty-five percent (25%) of Lesbians, and seventeen percent (17%) of Bisexual respondents first became conscious of their sexual orientation before the age of 10 years.

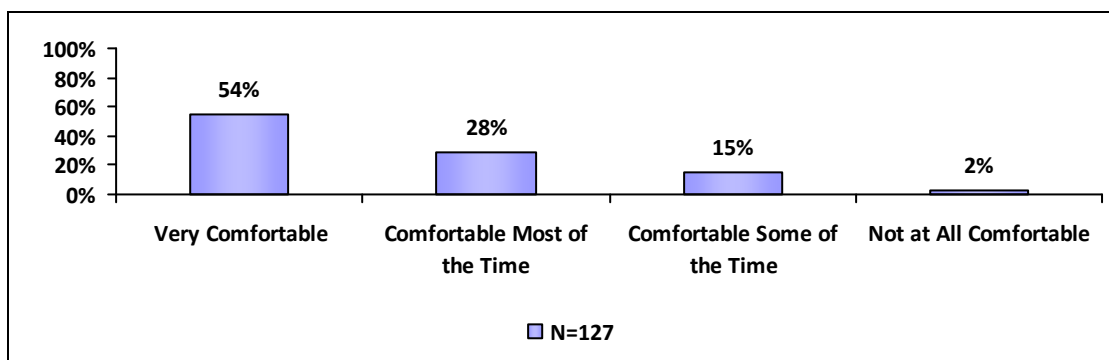
Figure 18. Age Respondent Became Conscious of their Sexual Orientation, by Sexual Orientation^{1,2}



Note: Percents may exceed 100% due to rounding.

As Figure 19 demonstrates, close to half (45%) of Latino GLBT respondents don't feel very comfortable with their sexual orientation, while a little more than half (54%) are "very comfortable" with their sexual orientation. Seventeen percent (17%) of respondents are "not at all comfortable" or "comfortable some of the time." Over one-quarter (28%) of respondents were "comfortable most of the time" with their sexual identity. At the same time, 69% of Lesbian respondents were "very comfortable" with their sexual orientation, followed by Gay (60%) respondents, "Other" (40%) respondents, and Bisexual (38%) respondents.

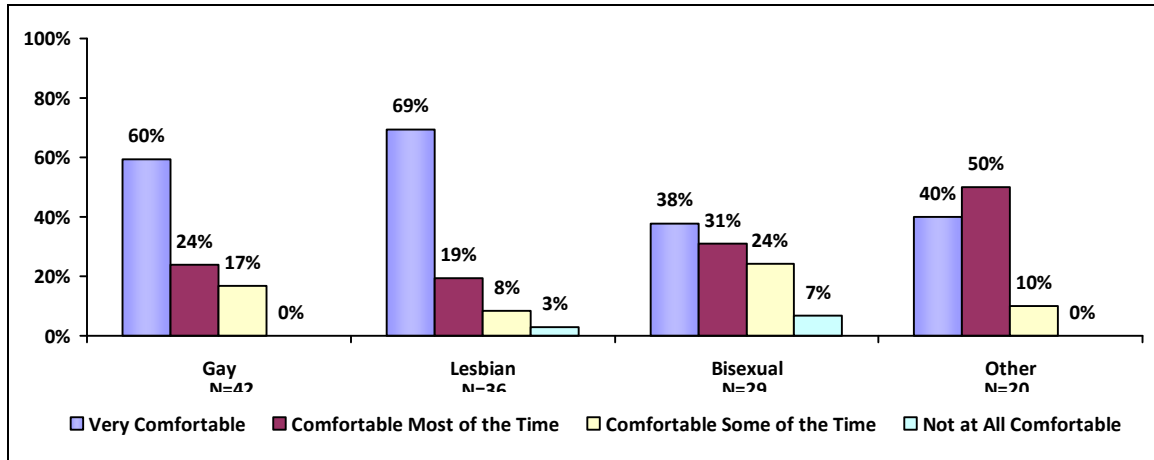
Figure 19. Respondents Level of Comfort with their Sexual Orientation



¹ Question is focused on sexual orientation, not gender identity, thus Transgender individuals are included in sample.

² "Other" includes individual who identify as Homosexual, Heterosexual and Other.

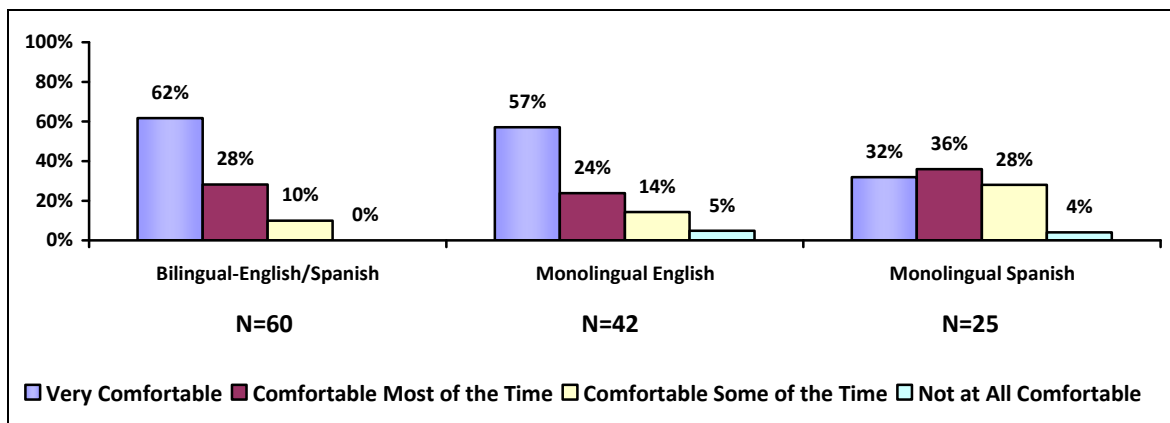
Figure 20. Respondents Level of Comfort with their Sexual Orientation, by Sexual Orientation^{3,4}



Note: Due to rounding figures may exceed 100%.

More specifically, Bilingual and monolingual English speaking participants were proportionately more likely to be very comfortable with their sexual orientation than monolingual Spanish speaking participants. Thirty-two percent (32%) of monolingual Spanish speaking participants stated they were “very comfortable” about their sexual orientation, compared to 62% of Bilingual respondents, and 57% of monolingual English speaking respondents.

Figure 21. Respondents Level of Comfort with their Sexual Orientation, by Language



³ Question is focusing on sexual orientation, not gender identity, thus Transgender individuals are included in sample.

⁴ “Other” includes individual who identify as Homosexual, Heterosexual and Other.

In order to get a better sense of Latino GLBT sexual orientation disclosure, we asked respondents to inform us of people who they were “out to” (individuals who are aware of respondents sexual orientation) and the degree of acceptance they felt by these individuals. Figure 22, highlights that respondents were proportionally more open about their sexual orientation with “friends” (92%), followed by “professors/teachers” (83%), and their “siblings” (77%). At the same time, three-fourths (75%) of respondents reported that their friends “always” accepted and respected their sexual orientation. But only 46% of respondents reported that their professors/teachers “always” accepted and respected their sexual orientation.

Figure 22. Individuals Who Are “Aware” of Respondents Sexual Orientation

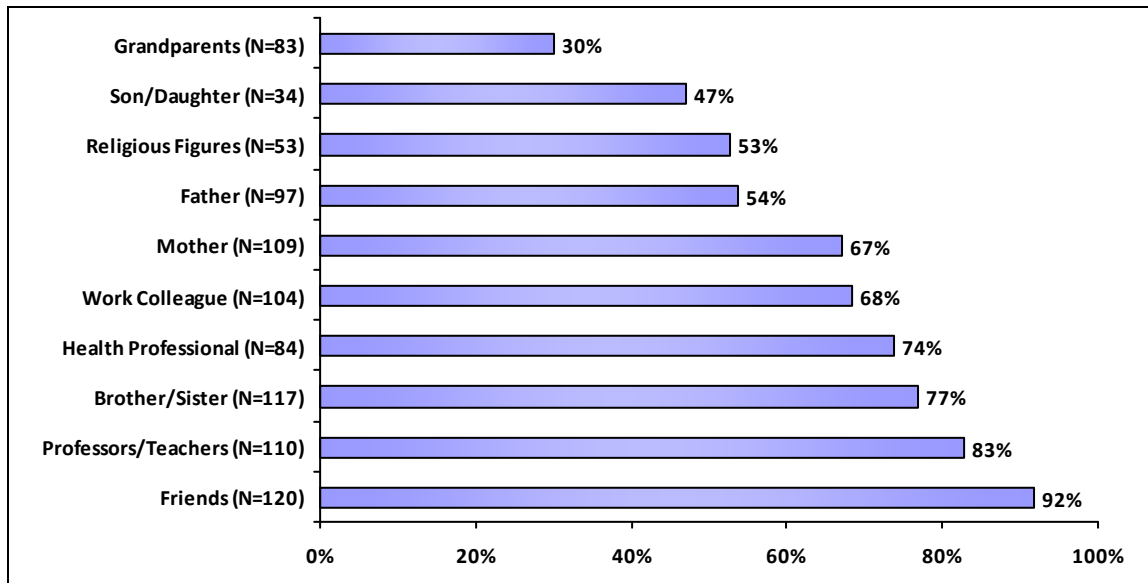
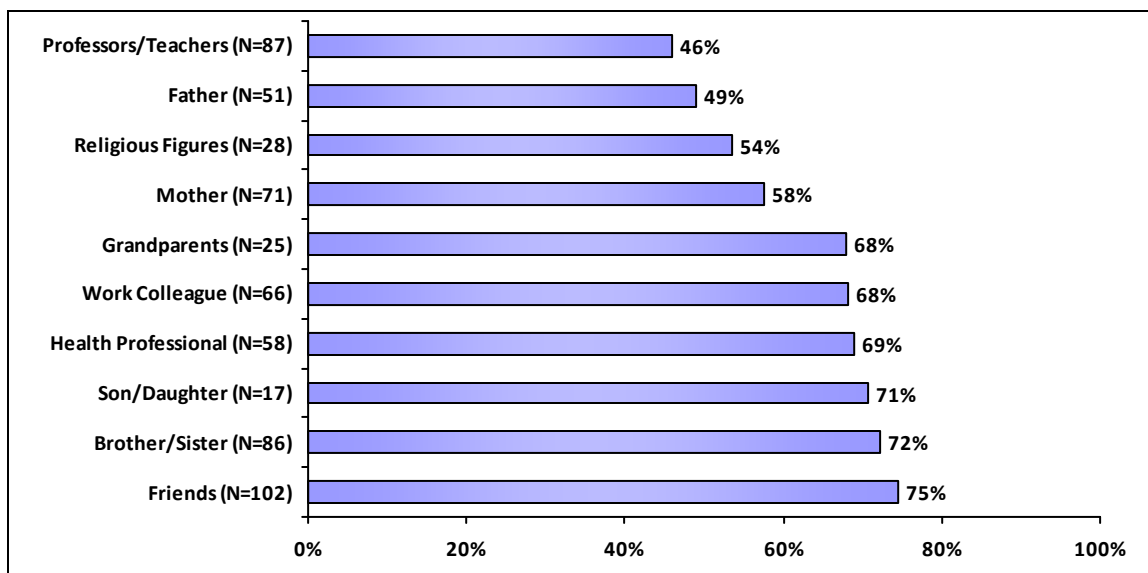


Figure 23. Individuals Who “Always” Accept and Respect Respondents Sexual Orientation



Note: Due to small numbers, caution should be taken when interpreting these data.

In Figure 24 and 25, respondents were asked if they believe it is important to have GLBT visibility in the community and if it is important to know other GLBT people. More than three-quarters (77%) of respondents stated “yes” it was important to have GLBT visibility in the community, and 82% stated that it was important to know other GLBT individuals.

Figure 24. Respondents Who Believe it is Important to Have GLBT Visibility

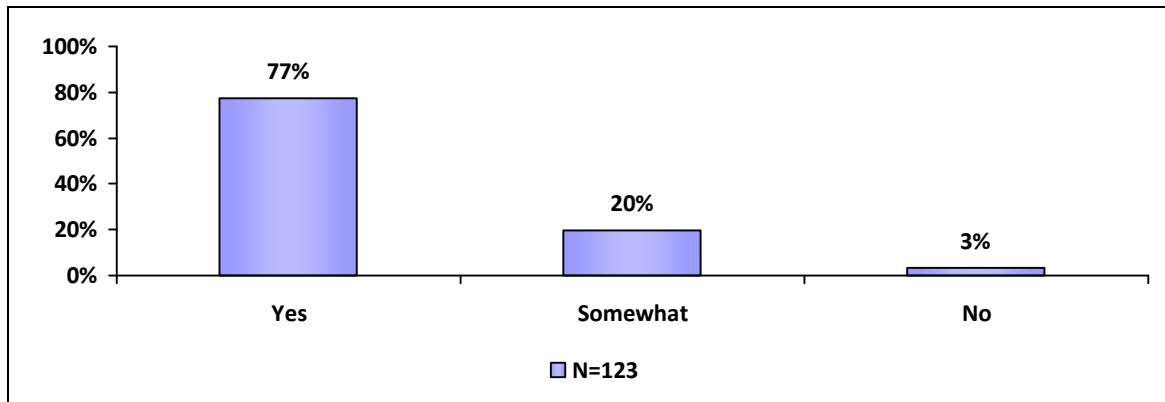
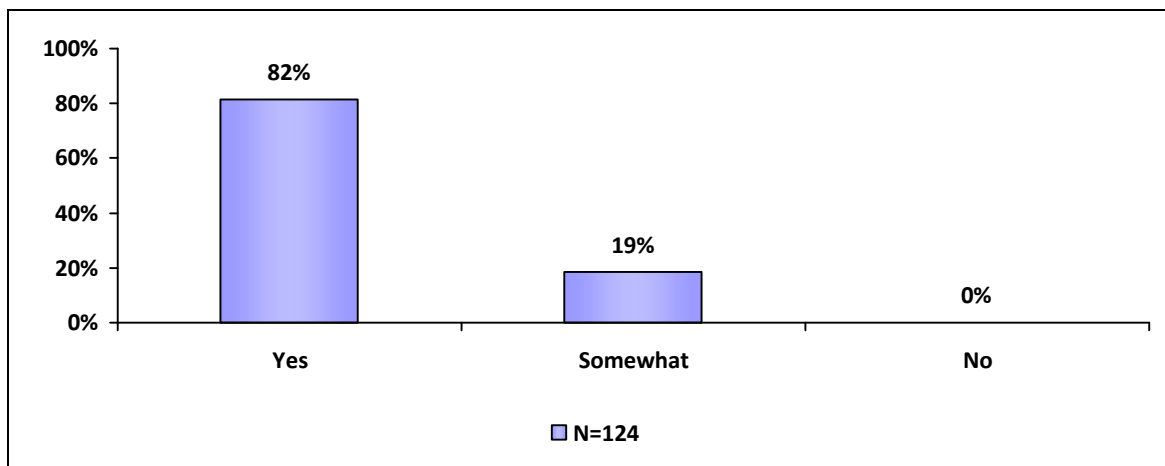


Figure 25. Respondent Who Believe it is Important to Know GLBT People



Summary of Participants Identification & Visibility

In this report, the identity and visibility of Latino GLBT respondents is described by the age at which respondents reported that they first became conscious of their sexual orientation, their comfort about being lesbian, gay, or bisexual and their openness about their identity with different individuals in their lives. Figure 17 displays the age at which participants first became conscious of their sexual identities. Figures 19 and 21, display participants comfort with their sexual orientation, and how these frequencies differ by sexual orientation and language.

Almost one-third (31%) of respondents first became conscious of their sexual orientation before the age of 10, and the majority (41%) became conscious of their sexual orientation between the ages of 11 and 15. A little more than one-quarter (28%) became conscious of their sexual orientation at 16 years or older. These findings indicate that most respondents became conscious of their sexual orientation in their teen years, suggesting that Latino pre-adolescents and adolescents could benefit greatly from education and intervention services.

Although forty-one percent (41%) of respondents became conscious of their sexual orientation between the ages of 11-15 years old; forty-four percent (44%) of Gay, twenty-five percent (25%) of Lesbians, and seventeen percent (17%) of Bisexual respondents first became conscious of their sexual orientation before the age of 10 years.

As Figure 19 demonstrates, close to half (45%) of Latino GLBT respondents don't feel very comfortable with their sexual orientation, while a little more than half (54%) are "very comfortable" with their sexual orientation. Seventeen percent (17%) of respondents are "not at all comfortable" or "comfortable some of the time." At the same time, 69% of Lesbian respondents were "very comfortable" with their sexual orientation, followed by Gay (60%) respondents, "Other"(40%) respondents, and Bisexual (38%) respondents. Over one-quarter (28%) of respondents were "comfortable most of the time" with their sexual identity.

More specifically, Bilingual and monolingual English speaking participants were proportionately more likely to be very comfortable with their sexual orientation than monolingual Spanish speaking participants. Thirty-two percent (32%) of monolingual Spanish speaking participants stated they were "very comfortable" about their sexual orientation, compared to 62% of Bilingual respondents, and 57% of monolingual English speaking respondents.

In order to get a better sense of Latino GLBT sexual orientation disclosure, we asked respondents to inform us of people who they were "out to" (individuals who are aware of respondents sexual orientation) and the degree of acceptance they felt by these individuals. Figure 22, highlights that respondents were proportionally more open about their sexual orientation with "friends" (92%), followed by "professors/teachers" (83%), and their "siblings" (77%). At the same time, three-fourths (75%) of respondents reported that their friends "always" accepted and respected their sexual orientation. But only 46% of respondents reported that their professors/teachers "always" accepted and respected their sexual orientation.

In Figure 24 and 25, respondents were asked if they believe it is important to have GLBT visibility in the community and if it is important to know other GLBT people. More than three-quarters (77%) of respondents stated “yes” it was important to have GLBT visibility in the community, and 82% stated that it was important to know other GLBT individuals.

Challenges & Discrimination

To understand the challenges Latino GLBT individuals face, respondents were asked if they have experienced challenges or discrimination. Sixty percent (60%) of respondents reported facing challenges as Latino GLBT individuals. Monolingual Spanish speakers (71%) reported experiencing challenges proportionately higher compared to monolingual English speakers (44%).

Figure 26. Those Who Reported Facing Challenges as GLBT Individuals

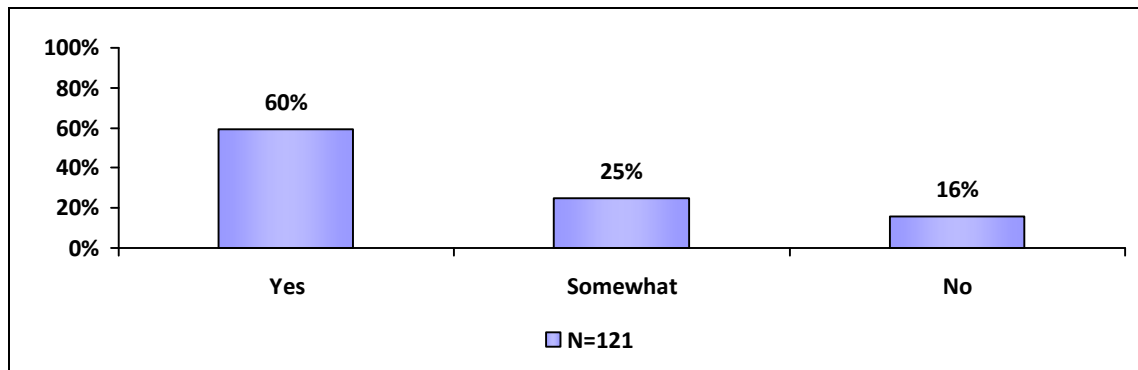
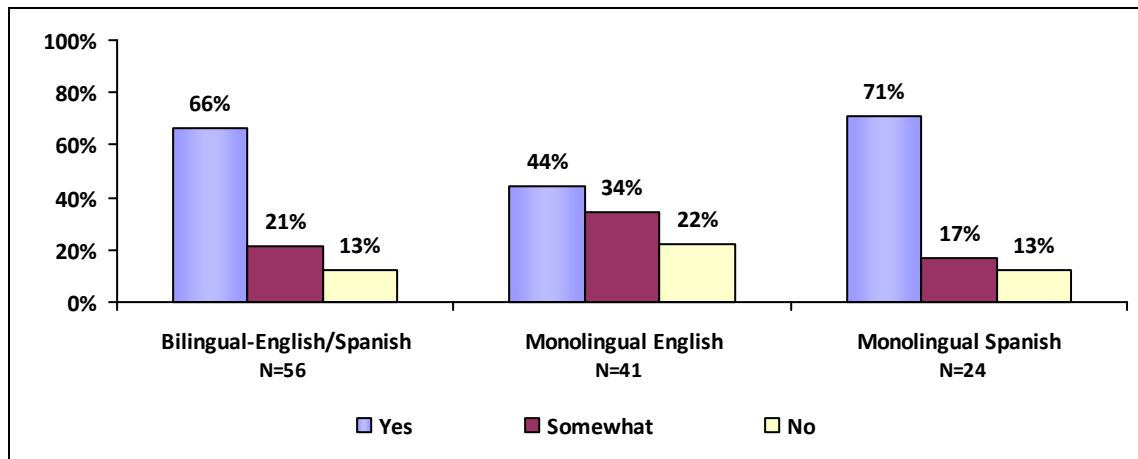


Figure 27. Those Who Reported Facing Challenges as GLBT Individuals, by Language



The top five types of discrimination respondents faced in the last year were homophobia, xenophobia, racism, sexism, and prejudices against dressed style. Half (50%) of the respondents reported experiencing discrimination due to their sexual orientation, followed by nationality (44%), skin color (43%), dress (39%), and gender (33%). Lesbian (43%) and Bisexual (48%) respondents were proportionately more likely to reported experiencing sexism in the last year.

Figure 28. Respondents Who Were Discriminated in the Last Year Due to:

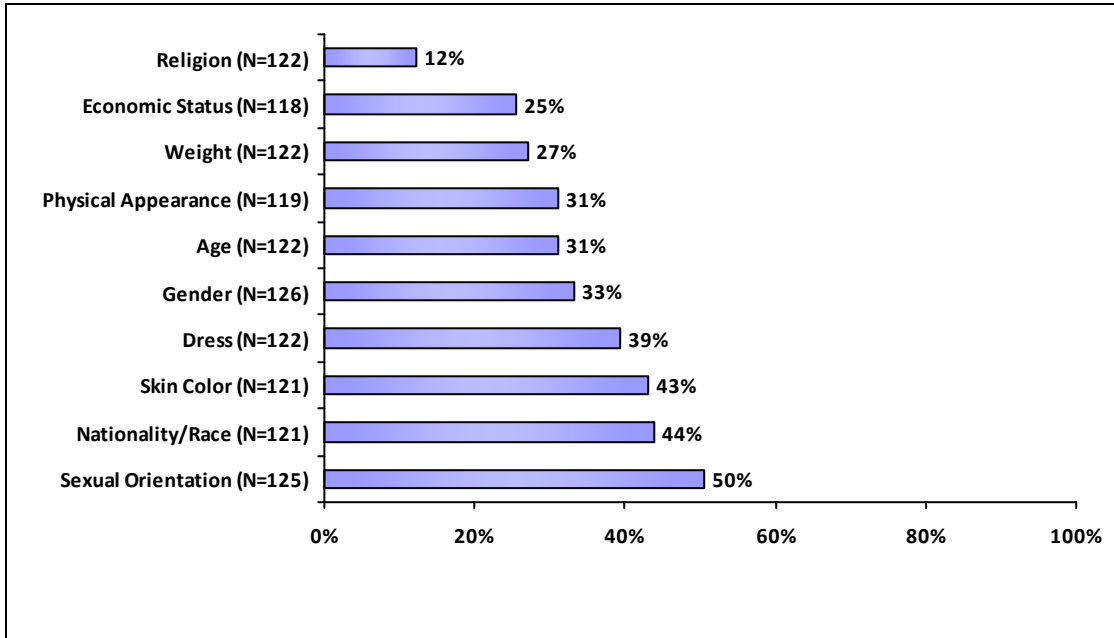
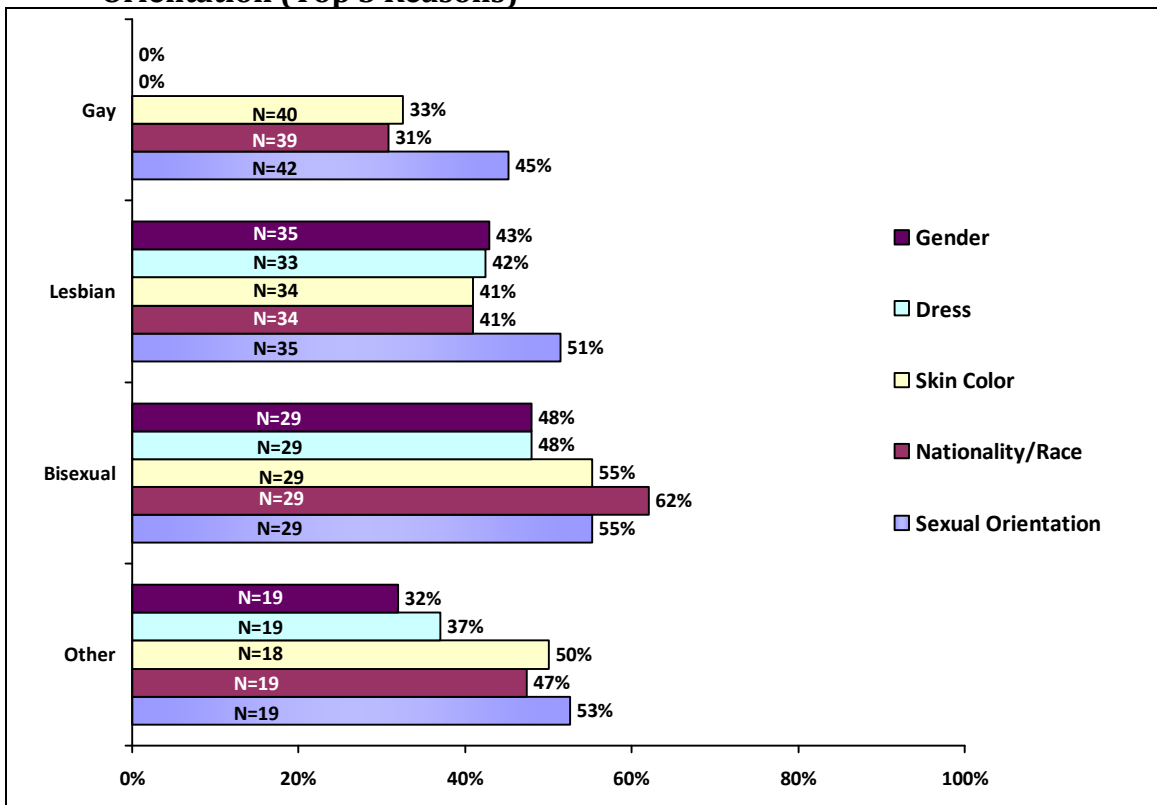


Figure 29. Respondents Who Were Discriminated in the Last Year, by Sexual Orientation (Top 5 Reasons)^{5,6}

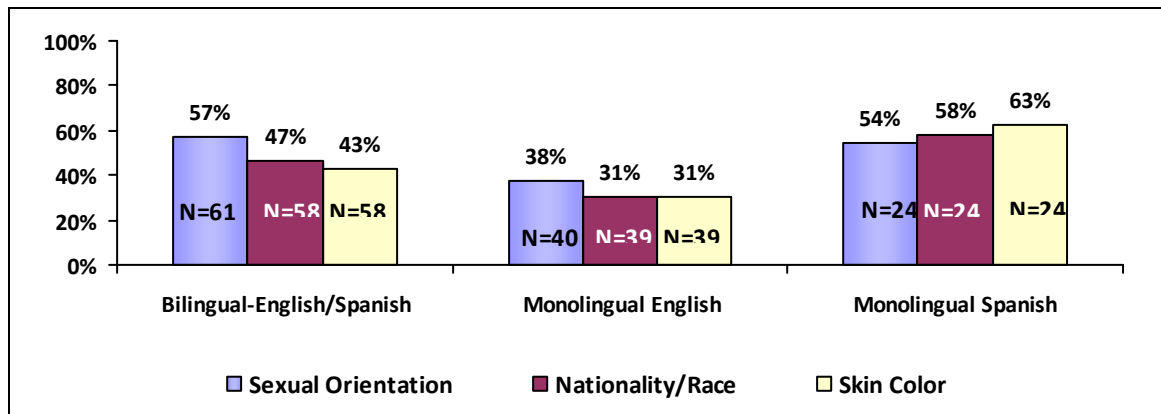


⁵ Other includes individual who identify as Homosexual, Heterosexual and Other.

⁶ Question is focusing on sexual orientation, not gender identity, thus Transgender individuals are included in sample.

Discrimination based on nationality and skin color was more prevalent among monolingual Spanish speaking respondents compared to monolingual English speaking respondents. Sixty-three percent (63%) of monolingual Spanish speaking respondents have experienced discrimination based on skin color, followed by 43% of Bilingual respondents, and 31% of monolingual English speaking respondents. And fifty-eight percent (58%) of monolingual Spanish speaking respondents have experienced discrimination based on nationality, compared to 47% of Bilingual respondents, and 31% of monolingual English speaking respondents. Discrimination based on sexual orientation was more prevalent among Bilingual respondents (57%), compared to monolingual English speaking (38%) respondents.

Figure 30. Respondents Who Were Discriminated in the Last Year, by Language (Top 3 Reasons)



The type of discrimination by setting is provided in Figure 31. Over all, most respondents reported experiencing discrimination in a place public space other than work, educational setting or at home. For example, out of fifty-seven respondents who experienced discriminating based on their sexual orientation, (75%) of them experience it in a public space other than work, an educational setting or at home.

Figure 31. Type of Discrimination, by Setting

		Educational Setting	At Work	At Home	Other Public Spaces	*Total Number of Respondents
a. Gender	N	11	11	7	29	38
	%	29%	29%	18%	76%	
b. Sexual Orientation	N	18	9	13	43	57
	%	32%	16%	23%	75%	
c. Skin Color	N	17	9	2	41	47
	%	36%	19%	4%	87%	
d. Nationality/Race	N	14	8	1	44	49
	%	29%	16%	2%	90%	
e. Weight	N	9	4	9	24	30
	%	30%	13%	30%	80%	
f. Age	N	10	11	7	23	32
	%	31%	34%	22%	72%	
g. Religion	N	5	3	2	8	12
	%	42%	25%	17%	67%	
h. Dress	N	11	12	10	34	42
	%	26%	29%	24%	81%	
i. Economic Status	N	5	2	6	22	27
	%	19%	7%	22%	82%	
j. Physical Appearance	N	10	9	6	31	34
	%	29%	27%	18%	91%	

**Based on multiple response questions for each variable. For example, 38 individuals reported being discriminated based on their “Gender” and checked the settings where discrimination took place: Education, Public, Work, or Home.*

Note: Caution should be taken when interpreting data due to small number of respondents

Summary of Participants Challenges & Discrimination

To understand the challenges Latino GLBT individuals face, respondents were asked if they have experienced challenges or discrimination. Sixty percent (60%) of respondents reported facing challenges as Latino GLBT individuals. Monolingual Spanish speakers (71%) reported experiencing challenges proportionately higher compared to monolingual English speakers (44%).

The top five types of discrimination respondents faced in the last year were homophobia, xenophobia, racism, sexism, and prejudices against dressed style. Half (50%) of the respondents reported experiencing discrimination due to their sexual orientation, followed by nationality (44%), skin color (43%), dress (39%), and gender (33%). Lesbian (43%) and Bisexual (48%) respondents were proportionately more likely to report experiencing sexism in the last year.

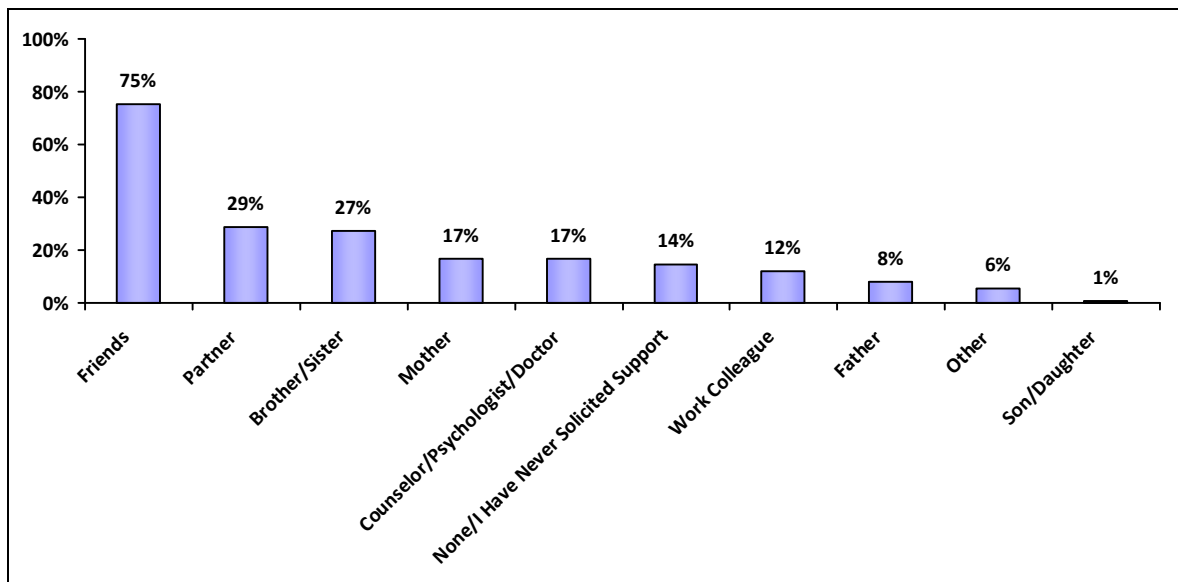
However, discrimination based on nationality and skin color was more prevalent among monolingual Spanish speaking respondents compared to monolingual English speaking respondents. Sixty-three percent (63%) of monolingual Spanish speaking respondents have experienced discrimination based on skin color, followed by 43% of Bilingual respondents, and 31% of monolingual English speaking respondents. And fifty-eight percent (58%) of monolingual Spanish speaking respondents have experienced discrimination based on nationality, compared to 47% of Bilingual respondents, and 31% of monolingual English speaking respondents. Discrimination based on sexual orientation was more prevalent among Bilingual respondents (57%), compared to monolingual English speaking (38%) respondents.

The type of discrimination by setting is provided in Figure 31. Over all, most respondents reported experiencing discrimination in a place public space other than work, educational setting or at home. For example, out of fifty-seven respondents who experienced discriminating based on their sexual orientation, (75%) of them experience it in a public space other than work, an educational setting or at home.

Support & Social Activities

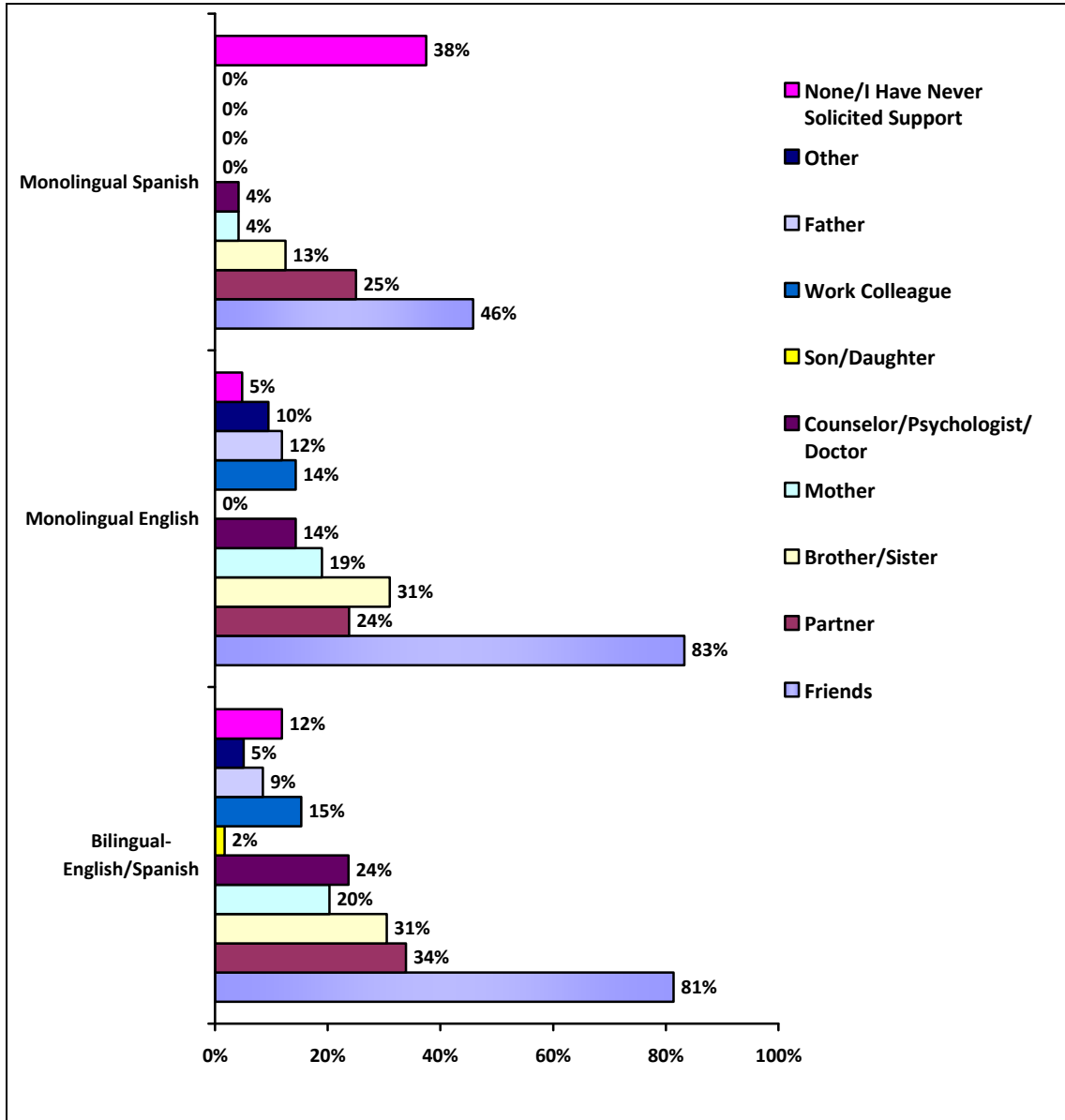
In order to comprehend Latino GLBT support systems, respondents were asked a series of questions pertaining to institutional and social support. Three-fourths (75%) of respondents reached out to “friends” for support when they faced challenges pertaining to their sexual orientation, followed by their “partner” (29%), and “siblings” (27%). However, fourteen percent (14%) of respondents have never solicited any type of support. Among monolingual Spanish speaking respondents 38% have never solicited support concerning their sexual orientation, compared to 5% of monolingual English speaking respondents.

Figure 32. Individuals Respondents Reach Out to for Support Concerning their Sexual Orientation



Multiple response question with 125 respondents offering 257 responses.

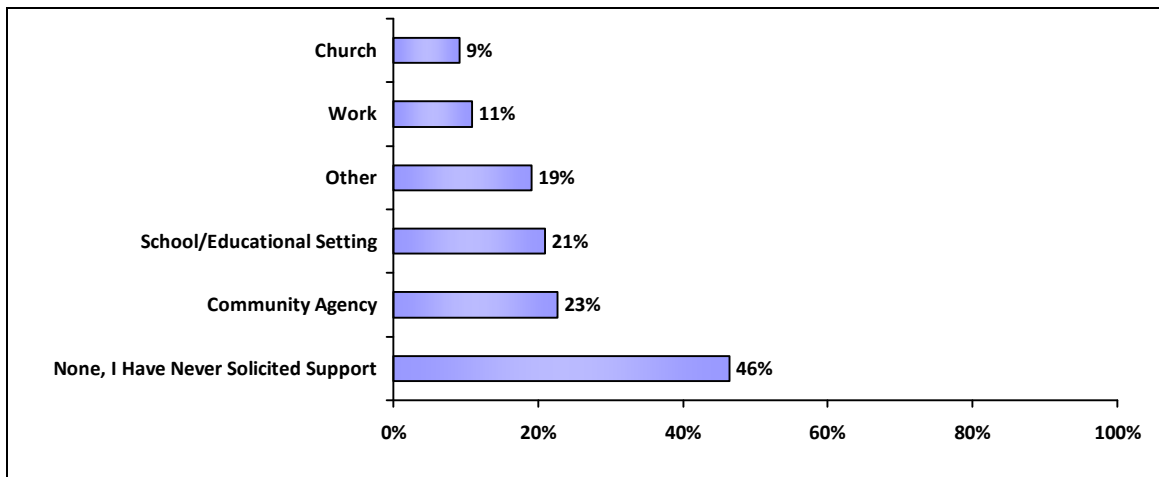
Figure 33. Individuals Respondents Reach Out to for Support Concerning their Sexual Orientation, by Language



Multiple response question with 24 Monolingual Spanish Speaking respondents offering 31 responses, 42 Monolingual English Speaking respondents offering 89 responses, and 59 Bilingual respondents offering 137 responses.

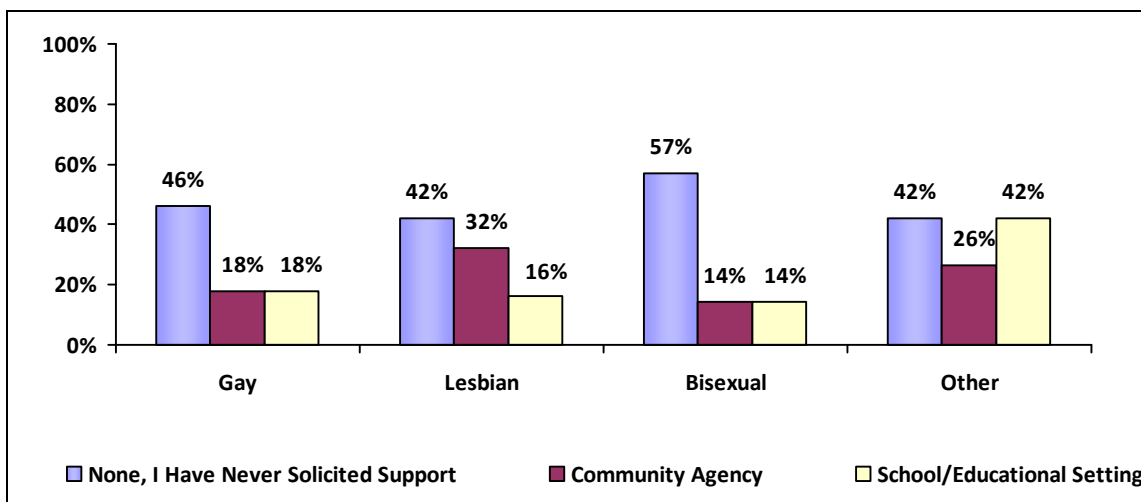
Approximately half (46%) of respondents reported “never” soliciting support from institutions such as churches, educational settings and community agencies. Spanish speaking respondents were proportionately more likely not to solicit institutions for support. Of those that have solicited support, twenty-three percent (23%) reached out to community agencies, followed by educational institutions (21%). Lesbian respondents were more likely to utilize community agencies for support.

Figure 34. Institutions Respondents Reached Out to for Support Concerning their sexual Orientation



Multiple response question with 110 respondents offering 142 responses.

Figure 35. Institutions Respondents Reached Out To When They Needed Support, by Sexual Orientation^{7,8}

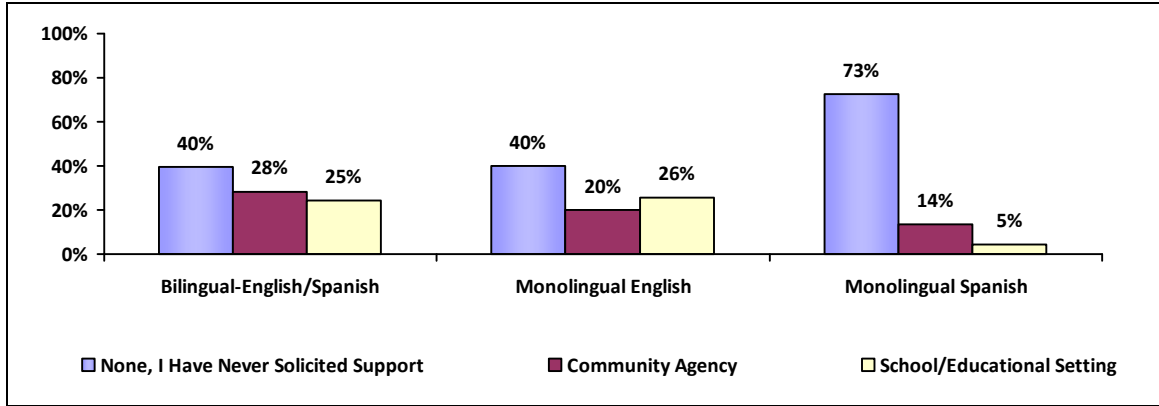


Multiple response question with 39 Gay respondents offering 45 responses, 31 Lesbian respondents offering 44 responses, 21 Bisexual respondents offering 24 responses, and 19 Other respondents offering 29 responses.

⁷ Other includes individual who identify as Homosexual, Heterosexual and Other.

⁸ Question is focusing on sexual orientation, not gender identity, thus Transgender individuals are included in sample.

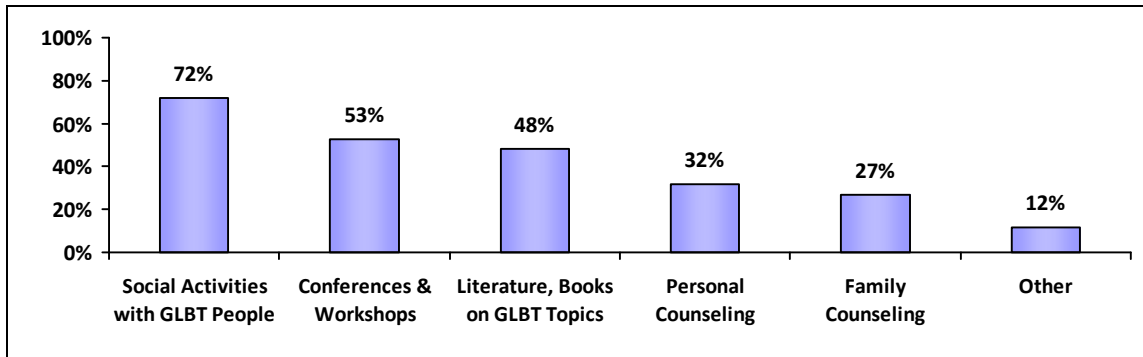
Figure 36. Institutions Respondents Reached Out To When They Needed Support, by Language



Multiple response question with 22 Monolingual Spanish Speaking respondents offering 23 responses, 35 Monolingual English Speaking respondents offering 45 responses, and 53 Bilingual respondents offering 74 responses.

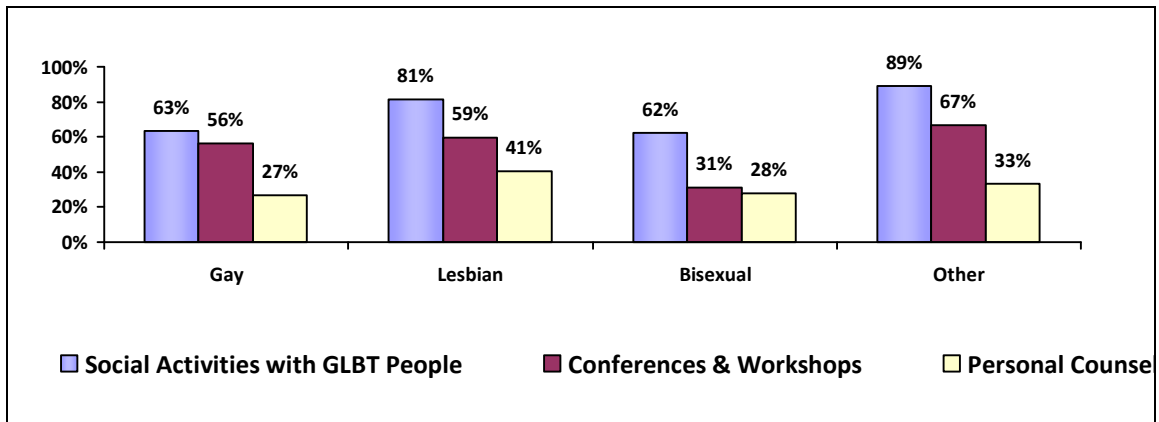
Figures 37-39 summarize the findings of participants' relationships to helpful programs and services by both sexual orientation and language. The greatest proportion of participants indicated social activities with other GLBT people (72%) would be helpful, followed by conferences and workshops (53%), literature on GLBT topics (48%), personal counseling (32%), and family counseling (27%). Furthermore, with regard to personal counseling, forty-one percent (41%) of Lesbians and 28% of Bisexual respondents reported that personal counseling would be helpful. Additionally, monolingual Spanish (42%) speaking participants were more likely to respond that they needed personal counseling, compared to Bilingual (26%) respondents, and monolingual English (34%) speaking respondents.

Figure 37. Helpful Programs and Services



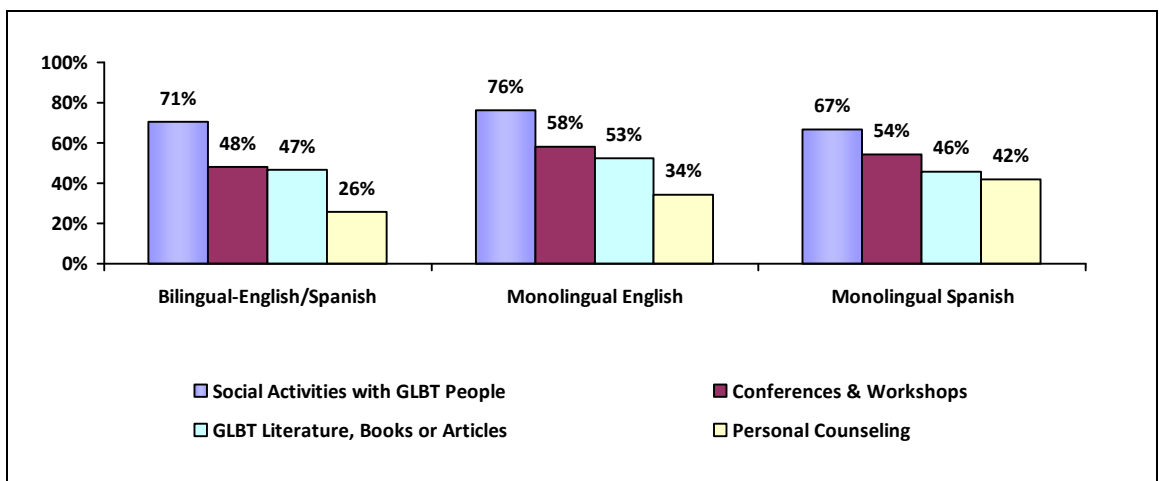
Multiple response question with 120 respondents offering 291 responses.

Figure 38. Helpful Programs and Services, by Sexual Orientation^{9,10} (Top 3)



Multiple response question with 41 Gay respondents offering 96 responses, 32 Lesbian respondents offering 89 responses, 29 Bisexual respondents offering 50 responses, and 18 Other respondents offering 56 responses.

Figure 39. Helpful Programs and Services, by Language (Top 4)



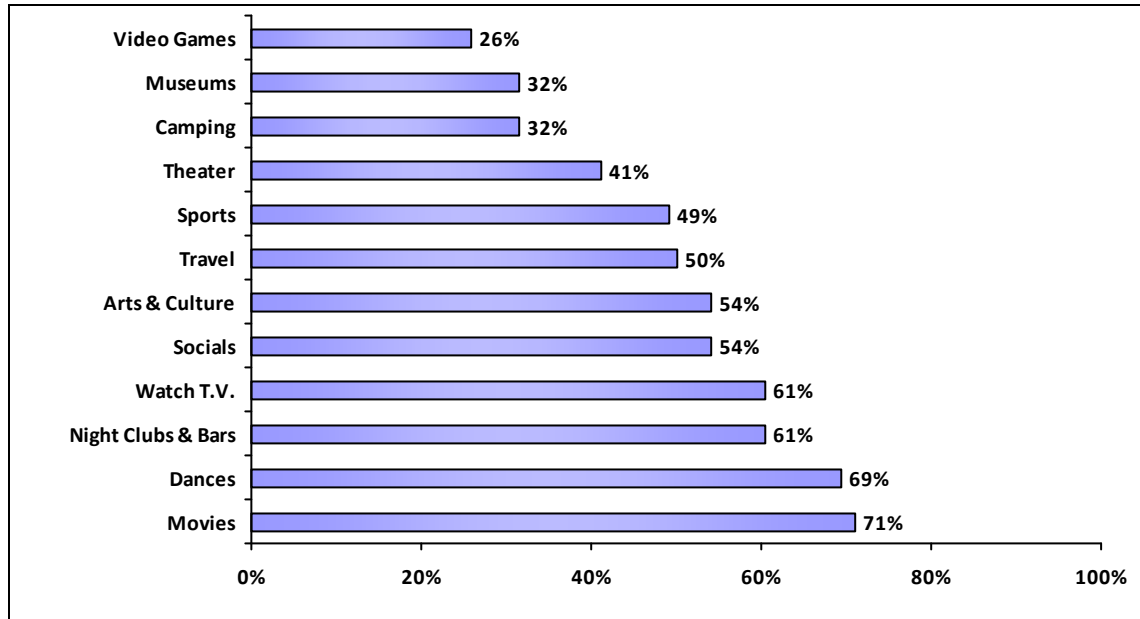
Multiple response question with 24 Monolingual Spanish Speaking respondents offering 59 responses, 38 Monolingual English Speaking respondents offering 96 responses, and 58 Bilingual respondents offering 136 responses.

⁹ Other includes individual who identify as Homosexual, Heterosexual and Other.

¹⁰ Question is focusing on sexual orientation, not gender identity, thus Transgender individuals are included in sample.

The top three fun activities Latino GLBT respondents participate in were activities that took place outside of the home. For example, seventy-one percent (71%) reported going to the movies, 69% reported going to dances, and 61% to night clubs and bars.

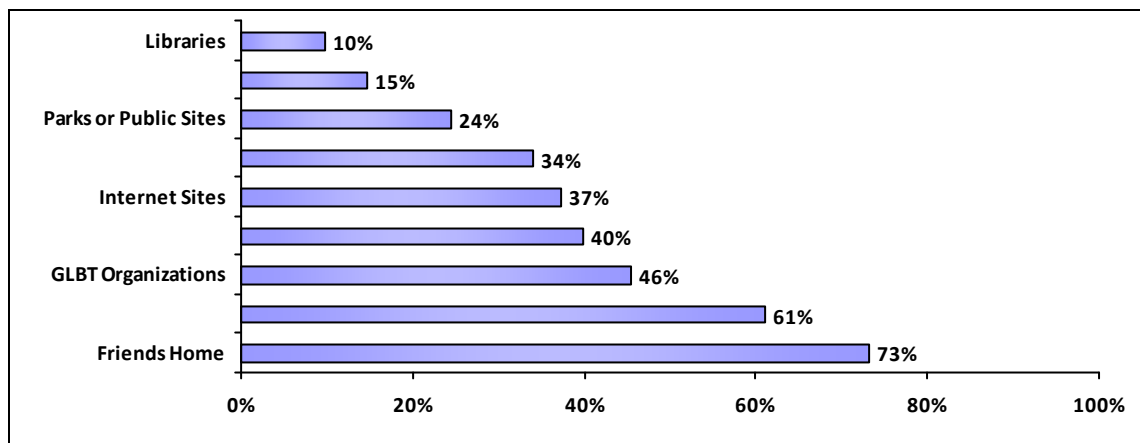
Figure 40. Fun Activities Respondents Participate In



Multiple response question with 124 respondents offering 742 responses.

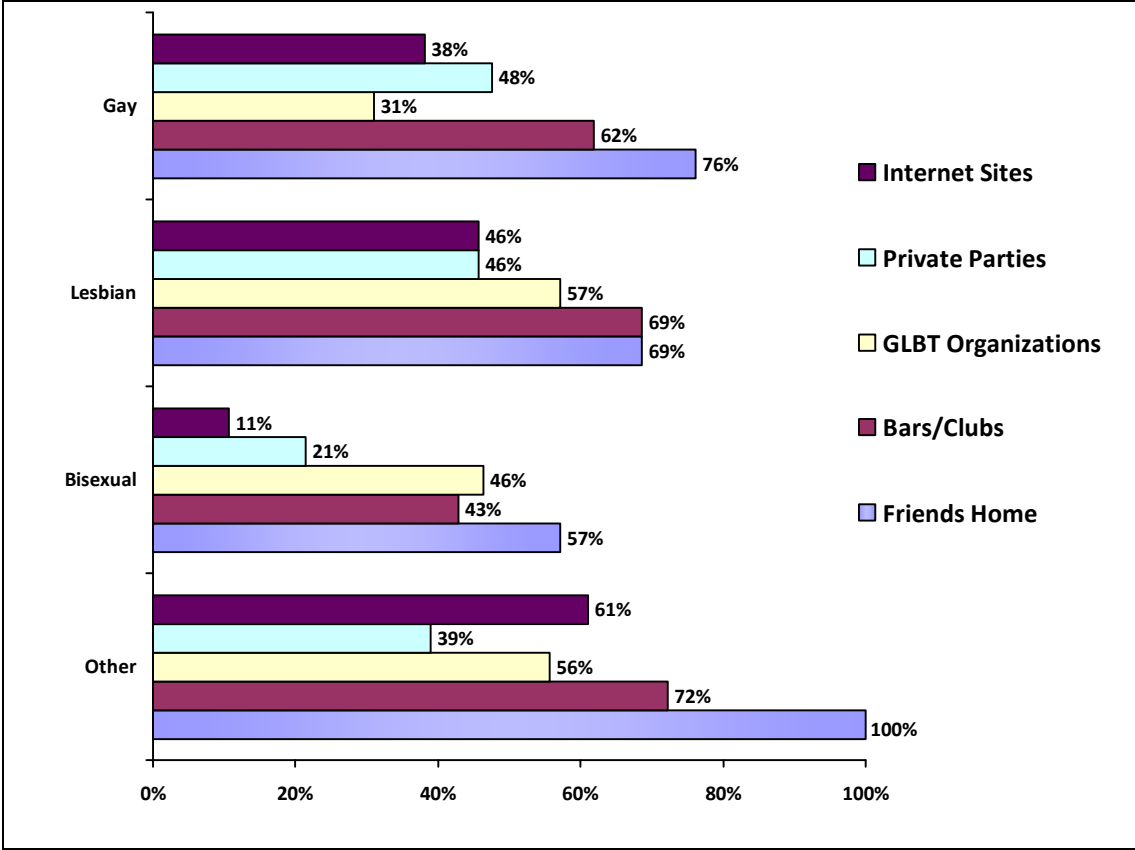
In addition, respondents reported socializing with GLBT individuals both in private and public spaces. Seventy-three percent (73%) reported socializing in their “friends home”, followed by “bars and clubs” (61%), and at “GLBT organizations” (46%). Lesbian respondents were more likely than Bisexual respondents to socialize in GLBT organizations.

Figure 41. Places Respondents Socialize with GLBT Individuals



Multiple response question with 123 respondents offering 418 responses.

Figure 42. Places Respondents Socialize with GLBT Individuals, by Sexual Orientation¹¹



Multiple response question with 42 Gay respondents offering 141 responses, 35 Lesbian respondents offering 131 responses, 28 Bisexual respondents offering 64 responses, and 18 Other respondents offering 81 responses.

¹¹ Question is focusing on sexual orientation, not gender identity, thus Transgender individuals are included in sample.

Summary of Participants Support & Social Activities

In order to comprehend Latino GLBT support systems, respondents were asked a series of questions pertaining to institutional and social support. Three-fourths (75%) of respondents reached out to “friends” for support when they faced challenges pertaining to their sexual orientation, followed by their “partner” (29%), and “siblings” (27%). However, fourteen percent (14%) of respondents have never solicited any type of support. Among monolingual Spanish speaking respondents 38% have never solicited support concerning their sexual orientation, compared to 5% of monolingual English speaking respondents.

Approximately half (46%) of respondents reported “never” soliciting support from institutions such as churches, educational settings and community agencies. Spanish speaking respondents were proportionately more likely not to solicit institutions for support. Of those that have solicited support, twenty-three percent (23%) reached out to community agencies, followed by educational institutions (21%). Lesbian respondents were more likely to utilize community agencies for support.

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Volunteering & Civic Engagement

The engagement of respondents in civic and political activities can be assessed through their volunteer activities and financial contributions. Figures 43 through 47 addresses these topics and reveal that Latino GLBT participants make civic contributions to Santa Cruz County.

Half (50%) of the respondents reported volunteering their time in community activities in the last three months. Bilingual respondents (56%) were more likely to volunteer, compared to 32% of monolingual Spanish speaking respondents.

Figure 43. Respondents who Volunteered or Participated in Community Activities in the Last 3 Months

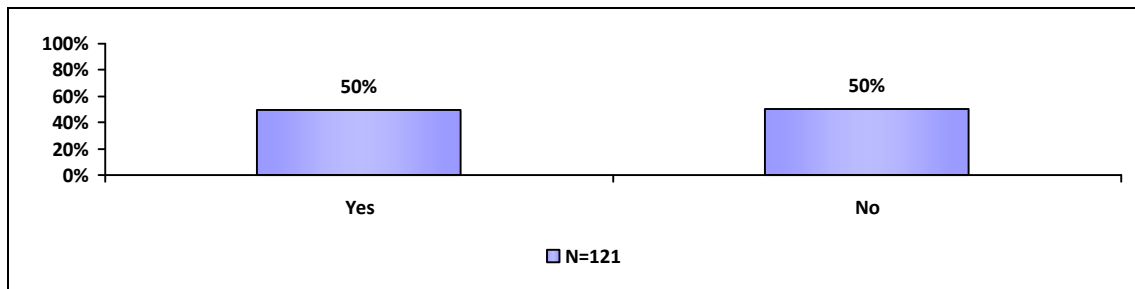
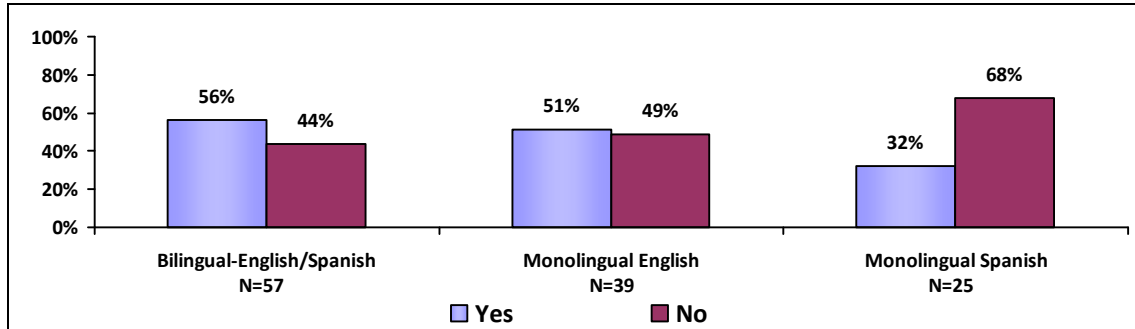


Figure 44. Respondents who Volunteered or Participated in Community Activities in the Last 3 Months, by Language



As shown by Figure 45, more than two-fifths (44%) of participants reported contributing money to charitable causes in the last three months. Monolingual Spanish (76%) speaking respondents were less likely to donate money, followed by monolingual English (63%) speaking respondents, and Bilingual (43%) respondents.

Figure 45. Respondents who Donated Money to Charitable Causes in the Last 3 Months

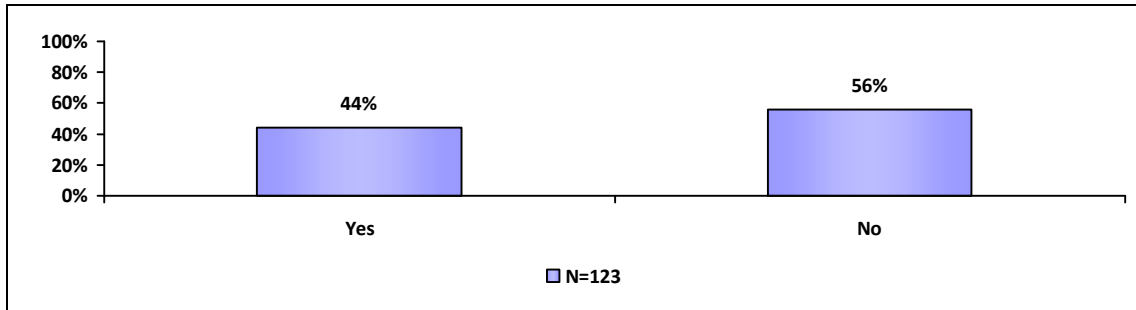
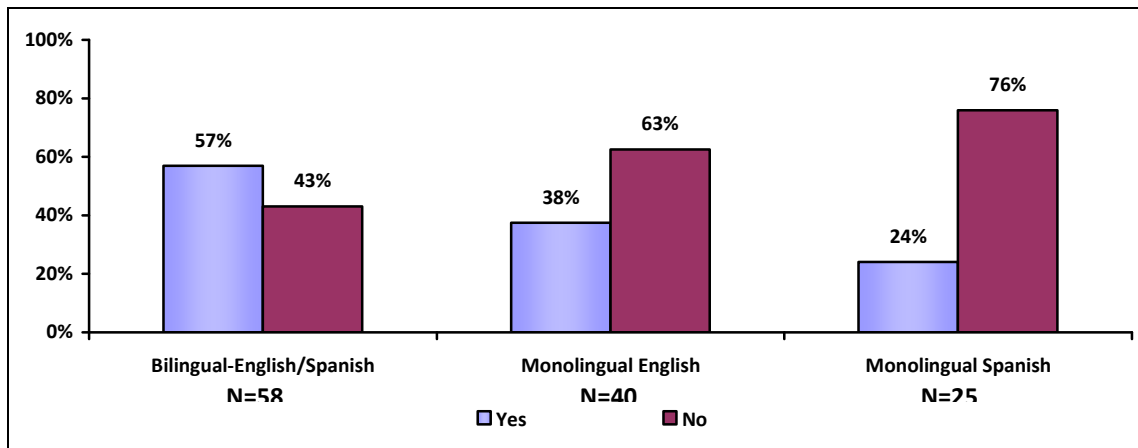


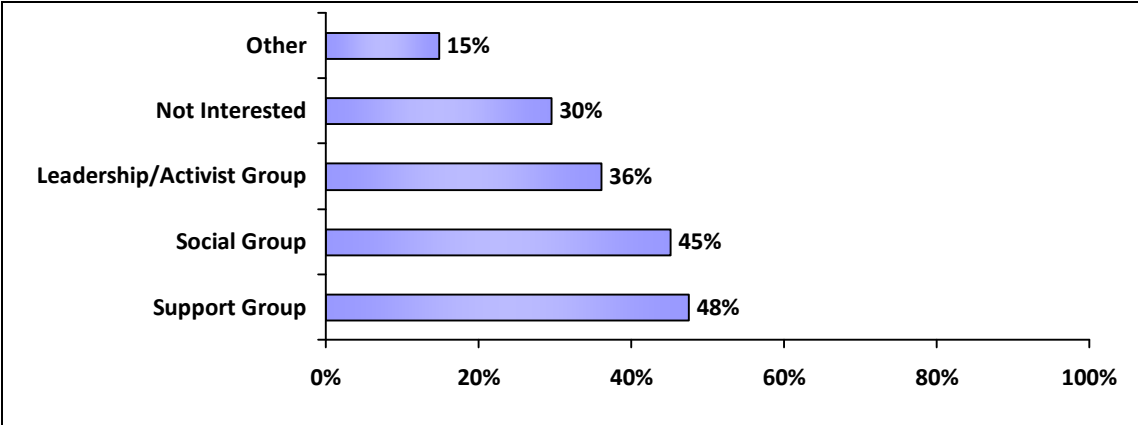
Figure 46. Respondents who Donated Money to Charitable Causes in the Last 3 Months, by Language



Facilitating participation in volunteering and other civic activities among Latino GLBT community members could be an important program development area for social service and philanthropic organizations supporting GLBT causes. Figure 47 shows the proportion of respondents who would consider volunteering by creating focused groups.

A substantial proportion (48%) of participants would consider volunteering and creating a Latino GLBT “support group”. Another 45% reported being interested in creating a “social” group, and 36% were interested in creating a “leadership/activist” group. And 30% of all participants reported not being interested in volunteering.

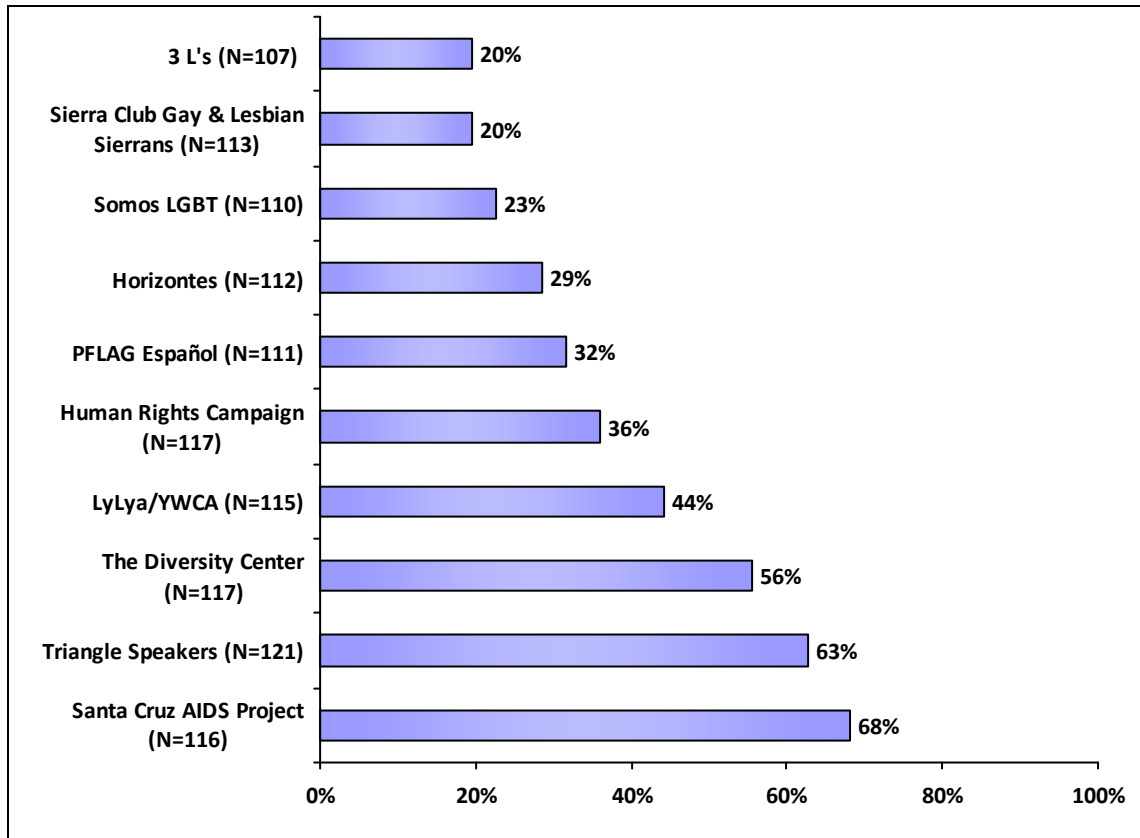
Figure 47. Respondents Interested in Creating the Following Latino GLBT Groups



Multiple response question with 122 respondents offering 211 responses.

In terms of being aware or familiar with existing GLBT community organizations or groups, most respondents were familiar with the Santa Cruz AIDS project (68%), followed by Triangle Speakers (63%) and The Diversity Center (56%). The two least known groups were 3 L's (20%), followed by the Sierra Club Gay and Lesbian Sierrans (20%).

Figure 48. Respondents Familiar with the Following GLBT Organizations/Groups



Summary of Participants Civic Engagement

The engagement of respondents in civic and political activities can be assessed through their volunteer activities and financial contributions. Figures 43 through 47 addresses these topics and reveal that Latino GLBT participants make civic contributions to Santa Cruz County.

Half (50%) of the respondents reported volunteering their time in community activities in the last three months. Bilingual respondents (56%) were more likely to volunteer, compared to 32% of monolingual Spanish speaking respondents. As shown by Figure 45, more than two-fifths (44%) of participants reported contributing money to charitable causes in the last three months. Monolingual Spanish (76%) speaking respondents were less likely to donate money, followed by monolingual English (63%) speaking respondents, and Bilingual (43%) respondents.

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Conclusion & Recommendations

Through this community assessment, Triangle Speakers took an important step in understanding the characteristics and needs of Santa Cruz County's Latino GLBT community by studying the following questions:

1. What are some of the barriers and needs of the Latino GLBT community in Santa Cruz County?
2. Do Latino GLBT individuals experience aggression or discrimination?
3. If and when Latino GLBT individuals need support, what institutions or individuals do they reach out to?

Latino GLBT respondents in this study reported experiencing discrimination not just based on gender and sexual orientation, but also based on their ethnicity and skin color. While Santa Cruz County is generally known as a progressive and accepting community, it is not immune to the powerfully homophobic and racist environment and sentiments that encompass American culture. With such anti-Latino and GLBT messages communicated at county, state and national levels, making our home community one that is safe and welcoming for Latino GLBT members becomes an even greater challenge.

Triangle Speakers and the Diversity Center's commitment to understanding and addressing the needs of the Latino GLBT community are demonstrated in part by this assessment effort. As a merged organization one of their priorities is to expand services to the Latino GLBT community. As they work towards such efforts, special attention should be considered to the monolingual Spanish Speaking community. According to our findings, a considerable proportion of Latino monolingual Spanish speakers do not solicit support from community agencies, and as a consequence remain isolated from community services.

Further programming for the Latino GLBT community should involve the creation of social activities, distribution of educational materials on GLBT topics, and conferences and workshops relevant to this community. Latina lesbians can benefit greatly from social gatherings, since the majority of Lesbian respondents identified "social activities with other GLBT people" as a beneficial activity. Counseling services were also identified as a need in the community, with personal counseling ranking highest among monolingual Spanish speaking respondents.

In addition to service and community needs, this report reveals that there is a dynamic and deeply rooted Latino GLBT community in Santa Cruz County. On average, the Latino GLBT residents of the County who participated in the survey have lived in the area for over a decade. They are engaged in the politics and civic life of the County by making financial contributions to charitable causes, and volunteering their time for the benefit of the community at large.

Further research should be conducted, specifically because the survey did not capture a strong representation of the Transgender and youth community. In addition, more in-depth information about the emotional and mental health needs related to coping with the stress of being Latino and GLBT should be studied. Nonetheless, this study can provide information to nonprofit organizations serving the Latino GLBT community. This report shows a community with needs that can be improved, at least in part, by directing resources to appropriate and sensitive social services as well as community educational programs.

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