

The LGBT Community and Library Usage

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### **Introduction**

The focus of my survey places emphasis on the LGBT community and the interactions of the individuals in this community with the library. This survey will identify how LGBT individuals interact with the library, their perceptions of the library's general attitude towards the LGBT community, and if they feel there are a substantial amount of LGBT materials and resources available to them through the library.

The purpose of this survey is to be able to better identify the library's strengths and shortcomings when it comes to promoting diversity and inclusiveness for the often-underrepresented LGBT community. This is mainly to see if the LGBT community feels that it is being fully represented and included in using library services.

At the Don C. Locke Library at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, we have an art display area that changes throughout the year and I was particularly proud of the display we had this spring which consisted of photography highlighting different trans members of the college community. This is a subject I am very passionate about and as a student member of the ALA's GLBT round table, I was able to gain inspiration from the ALA's GLBT Outreach page. The problem is, we do not know the feelings of the LGBT community within the student body about the library's current practices with regards to LGBT students. My goal is to discover whether or not improvements are needed in this area.

This survey is intended to be completed anonymously at the subject's discretion of time and place through the use of Qualtrics, the internet survey site. This will not only keep the cost of distribution down, but will also allow for the potential to survey the entire student population as it will be available through a link at the library's website and will be distributed through the college's student listserv system. At first, I considered limiting the population only to those in

the LGBT community, but I decided that the survey should be open to all student library users to gain a wider perception of the library's practices and the behaviors of students from many different backgrounds. The student population at A-B Tech as of Fall 2016 was 7,249. I while I have decided to survey the entire student population, I think it is important to note that a 2016 Gallup poll states that 4.1% of Americans identify as LGBT with 7.3% of millennials identifying as LGBT. If we apply the same 4.1% to the student body at A-B Tech, that would mean 297 students identify as LGBT. This is a significant amount of the population and warrants attention that this survey provides.

The results will be analyzed and be reported to Locke Library's director as well as other important library stakeholders. This will allow them to see the results of their initiatives for LGBT inclusiveness (positive or negative) and provide information on which to build a plan moving forward to address the outcomes of the survey.

### **Introductory Letter**

Dear Student, Locker Library here at A-B Tech is always looking to better ourselves and therefore your experience as a student here by creating an inclusive environment in which everyone has the opportunity to learn and interact with the community. We are conducting a simple survey to help us learn more about the LGBT community here and to see how different aspects of the library and the library's resources are perceived by the student body. By participating in this survey, you will have the opportunity to win a brand new Google Chromebook! The survey will only be open for one week, so please take the time to complete it as soon as possible and tell your friends so you all can have a chance to win, as well as contribute to the advancement of our community by sharing your thoughts.

All data collected as a part of this survey will be kept confidential and will be reviewed only by the researcher(s). This survey will not ask for your name nor will any information collected be viewed by or shared with anyone outside this project. Information collected will be used solely to improve the library's services and resources and will not be released to any other parties. This is meant to be an anonymous survey, please do not provide any personally identifiable information. Please contact Tyler Wilmoth at [tylerawilmoth@abtech.edu](mailto:tylerawilmoth@abtech.edu) with any questions about the survey.

## Survey

### The LGBT Community and Library Usage

The purpose of this survey is to measure the use of the library by LGBT individuals and to discern these individuals' perceptions of the library and library services as they relate to the LGBT community. All data collected as a part of this survey will be kept confidential and will be reviewed only by the researcher(s). This survey will not ask for your name nor will any information collected be viewed by or shared with anyone outside this project. Information collected will be used solely to improve the library's services and resources and will not be released to any other parties. This is meant to be an anonymous survey, please do not provide any personally identifiable information.

**This section is a set of three preliminary questions that help us know more about you.**

i) Age

- ☐ 19 or below (1)
- ☐ 20-29 (2)
- ☐ 30-39 (4)
- ☐ 40-49 (5)
- ☐ 50-59 (6)
- ☐ 60+ (3)

## ii) Highest Level of Education Completed

- ☐ No Degree (10)
- ☐ High School (1)
- ☐ 1 Year of College (2)
- ☐ 2 Years of College (3)
- ☐ 3 Years of College (4)
- ☐ 4+ Years of College (5)
- ☐ Associate's (6)
- ☐ Bachelor's (7)
- ☐ Master's (8)
- ☐ Doctorate (9)
- ☐ Other (11) \_\_\_\_\_

## iii) Gender

- ☐ Female (1)
- ☐ Male (2)
- ☐ Trans\* (FTM) (3)
- ☐ Trans\* (MTF) (4)
- ☐ Other: (5) \_\_\_\_\_

## iv) Sexual Orientation

- ☐ Asexual (1)
- ☐ Bisexual (2)
- ☐ Heterosexual (3)
- ☐ Homosexual (4)
- ☐ Pansexual (5)
- ☐ Other: (6) \_\_\_\_\_

**This section asks about how you use library services.**

## 1) On a weekly basis, how often do you use library services?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Sometimes (2)
- ☐ About half the time (3)
- ☐ Most of the time (4)
- ☐ Always (5)

2) How often do you use library services in person?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Sometimes (2)
- ☐ About half the time (3)
- ☐ Most of the time (4)
- ☐ Always (5)

3) How often do you use library services online?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Sometimes (2)
- ☐ About half the time (3)
- ☐ Most of the time (4)
- ☐ Always (5)

**In this section, please indicate your level of satisfaction for each question.**

4) How satisfied are you with the level of representation of the LGBT community in your library?

- ☐ Extremely dissatisfied (1)
- ☐ Somewhat dissatisfied (2)
- ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3)
- ☐ Somewhat satisfied (4)
- ☐ Extremely satisfied (5)

5) How satisfied are you with the amount of non-fiction LGBT resources?

- ☐ Extremely dissatisfied (1)
- ☐ Somewhat dissatisfied (2)
- ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3)
- ☐ Somewhat satisfied (4)
- ☐ Extremely satisfied (5)

6) How satisfied are you with the amount of fiction LGBT resources?

- ☐ Extremely dissatisfied (1)
- ☐ Somewhat dissatisfied (2)
- ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3)
- ☐ Somewhat satisfied (4)
- ☐ Extremely satisfied (5)

**In this section, please indicate your level of comfortability for each question. Please choose N/A if you do not identify as LGBT.**

7) How comfortable are you with the approachability of the library's staff when it comes to discussing sensitive situations as an LGBT individual?

- ☐ Extremely uncomfortable (1)
- ☐ Somewhat uncomfortable (2)
- ☐ Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (3)
- ☐ Somewhat comfortable (4)
- ☐ Extremely comfortable (5)
- ☐ N/A (6)

8) How comfortable do you feel in your library as an LGBT individual?

- ☐ Extremely uncomfortable (1)
- ☐ Somewhat uncomfortable (2)
- ☐ Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (3)
- ☐ Somewhat comfortable (4)
- ☐ Extremely comfortable (5)
- ☐ N/A (6)

9) How comfortable do you feel as an LGBT person as a part of the student body?

- ☐ Extremely uncomfortable (1)
- ☐ Somewhat uncomfortable (2)
- ☐ Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (3)
- ☐ Somewhat comfortable (4)
- ☐ Extremely comfortable (5)
- ☐ N/A (6)

**In this section, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.**

10) There are clearly marked or emphasized safe zones in the library.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (2)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (4)
- ☐ Strongly agree (5)

11) I feel that the library has censored materials because of the inclusion of LGBT content.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (2)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (4)
- ☐ Strongly agree (5)

12) I feel that the library's programming has underserved the LGBT population by not addressing the LGBT experience.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (2)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (4)
- ☐ Strongly agree (5)

13) Use this space to provide additional comments about the survey.

Thank you for your participation in this survey, it is greatly appreciated. Not only are you helping to bring visibility to the LGBT community when it comes to library services, but you are providing invaluable information that will help in the library's continued development and therefore help us all as a community.

### Statistics

Results for Survey Questions					
Question #	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation	Variance
1	4.05	4	5	0.999	0.997
2	3.5	4	4	1.235	1.526
3	4.15	4	5	0.933	0.871
4	3.7	4	5	1.490	2.221
5	3	3	1	1.589	2.526
6	3.9	4	4	1.071	1.147
7	3.4	4	4	1.392	1.937
8	3.75	4	5	1.293	1.671



**T-Score & T-Distribution for Question 7**

$$t = \frac{x - \mu}{s / \sqrt{n}}$$

$$t = \frac{3.4 - 3.6}{1.392 / \sqrt{20}} = -0.642$$

$$t\text{-distribution} = 0.2643$$

## References

- Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College. (2016). Curriculum Student Profile - Fall 2016. Retrieved from <https://www.abtech.edu/sites/default/files/users/allisonkseidel/Curriculum%20Student%20Profile%20Fall%202016-17.pdf>
- Gates, G. J. (2017, January 11). In US, More Adults Identifying as LGBT. Retrieved from <http://www.gallup.com/poll/201731/lgbt-identification-rises.aspx>