



ENHANCING INCLUSIVITY AND STUDENT WELL-BEING: A SENTIMENT ANALYSIS ON THE NEED FOR A GENDER- INCLUSIVE COMFORT ROOM AMONG IT STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Aim/Purpose

The question of whether an educational environment is truly inclusive for all students, including LGBTQIA+ individuals, is becoming increasingly important. The study aims to investigate the demographic profile, support levels, and sentiments of information technology students regarding a proposed dedicated comfort room for LGBTQIA+ members. By assessing student attitudes and support, the study aims to inform initiatives that promote inclusivity and address the needs of LGBTQIA+ individuals within the college community. This research is timely, as educational institutions increasingly recognize the need for safe, supportive spaces for marginalized groups.

Background

The background of the study highlights the growing recognition of the importance of inclusivity and support for LGBTQIA+ individuals in educational environments, particularly in the context of the information technology program. As colleges strive to create safe and supportive spaces for all students, the need for dedicated facilities like comfort rooms has emerged as a crucial aspect of fostering a welcoming atmosphere. This study seeks to explore the sentiments of IT students at the College of Information and Communications Technology of the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology regarding such a facility to understand their perspectives and support levels better. Therefore, this study focuses explicitly on IT students' support levels and sentiments regarding such a facility.

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Methodology	The study's methodology employs a quantitative research design using a descriptive approach. Data was collected through a self-made questionnaire distributed via Google Forms to 508 IT students across various year levels. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize and describe the demographic profile, the support for LGBTQIA+, and overall sentiment towards the dedicated comfort room. Sentiment analysis was conducted using a rule-based approach with Python programming and the TextBlob library, complemented by data visualization tools to present the findings effectively. This combination of descriptive statistics and sentiment analysis offers a comprehensive understanding of students' views on the proposed facility.
Contribution	This study contributes to understanding LGBTQIA+ inclusivity within educational settings by providing empirical data on IT students' sentiments and support regarding a dedicated comfort room. The findings have significant implications for policy and practice within educational institutions, as they can inform institutional policies and initiatives to enhance inclusivity, foster a supportive environment, and guide future research on LGBTQIA+ issues in higher education. By highlighting the need for dedicated facilities like comfort rooms, the study underscores the importance of addressing the diverse needs of students to ensure their well-being. Ultimately, this study supports broader efforts to create environments encouraging acceptance and well-being for LGBTQIA+ individuals, thus shaping more inclusive and responsive institutional practices.
Findings	The study revealed that most surveyed IT students were male, with a notable representation of LGBTQIA+ individuals. Most respondents were aged 18 to 20 years. A high level of support for the LGBTQIA+ community was observed among students, alongside predominantly positive sentiment (75.2%) towards the proposed dedicated comfort room. Additionally, word clouds highlighted key themes and attitudes regarding the initiative. These findings underscore the importance of such facilities in enhancing inclusivity and addressing the diverse needs of the student population.
Recommendations for Practitioners	Practitioners are encouraged to enhance communication about the dedicated comfort room's purpose and benefits while engaging LGBTQIA+ students in the planning process to address their needs. They should also ensure privacy and safety in the comfort room design.
Recommendations for Researchers	Researchers are encouraged to conduct further studies that explore the long-term impact of dedicated comfort rooms on the well-being and academic performance of LGBTQIA+ students. Future research could also examine the effectiveness of various inclusivity programs within educational institutions.
Impact on Society	The study highlights the importance of inclusivity for LGBTQIA+ individuals in educational settings, promoting a culture of acceptance that can extend beyond the campus. By advocating for dedicated spaces like comfort rooms, the research contributes to broader societal efforts to address discrimination and enhance the well-being of marginalized communities.
Future Research	Future research could focus on exploring the long-term effects of dedicated comfort rooms on the mental health and academic success of LGBTQIA+ students, assessing whether such initiatives lead to improved retention and engagement. Additionally, studies could investigate the effectiveness of various inclusivity programs across different educational institutions, identifying best practices that can be implemented more widely. Comparative research examining the experiences of LGBTQIA+ students in rural versus urban colleges could

also provide valuable insights into these populations' unique challenges and support needs. These avenues of research will provide a deeper understanding of how such initiatives impact LGBTQIA+ students in various educational contexts.

Keywords dedicated comfort room, gender-inclusive spaces, LGBTQIA+, SDG 5, sentiment analysis

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Gender-inclusive spaces in educational institutions promote equity and respect for all genders, fostering a safe and supportive learning atmosphere. These spaces are essential for addressing gender bias, enhancing educational experiences, and ensuring all students feel valued and included. This commitment aligns with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5, which aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Educational institutions are crucial in advancing this goal by creating environments where every student can thrive.

For example, in e-learning, it is crucial to design prototypes that accommodate linguistic diversity and gender biases. This ensures that digital learning platforms provide equitable opportunities for all students, regardless of gender or background (Malkawi et al., 2024). Integrating inclusive design principles into educational technologies not only promotes gender equality but also enhances the overall learning experience by addressing potential biases from the outset.

Moreover, research indicates that physical school environments often reflect gendered experiences, with spaces frequently dominated by males, which can constrain the learning opportunities and experiences of other genders. Addressing these disparities through improvements such as gender-responsive comfort rooms is vital for promoting equity within educational facilities (Makamure, 2022). Implementing dedicated comfort rooms in educational institutions is part of broader strategies to integrate LGBTQIA+ experiences into curricula and campus policies. By providing dedicated spaces where LGBTQIA+ individuals can feel safe, respected, and free from discrimination, learning institutions demonstrate their commitment to fostering inclusivity. In alignment with inclusive curricula, such spaces allow students to experience a sense of belonging and recognition, which can positively impact their academic and personal growth. As McClellan (2024) noted, these efforts not only support the well-being of LGBTQIA+ students but also create an educational atmosphere that values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all.

To foster truly inclusive educational settings, the design of educational spaces must consider the diverse needs of students, including their cognitive and emotional development. Engaging environments that are thoughtfully designed can significantly enhance students' learning experiences. Involving students in the design process is crucial, as their input provides valuable insights into how spaces can be optimized to meet their needs effectively (Chrzanowska, 2024). By incorporating feedback from those who use these spaces, institutions can create environments that better support a wide range of learning styles and personal identities, thereby advancing the principles of gender equality outlined in SDG 5.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

The student population is predominantly male in the College of Information and Communications Technology (CICT) of the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology. However, it also includes a diverse range of sexual orientations and gender identities, such as gay, lesbian, queer, and transgender students. Despite this diversity, many LGBTQIA+ students report feelings of discrimination and exclusion due to their gender identity or sexual orientation. Many express a sense of not

belonging, and some feel their peers do not fully accept them. This marginalization negatively impacts their well-being, as well as their academic and personal growth. For instance, one student shared his experience of being ridiculed in class for his gender expression, leading to a decline in his academic performance and an overwhelming sense of isolation. In a male-dominated field where LGBTQIA+ representation remains underrepresented, the college faces an urgent need to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for all students.

Despite growing awareness of gender inclusivity and the importance of supportive environments in educational institutions, a significant gap exists in understanding how these principles are explicitly applied within the College of Information and Communications Technology (CICT) context. While research has highlighted the general benefits of gender-inclusive spaces and the necessity of addressing gender biases (Rampaul & Magidimisha-Chipungu, 2022), there is limited empirical evidence on the specific needs and experiences of LGBTQIA+ students within technical and male-dominated disciplines such as information technology.

LGBTQIA+ inclusivity in higher education is a complex issue that requires creating environments where students and staff feel safe, respected, and valued. While positive progress has been made toward fostering inclusivity, challenges persist, especially in combating discrimination and building a genuinely welcoming atmosphere. Research on this topic highlights various dimensions of LGBTQIA+ inclusivity, including student attitudes and acceptance. For instance, a study at Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology revealed generally positive attitudes and high levels of acceptance towards LGBTQIA+ students, closely linked to students' gender and year level, though not their course or religion (Tomas, 2024). In a separate study by Tillquist (2023), the adoption of inclusive pedagogical practices, such as using non-binary language and respecting preferred names, has been shown to enhance the educational experience for LGBTQIA+ students by creating safer, more supportive spaces (Tillquist, 2023). These insights underscore the importance of continuous efforts to cultivate inclusive environments in higher education.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Dedicated spaces in educational settings are crucial for fostering a sense of community, enhancing identity, and supporting innovative teaching methodologies. These spaces provide safe environments where students, especially those from marginalized groups like LGBTQIA+, can connect with peers who share similar experiences, which is essential for their overall well-being and academic success. For example, a space in one higher education institution, as explained by Smith and Varghese (2016), helps build a sense of belonging and reinforce cultural identity, offering platforms for cultural expression and engagement. Similarly, for LGBTQIA+ students, dedicated spaces offer a safe space for identity expression, peer support, and validation, contributing to their educational success and emotional resilience.

Promoting inclusivity and providing dedicated spaces for LGBTQIA+ students can ensure that every student feels valued, respected, and supported. Such an environment contributes to their holistic development, well-being, and academic success while fostering a sense of belonging that encourages them to engage fully in their studies and future careers. This approach aligns with the growing recognition of the importance of inclusivity in educational settings and addresses the specific challenges faced by LGBTQIA+ students in a predominantly heteronormative academic discipline.

Various literature indicates that industries related to information technology often exhibit a male-dominated culture, which can impact the representation and acceptance of LGBTQIA+ individuals. However, there is a lack of detailed studies focusing on the acceptance and sentiments for gender-inclusive spaces, such as dedicated comfort rooms, and their possible impact in fostering a supportive environment for LGBTQIA+ students. Furthermore, while some research has explored the demographic profiles of students and their general experiences, there is a paucity of studies examining how these factors influence the design and effectiveness of inclusive facilities in the context of infor-

mation technology education. Specifically, there is a need for comprehensive research on the sentiment of students regarding gender-inclusive spaces, including their perceptions and experiences related to LGBTQIA+ support and the impact of dedicated comfort rooms.

This study argues that establishing gender-inclusive spaces, specifically dedicated comfort rooms, within the College of Information and Communications Technology is essential for promoting a supportive and inclusive environment for LGBTQIA+ students, ultimately contributing to their academic success and well-being in a male-dominated discipline.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study aims to address these gaps by answering the following research questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of information technology students in the College of Information and Communications Technology (CICT) regarding gender identity and sexual orientation?
2. Do information technology students support LGBTQIA+ members and initiatives directly benefiting them?
3. What is the sentiment of information technology students regarding the presence of a dedicated comfort room for LGBTQIA+ students?

By exploring these areas, the study seeks to provide insights into the effectiveness of gender-inclusive measures and contribute to developing more inclusive and supportive environments in technical education settings.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

SENTIMENT ANALYSIS IN AN EDUCATIONAL SETTING

Sentiment analysis (SA) is a machine learning technique primarily used to examine unstructured text by identifying the positive, negative, or neutral polarity of the emotions expressed within the data. This method is particularly valuable for automating feedback processes, making it highly effective when large amounts of textual data must be evaluated (Jain et al., 2021). As a key element of natural language processing (NLP), SA relies on text mining and statistical learning to interpret and classify human emotions. The process involves several essential stages, such as data collection, pre-processing, feature extraction, classification, and evaluation, which transform raw text into actionable insights (Cerulli, 2023; Goniwada, 2023).

The SA process begins with data collection and pre-processing, where user-generated content from platforms, such as social media or product reviews, is gathered, cleaned, and prepared for analysis (Goniwada, 2023). Next, feature extraction techniques like the “bag of words” algorithm convert this unstructured text into a structured format suitable for machine learning models (Cerulli, 2023). The classification and evaluation stage follows, where algorithms categorize sentiments and assess the accuracy of predictions, using tools like Python and R to perform these tasks (Cerulli, 2023). This structured approach makes SA highly versatile, applicable not only in education but also in fields such as market research, where companies analyze consumer feedback to enhance products and services (Ashwitha & Anbumani, 2024).

In higher education, particularly in institutions with diverse student populations such as the College of Information and Communications Technology (CICT), sentiment analysis can be essential in capturing students’ emotions, attitudes, and reactions toward institutional policies or initiatives. By understanding students’ feelings toward LGBTQIA+ support and the presence of facilities like a dedicated comfort room, educators and administrators can develop more personalized, responsive strategies for inclusivity (Dake & Bada, 2023). For instance, analyzing sentiment towards a dedicated comfort room for LGBTQIA+ students will provide actionable insights into student perspectives, especially regarding how supportive the institution is perceived regarding gender and sexual orientation

inclusivity. Through sentiment analysis, the emotional tone of feedback can guide data-driven decisions that contribute to improved institutional practices and increased student engagement. This approach is instrumental in addressing inclusivity issues and fostering a supportive learning environment, which is crucial for LGBTQIA+ students' academic and social well-being.

The capacity of SA to assess the emotional undertones in student feedback can be crucial when considering how students perceive the level of LGBTQIA+ support within their institution. For example, studies by Kumar and Kumar (2024) and Peña-Torres (2024) employed sentiment analysis to evaluate feedback and report high accuracy in classifying the emotional tone of responses. This approach could be similarly used to measure how IT students feel about the inclusion of a dedicated comfort room, which is an important aspect of supporting the LGBTQIA+ community in educational settings. Given the increasing attention to the need for LGBTQIA+ inclusivity in educational spaces (Pagliaccio, 2024), sentiment analysis offers a reliable and efficient method for understanding the emotional landscape and guiding institutional improvements that enhance students' academic experiences and overall well-being.

SDG 5 – GENDER EQUALITY

In September 2015, the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which introduced the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to address global challenges and promote prosperity (Kaiser et al., 2016). Among these goals, Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) is specifically dedicated to achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. SDG 5 highlights the critical role that gender equality plays in sustainable development, emphasizing the need to eliminate barriers faced by women and girls worldwide. While significant progress has been made in various regions, ongoing challenges persist, indicating the need for continued interventions to fully realize the objectives of SDG 5 (Kaiser et al., 2016).

Research shows a notable increase in attention to gender equality following the adoption of the SDGs. For instance, a bibliometric analysis of 634 papers reveals a surge in research on gender equality in Arab countries post-2015, coinciding with the implementation of the SDGs (Sweileh, 2024). In Pakistan, while improvements have been seen in women's political representation and educational enrollment, workforce participation remains low due to persistent sociocultural and economic barriers (Khan et al., 2024). Similarly, South America has experienced slight progress in female political participation, yet the region still struggles to achieve gender parity, calling for ongoing efforts to bridge the gap (Ernst et al., 2024). The Philippines has also embraced SDG 5, making strides in gender equality, particularly in education and political representation, where women actively participate across various sectors (David et al., 2018).

Integrating dedicated comfort rooms for LGBTQIA+ individuals plays a significant role in advancing the objectives of SDG 5 by promoting gender equality and inclusivity. These comfort rooms act as safe spaces, offering LGBTQIA+ individuals a sense of belonging and the opportunity to express their identities without fear of discrimination or judgment (Simon, 2017). Research shows that LGBTQIA+-specific labeling in healthcare settings dramatically enhances patient comfort, improving healthcare outcomes and effective communication between patients and healthcare providers (Lee et al., 2024). Moreover, collecting sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) data enables healthcare professionals to offer more personalized care, addressing the unique needs of LGBTQIA+ individuals (Alexander et al., 2020).

Despite these advances, challenges remain, especially in ensuring equal economic opportunities for women. Gender-related indicators show improvements in human capabilities, yet disparities persist in economic empowerment (David et al., 2018). Additionally, integrating SDG 5 into educational curricula has become a key strategy for promoting gender equality among students (Ayo & Daet, 2023). Policies aimed at addressing transformational gender issues, such as enhancing women's safety and empowerment, are currently being developed to further advance gender equality in the country (David et al., 2018).

COMPARATIVE EXPLORATION ACROSS CULTURAL, ACADEMIC, AND SOCIAL CONTEXT ON LGBTQIA+ INCLUSIVITY

LGBTQIA+ individuals face varying degrees of inclusivity depending on the cultural, social, and political environments in which they live. Studies show that while challenges such as discrimination and marginalization are common, how individuals cope with these issues differs across regions and communities. For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, LGBTQIA+ individuals in the UK and Brazil experienced isolation, with disrupted healthcare and a lack of community support. The pandemic underscored the necessity of adopting intersectional approaches in disaster response to address the compounded marginalization faced by these groups (Haworth et al., 2022). The need for tailored coping strategies and systemic changes in response to such crises is evident.

In academic settings, a significant number of LGBTQIA+ individuals, despite being out personally, remain closeted at work or school, with 46% of them not openly identifying as LGBTQIA+ in their professional environments (Pagliaccio, 2024). This situation reveals the prevalence of exclusion and mental health challenges within academic institutions, pointing to the critical need for structural support. To foster inclusive academic environments, there is a call for explicit inclusion of LGBTQIA+ issues in curricula and more robust institutional policies. These steps would help create a supportive atmosphere for students and faculty alike, mitigating the sense of alienation that many LGBTQIA+ individuals face.

For lesbian individuals in underdeveloped countries, the challenges extend beyond discrimination to include severe social and emotional difficulties. Many have found coping strategies by surrounding themselves with positive influences, highlighting the importance of respect for identity and recognition of their rights for their well-being (Marciano et al., 2024). Meanwhile, transgender individuals, particularly dancers in the UK, face challenges with binary competition rules, often having to compromise their identities to fit into traditional categories (Wong, 2025). This situation calls for radical policy changes to enhance inclusivity, not just in academic or work settings but also in areas like sports, where transgender individuals continue to face exclusion. However, it is essential to remember that focusing on inclusivity for the broader LGBTQIA+ community should not overshadow the unique challenges faced by its subgroups, ensuring that their specific needs are addressed.

THE LONG-TERM IMPACT OF INCLUSIVITY INITIATIVES ON STUDENT WELL-BEING AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Longitudinal studies examining the long-term impacts of inclusivity initiatives reveal significant benefits in various educational contexts, particularly regarding student well-being and academic success. These studies highlight the importance of tailored strategies that foster an inclusive environment, ultimately improving students' emotional and academic outcomes. For instance, proper implementation of inclusive policies has been shown to enhance the emotional well-being of students with disabilities significantly, promoting better academic integration (Alvarado et al., 2024). Focusing on holistic approaches, such as psychological care and academic accommodations, is essential for addressing the diverse needs of students in higher education (Alvarado et al., 2024).

Additionally, research emphasizes that initiatives supporting students from widening participation backgrounds have been found to increase confidence, particularly in challenging fields such as medical school, which correlates with improved academic performance (Fouda et al., 2024). Longitudinal studies have also indicated that accommodations positively impact academic performance, although certain curriculum modifications may have detrimental effects, underscoring the need to carefully implement inclusivity measures (Lozano et al., 2023). Furthermore, mindfulness-based interventions have been linked to significant reductions in stress and improvements in academic performance, suggesting that well-being initiatives can have lasting positive effects on student success (Swargiary & Roy, 2023). However, it is important to note that not all-inclusive initiatives yield uniformly beneficial

outcomes, and some measures may inadvertently hinder academic performance, requiring a nuanced approach to their implementation (Lozano et al., 2023).

In the context of LGBTQIA+ inclusion, the findings from these studies reinforce the significance of creating dedicated comfort rooms for LGBTQIA+ individuals within educational institutions. Such spaces align with the broader goals of inclusivity and offer emotional and psychological benefits that enhance students' well-being and academic success. Establishing a dedicated comfort room can be seen as a critical step in promoting a supportive and safe environment for LGBTQIA+ students, contributing to their overall academic performance and emotional health.

RELEVANCE OF THE REVIEWED LITERATURE TO THE CURRENT STUDY

The reviewed studies underscore the significant challenges faced by LGBTQIA+ individuals across cultural, social, and academic contexts, which are highly relevant to the present study focused on navigating gender-inclusive spaces by exploring the sentiments of IT students on having a dedicated comfort room for LGBTQIA+ students in higher education institutions. As the studies highlight, LGBTQIA+ individuals often face discrimination and exclusion, particularly in academic environments where many remain closeted due to fear of judgment or marginalization (Pagliaccio, 2024). This exclusion can result in increased mental health challenges, indicating the need for institutional support systems to foster inclusivity. A dedicated comfort room aligns with these findings by aiming to create a safe and supportive space for LGBTQIA+ students where they can feel valued and respected without fear of discrimination.

Moreover, the study emphasizes the growing importance of policies that explicitly address the unique needs of LGBTQIA+ subgroups, such as transgender and lesbian individuals, who face distinct challenges. Research shows that while some LGBTQIA+ students in academic settings have found coping strategies, such as surrounding themselves with positive influences (Marciano et al., 2024), structural support within institutions remains inadequate. A dedicated comfort room can serve as a crucial intervention to help alleviate feelings of isolation and provide a space that acknowledges and respects the diverse identities within the LGBTQIA+ community. This approach contributes to the well-being of LGBTQIA+ students. It aligns with global efforts to advance gender equality, as outlined in Sustainable Development Goal 5, which emphasizes the importance of creating inclusive educational environments for all students. Thus, it resonates with the broader push for institutional policies that promote gender equality and inclusivity, addressing marginalized students' emotional and physical needs.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative approach using descriptive research methods to explore the demographic profile, support for the LGBTQIA+ community, and sentiments regarding a dedicated comfort room among students in the College of Information and Communications Technology (CICT). These methods were chosen to facilitate the systematic collection and analysis of numerical data, providing a clear and objective understanding of the study variables. The descriptive approach enables the researchers to examine and articulate the current state of LGBTQIA+ support and sentiment, which are central to the research objectives.

Data was collected through a self-made survey questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The research questions were informed by a comprehensive literature review addressing gaps in knowledge and contextual challenges within the college. To ensure the questionnaire's validity and relevance, feedback was sought from scholars and practitioners, who reviewed and refined the survey items for clarity and alignment with the study objectives.

The instrument included closed-ended questions to capture structured, quantifiable responses on demographic profiles and support for the LGBTQIA+ community. Also, open-ended questions were included to allow respondents to express their perspectives in greater depth, enriching the overall

analysis with qualitative insights. Thus, the sentiments of the respondents were determined from their open-ended responses. This combination aligns with the study's objective of assessing inclusivity and the impact of dedicated spaces for LGBTQIA+ students.

The study was conducted at CICT, involving 508 students from various year levels determined using a random sampling technique, ensuring a representative sample. Participation was voluntary, with respondents fully informed about the study's purpose and their right to withdraw without consequence.

Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize the respondents' demographic characteristics, support levels, and sentiments regarding the dedicated comfort room. Sentiment analysis employed a rule-based approach to classify responses as positive, negative, or neutral. Positive sentiment was indicated by keywords such as "welcoming," "supportive," or "comforting," while negative sentiment included terms like "excluded" or "uncomfortable." Neutral sentiment was classified when responses lacked a clear opinion or used neutral language. This approach ensured consistent and transparent classification across all responses. Figure 1 presents the process flow being conducted for sentiment analysis.

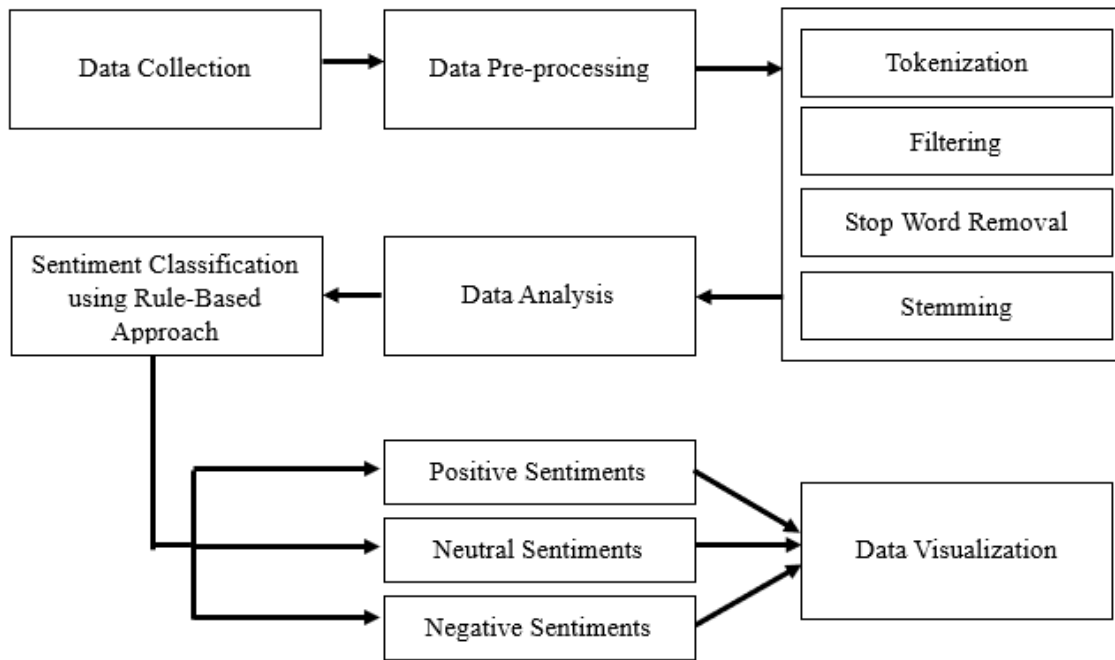


Figure 1. Sentiment analysis process flow

The sentiment analysis process commenced with data collection, utilizing a self-designed survey questionnaire to gather responses. The pre-processing phase involved several critical activities to prepare the data for analysis. Initially, text cleaning was performed to remove irrelevant or extraneous elements such as special characters, numbers, punctuation marks, and unnecessary whitespaces. Following this, tokenization was applied to divide the text into smaller, more manageable units for further processing. Additionally, stop word removal and stemming were conducted to eliminate common, non-essential words and reduce words to their root forms, ensuring consistency and uniformity across the text data.

Upon completing the pre-processing steps, the data was analyzed using a rule-based approach for sentiment analysis. This approach allowed for the classification of sentiments into three categories: positive, neutral, and negative. The sentiment analysis results were subsequently visualized using

graphical representations to enhance understanding. Furthermore, frequently occurring words within the dataset were highlighted through word clouds, providing a clear and intuitive visualization of key terms and their significance within the text.

Ethical considerations were rigorously upheld throughout the study. Respondents provided informed consent, with clear and comprehensive information about the study's purpose, procedures, and rights, ensuring they understood their voluntary participation and right to withdraw without negative repercussions. To safeguard participant confidentiality, strict measures were implemented to anonymize personal information and responses, ensuring that individual identities were not identifiable. The data collection platform, Google Forms, also provided features that maintained anonymity, preventing the collection of any personal identifiers. The study adhered to ethical guidelines, and its procedures were reviewed and approved by an appropriate ethics committee to ensure compliance with relevant standards.

While the study adhered to rigorous ethical standards, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations inherent in the research design. One such limitation is the potential for biases in self-reported data, as responses may reflect personal or social desirability biases, influencing the accuracy and authenticity of the information provided. Additionally, while the survey design allowed for comprehensive data collection, it may not fully capture the complexities of participants' experiences and sentiments, as open-ended responses can be subjective and context-dependent. The use of inferential statistics, while beneficial for understanding relationships between variables, also presents a limitation due to the research objectives framed and the research problems identified for this study. However, the use of inferential statistics is considered for future follow-up studies.

By adhering to these methodologies, the study aims to offer valuable insights into the experiences and needs of CICT students concerning gender inclusivity and support, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and supportive educational environment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study examines the demographic profile of LGBTQIA+ support and sentiments for a dedicated comfort room for the LGBTQIA+ community within the College of Information and Communications Technology through the presentation and analysis of key findings. The discussion aims to offer insights into the diverse student community of the college and their sentiments for a project focused on LGBTQIA+ community members.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

The findings reveal that the information technology student population in the College of Information and Communications Technology is predominantly male, with 69.7% identifying as such, while female students make up 21.9%. Additionally, LGBTQIA+ groups, including lesbian, transgender, bisexual, and queer students, constitute a smaller proportion of the student body. Regarding age distribution, the majority of students fall within the younger age groups of 18 and below (36.2%) and 19 to 20 years old (36.8%), together accounting for 73% of the respondents. These demographic characteristics have significant implications for the study on LGBTQIA+ support and sentiment for a dedicated comfort room, particularly given the generational openness observed among younger respondents.

Sexual orientation

The following tables show the demographic profiles of the respondents according to their sexual orientation and age. Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of sex.

Table 1. Frequency and percentage distribution of information technology students according to their sexual orientation

Sexual Orientation	Frequency	Percentage
Male	354	69.7%
Female	111	21.9%
Lesbian	9	1.8%
Transgender	5	1.0%
Bisexual	23	4.5%
Queer	4	0.8%
Others	2	0.4%
Total	508	100.0%

Table 1 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of Information Technology students at the College of Information and Communications Technology based on their sexual orientation. The majority of the students identify as male, comprising 69.7% or 354 students out of 508 respondents. Female students account for 21.9% or 111 students. Other sexual orientations represented include bisexual with 4.5%, lesbian with 1.8%, transgender with 1.0%, queer with 0.8%, and other sexual orientations not mentioned constituting 0.4%. The data encompasses 508 students, with males being the predominant group.

The distribution of sexual orientations among students reveals a significant male majority, which may influence the dynamics of LGBTQIA+ support and sentiment within the college. Degree programs like Information Technology have been seen as dominated by male students due to various factors, including historical trends, socialization, and education experiences. Over the years, the percentage of women earning degrees in IT has significantly declined from 37% in 1984 to 28% in 1994, as Caputo and Kohun (2002) reported. Katz et al. (2004) asserted that by the 2001–2002 academic year, only 18% of computer science degrees were awarded to females in a large university in the United States. This shows that historically, the number of males is greater than that of female students enrolled in computing programs like information technology.

Given the smaller representation of LGBTQIA+ groups such as lesbian, transgender, bisexual, and queer students, there may be a heightened need for targeted support systems and inclusive facilities, like a dedicated comfort room. The data suggests that these groups constitute a smaller percentage of the student body, but their specific needs and concerns must still be addressed to promote a more inclusive and supportive environment. The implementation of gender-inclusive spaces could contribute to the well-being and sense of belonging of these minority groups, reflecting the college's commitment to inclusivity and diversity.

Age group

Table 2 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents according to their age group.

Table 2. Frequency and percentage distribution of information technology students according to their age group

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
18 and below	184	36.2%
19 to 20	187	36.8%
21 to 22	124	24.4%
23 to 24	10	2.0%
25 and above	3	0.6%
Total	508	100.0%

Table 2 presents information technology students' frequency and percentage distribution according to their age group. Most students fall within the age groups of 18 and below at 36.2% and 19 to 20 years old at 36.8%, accounting for nearly three-quarters or 73% of the total population. Students aged 21 to 22 comprise 24.4% of the population, while those aged 23 to 24 and 25 and above represent a small fraction, with 2.0% and 0.6%, respectively.

The age distribution of information technology students has implications for the study on LGBTQIA+ support and sentiment for a dedicated comfort room. The majority of students are within a younger age range, which may indicate a generational openness to discussing and supporting gender-inclusive spaces. Younger individuals are more familiar with and supportive of LGBTQIA+ issues, which could influence the overall sentiment toward establishing a dedicated comfort room. Younger generations exhibit greater awareness and familiarity with LGBTQIA+ issues due to increased exposure, evolving social norms, and educational advancements. This shift is influenced by various factors that have shaped their perspectives. According to Garretson (2015), young people have more opportunities for direct interactions with LGBTQIA+ individuals and characters in media, fostering empathy and understanding. Studies indicate that personal relationships and mediated representations have risen significantly over the past two decades, contributing to a more supportive attitude towards LGBTQI rights (Garretson, 2015).

In a study conducted by Kravčenko and Jarasiunaite-Fedosejeva (2022), research shows that each successive generation is more accepting of homosexuality than the previous one, influenced by factors such as education and political views. This trend is evident across Europe, where younger individuals demonstrate a marked increase in acceptance. Moreover, despite historical gaps in LGBTQIA+ education, recent efforts have improved knowledge and attitudes among youth, addressing misconceptions and promoting inclusivity (Thomas, 2013).

On the other hand, the relatively small percentage of older students might have a different perspective shaped by varying social norms and experiences, potentially affecting the diversity of opinions within the study. Knauer (2008) expressed that older generations often grew up in eras marked by significant stigma against LGBTQIA individuals, leading to internalized homophobia and reluctance to embrace their identities. Understanding these age-related dynamics is crucial for interpreting the results and crafting recommendations that resonate with the entire student population.

SUPPORT TO LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY

The findings reveal remarkable support for the LGBTQIA+ community within the College of Information and Communications Technology. Of 508 respondents, 467 (91.9%) expressed support, while only 41 (8.1%) did not. This overwhelming support underscores the possible positive sentiment among students towards inclusivity and indicates strong potential acceptance of initiatives like a dedicated comfort room for LGBTQIA+ members.

Table 3 shows the result of the data collection conducted to survey the respondents regarding their support of the LGBTQIA+ community within the college.

Table 3. Support to LGBTQIA+ Community

Support for LGBTQIA+ Community	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	467	91.9%
No	41	8.1%
Total	508	100.0%

The data presented in Table 3 reflects the level of support for the LGBTQIA+ community among respondents at the College of Information and Communications Technology. Of the 508 individuals

surveyed, 467, or 91.9%, expressed support for the LGBTQIA+ community, while 41, or 8.1%, did not. This overwhelming majority indicates strong backing for the community within the college. A high level of support for the LGBTQIA+ community among college students significantly enhances the educational experience and well-being of LGBTQIA+ individuals. This support fosters a more inclusive environment, improving mental health, academic engagement, and community belonging. Tomas (2024) indicates that positive attitudes towards LGBTQIA+ students correlate with supportive educational environments, which foster acceptance and understanding among peers. Further, Tomas (2024) mentioned that high acceptance levels are linked to students' gender and year level, emphasizing the role of educational settings in promoting inclusivity.

The high level of support, equivalent to 91.9% for the LGBTQIA+ community, suggests a generally positive sentiment toward initiatives that promote inclusivity, such as the proposal for a dedicated comfort room. This strong support implies that most of the college population would welcome implementing such a facility. The significant backing could also encourage the administration to consider further policies or actions to support the LGBTQIA+ community within the institution.

SENTIMENT ANALYSIS FOR A DEDICATED COMFORT ROOM

In conducting sentiment analysis, the researchers undertook several key activities: data collection, pre-processing, data analysis (including sentiment analysis), and data visualization. The study initially included responses from 508 participants. However, following data pre-processing, only 475 responses were deemed valid. The exclusion of 33 responses was due to various issues, including null answers, inconsistent data formats, text encoding problems, and errors during text cleaning.

Figure 2 illustrates the detailed distribution of sentiment scores from the 475 valid responses regarding respondents' views on a dedicated comfort room for LGBTQIA+ community members.

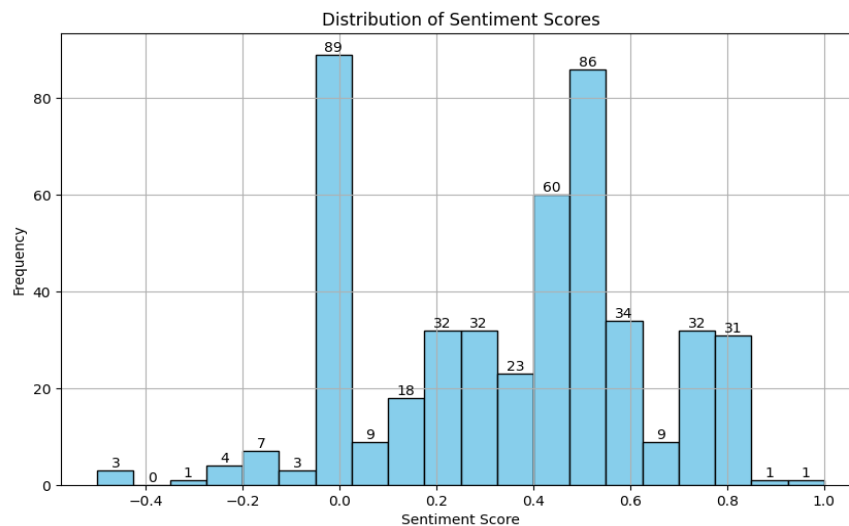


Figure 2. Distribution of sentiment scores

Positive sentiments

The majority of respondents expressed positive sentiments regarding the proposed establishment of a dedicated comfort room for LGBTQIA+ community members within the college, as depicted in Figure 3. Among the 475 valid responses, 356 were identified as positive, representing 75.2% of the total responses. This overwhelming support suggests a strong endorsement for creating an inclusive space for LGBTQIA+ students, underlining the community's collective desire for such an initiative.

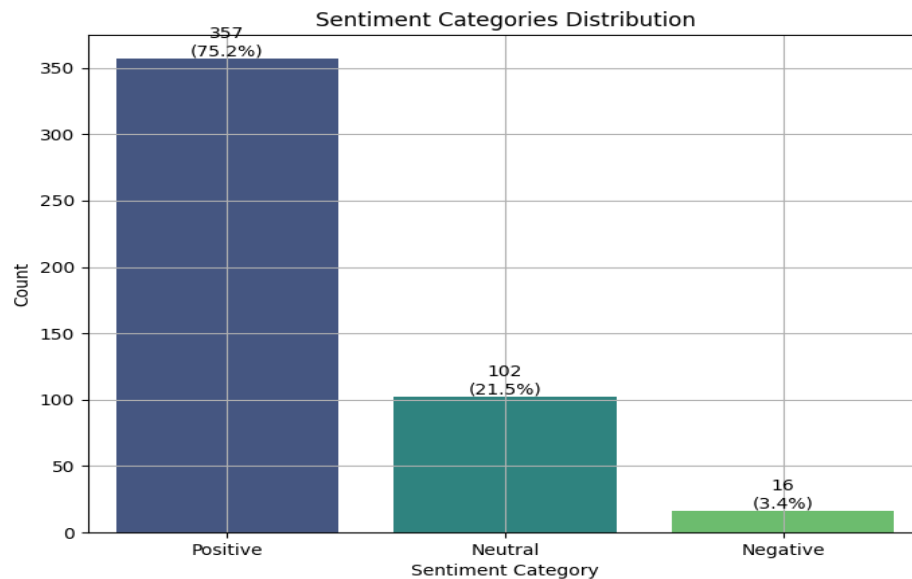


Figure 3. Sentiment category distribution

Qualitatively, one participant emphasized the importance of such a facility for fostering a sense of respect and safety, stating: *"I fully support this matter. Creating special restrooms for LGBTQIA+ students in our university is about ensuring that everyone feels comfortable and respected. It is like providing a safe space where they can feel at ease."* This highlights the psychological benefits of such a space, where LGBTQIA+ students would have a designated area where they can experience a sense of comfort without fear of discrimination or discomfort. Another respondent underscored the role of the dedicated comfort room in ensuring a welcoming and inclusive environment for all students, noting: *"Establishing a dedicated comfort room for LGBTQIA+ individuals in college is a positive step towards inclusivity and ensuring everyone feels comfortable and supported."* This statement reinforces the idea that the establishment of the comfort room aligns with the broader goals of inclusivity, further validating the need for such spaces on campus. Lastly, another response emphasized the practical benefits of the comfort room, particularly in reducing feelings of discomfort or embarrassment: *"If there were to be a restroom specifically for LGBTQIA+ members, it would be beneficial for them as it would make them more comfortable and prevent them from feeling embarrassed or uneasy."* This highlights the real-world implications of the initiative, suggesting that a dedicated comfort room would provide tangible benefits for LGBTQIA+ students in terms of their daily experiences on campus.

These qualitative positive responses reinforce the quantitative data and provide a richer understanding of the respondents' sentiments. They reflect a deep-seated desire for inclusivity, comfort, and respect within the college environment, emphasizing that establishing a dedicated comfort room would be a positive and necessary step toward meeting these goals.

The positive sentiment expressed by a substantial majority of respondents has significant implications for fostering inclusivity within the college environment. The support indicates a broad consensus on the necessity of a dedicated space that ensures the comfort and well-being of LGBTQIA+ students. Establishing a dedicated space for LGBTQIA+ individuals in learning institutions is essential for fostering inclusivity, safety, and community. These spaces support and empower marginalized identities, addressing historical inequities and promoting a sense of belonging among students. According to Corwin and Badra (2024), LGBTQIA+ centers serve as a crucial resource for advocacy, professional development, and community building, addressing issues like discrimination and harassment. They create environments where students can express their identities authentically, contributing to their overall well-being (Jacobs et al., 2024). This collective backing can inform college administrators and policymakers, providing a solid foundation for prioritizing the establishment of the comfort room as

an essential resource. From a policy perspective, the findings emphasize the need to integrate inclusive infrastructure planning into broader institutional policies. This support highlights the importance of involving stakeholders, including students and advocacy groups, in the design and implementation process to ensure the facility meets its intended purpose. For future research, these results open avenues for exploring the long-term impact of such inclusive initiatives on student well-being, academic performance, and campus culture. Further studies could also examine the replicability of this model in other educational institutions to enhance inclusivity across diverse contexts.

The researchers extracted phrases from the respondents' answers to gain deeper insights. Word clouds are particularly relevant in sentiment analysis as they effectively visualize common themes, highlight key sentiments, summarize large volumes of text, enhance communication, and identify trends. Figure 4 displays the word cloud representing the most frequently occurring positive sentiments.

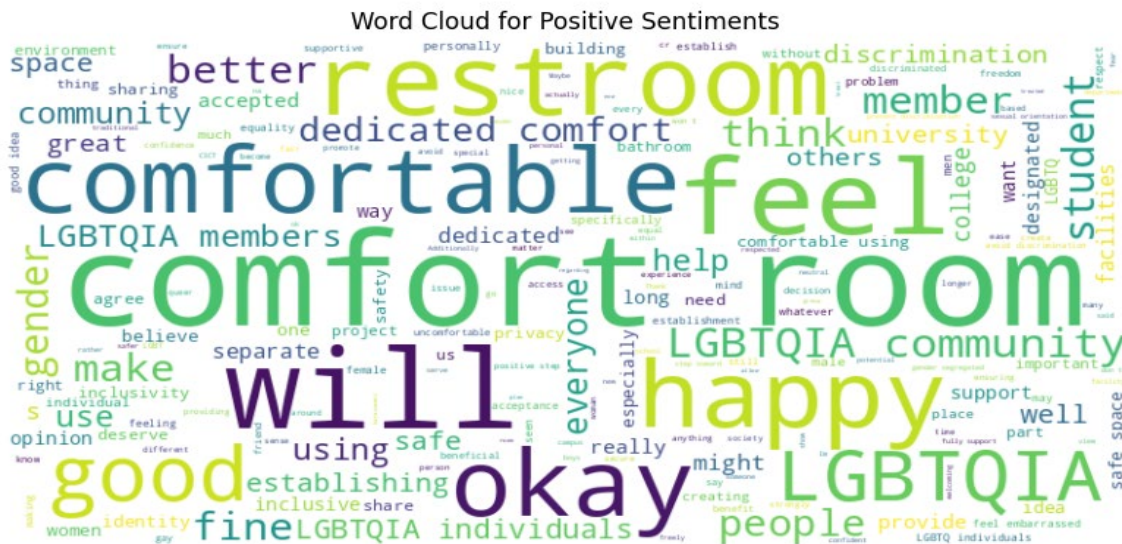


Figure 4. Positive sentiments about a dedicated comfort room for LGBTQIA+ community members

As depicted in Figure 4, respondents expressed several positive sentiments regarding the establishment of a dedicated comfort room for LGBTQIA+ community members, including phrases such as “*feel comfortable*,” “*happy*,” “*okay*,” and “*good*.” These terms reflect a general sense of approval and satisfaction among the respondents.

The sentiment analysis highlights that many individuals view the proposed comfort room as a positive addition to the college environment. Phrases like “*feel comfortable*” and “*happy*” suggest that respondents believe the facility would enhance their sense of belonging and personal comfort. Words like “*okay*” and “*good*” further indicate a favorable reception, showing that the majority of feedback is not just neutral but positively inclined.

The implications of these sentiments are significant. The strong positive response suggests that the dedicated comfort room will likely be well-received by the LGBTQIA+ community and could contribute to improved well-being and inclusivity on campus. It also reinforces the idea that such initiatives are aligned with the needs and expectations of the student body.

Furthermore, the positive feedback can be leveraged to support the proposal and secure necessary approvals or funding. It provides a strong case for the value of the comfort room and can be used in

communications to demonstrate broad support. However, it is also important to consider how to address and incorporate any specific suggestions or concerns arising from these positive sentiments to ensure the facility effectively meets the community's needs.

Neutral sentiments

On the other hand, 102 out of the 475 valid responses were categorized as neutral, constituting 21.5% of the total. These neutral responses suggest that while most respondents strongly supported the proposal, a significant proportion remained neutral, neither strongly endorsing nor opposing the creation of a dedicated comfort room for LGBTQIA+ community members.

The presence of such a notable proportion of neutral sentiment carries important implications. It indicates that, despite the high level of support, there is a portion of the student body whose views are more ambivalent or uncertain. The neutrality could stem from a range of factors, such as a lack of understanding about the specific needs and benefits of the comfort room or a general indifference towards the issue. It may also reflect a desire for further clarification or reassurance on the proposal, particularly regarding the logistics and implementation of the initiative.

Qualitative responses from neutral respondents shed light on some of the reasons behind this stance. One participant noted, *"I have no objections to establishing a dedicated comfort room for LGBTQIA+ individuals. However, I believe there should be a committee to determine who has access to this dedicated comfort room to ensure that no one exploits the fact that it is a comfort room shared among multiple genders."* This response suggests concern over the management and accessibility of the comfort room, indicating that while the respondents do not oppose the idea, they feel there are important practical considerations that need to be addressed to ensure the space is used appropriately and equitably.

Another neutral respondent expressed a more passive acceptance of the idea: *"If that is what they want, then I believe they deserve it."* This comment reflects a neutral stance that aligns with a general sense of fairness but lacks strong enthusiasm or commitment to the proposal. It suggests that while the respondent acknowledges the request's legitimacy, they may not feel invested. According to Passani and Debicki (2016), students may have a neutral feeling toward initiatives benefiting LGBTQIA+ individuals because students' attitudes towards LGBTQ rights vary significantly across countries, influenced by local cultural and legal contexts. For instance, students in countries with more progressive LGBTQ rights tend to have more positive views compared to those in conservative regions.

For decision-makers, the neutrality of respondents presents a valuable opportunity for further engagement, education, and refinement of the proposal. Addressing the concerns or uncertainties of the neutral respondents through targeted informational campaigns, discussions, or clarifications could help shift their stance toward a more informed position. This would increase overall support for the initiative and ensure that the decision-making process includes those who may have felt uncertain or uninformed about the comfort room's benefits.

Administrators can alleviate concerns and foster a deeper understanding of the initiative by engaging in dialogue about the specific benefits and goals of the comfort room and providing answers to logistical questions such as access, management, and policies. Additionally, understanding the reasons behind the neutral responses offers valuable insights into areas where more advocacy, education, or clarification is needed. This approach could guide future communications strategies, ensuring all stakeholders are well-informed.

Incorporating these insights into a refined implementation plan would be critical from a policy perspective. It would ensure that the comfort room is designed to align with the needs and expectations of a diverse student body while addressing any lingering concerns from neutral respondents. Practically, this could involve organizing town halls, focus groups, or further surveys to engage with the student population more effectively, refining the proposal, and securing broader support.

In terms of future research, this study could serve as a foundation for exploring how neutral or undecided respondents can be best engaged in campus-wide initiatives. Further studies might investigate

the factors contributing to a neutral stance in campus decisions and how these factors can be effectively addressed through communication and policy changes. Research could also focus on the long-term effects of engagement strategies on student attitudes and the overall success of inclusivity initiatives.

Addressing the neutral sentiment in a thoughtful and informed manner could contribute to a more comprehensive and unified community consensus on establishing the dedicated comfort room, promoting inclusivity in practice and policy across the college.

In Figure 5, the neutral sentiments of the respondents are shown.

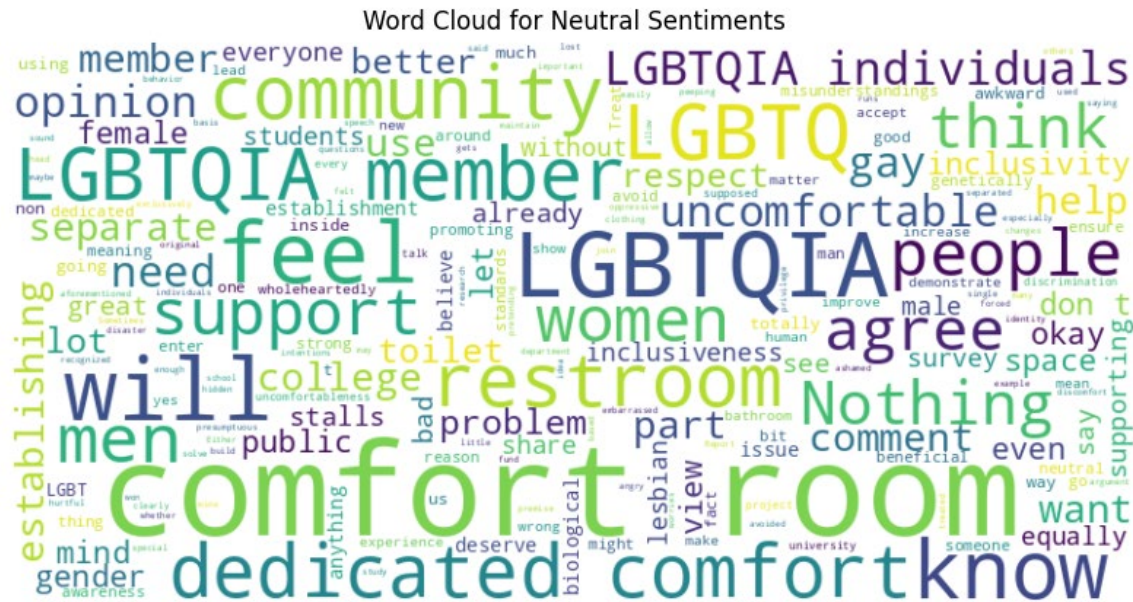


Figure 5. Neutral sentiments about a dedicated comfort room for LGBTQIA+ community members

As illustrated in Figure 5, the word cloud reveals some of the neutral sentiments expressed by respondents, including terms such as “*feel*,” “*support*,” “*comfort room*,” “*LGBTQIA*,” and “*community*.” These words suggest that while respondents recognize and acknowledge the concept of a dedicated comfort room for LGBTQIA+ community members, their feelings are generally neutral. This neutrality indicates that the respondents do not have strong positive or negative emotional responses towards the initiative.

The presence of terms like “*comfort room*” and “*LGBTQLA*” in the neutral sentiment category highlights that these concepts are central to the discussion but may not evoke a strong emotional reaction. This could imply that while the idea is understood and accepted, some respondents might not see it as impactful or urgent. Addressing this neutrality offers an opportunity for further engagement to explore why some individuals remain indifferent. Additional information or clarification might be needed to shift these neutral sentiments towards a more positive view.

Understanding and addressing these neutral responses can also guide communication strategies. By providing more context and emphasizing the benefits and significance of the comfort room, stakeholders can potentially influence the opinions of those with neutral sentiments. Furthermore, evaluating the proportion of neutral responses with positive and negative sentiments helps gauge the initiative's overall impact and identify improvement areas. This comprehensive approach ensures that all perspectives are considered, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and effective implementation of the comfort room.

Negative sentiments

Among the 475 valid responses, 16 were classified as expressing negative sentiments, accounting for 3.4% of the total responses, as shown in Figure 3. While this represents a small percentage, negative feedback is significant. It suggests that a minority of respondents harbor concerns or opposition regarding the proposed dedicated comfort room for LGBTQIA+ community members.

While the majority support the initiative, these negative sentiments indicate that reservations must be addressed to ensure the proposal includes all perspectives. The negative feedback could stem from various factors, such as doubts about the necessity or impact of the comfort room, concerns about resource allocation, or potential misunderstandings about the intent behind the space.

Qualitative responses help to illuminate the specific concerns raised by these respondents. One participant expressed, *“Establishing a dedicated comfort room would lead to more uncomfortableness and problems in the future if this project started.”* This response suggests a concern that the initiative might create unintended negative consequences, perhaps leading to further division or discomfort among the broader campus community. It reflects a fear that such a space could generate more issues than it resolves, potentially complicating the dynamics of inclusivity.

Another negative response raised an important critique about the symbolism of the comfort room, stating: *“Provision of the comfort room would set an offensive remark against the queer communities because of the implication that they, rather we, are being excluded from society, plus adding unwanted visibility to our existence that would rather push more homophobia than inclusivity in this heteronormative country.”* This comment points to a concern that the creation of a separate space could unintentionally perpetuate exclusion or reinforce societal divisions, especially in a context where LGBTQIA+ individuals are already marginalized. The respondent fears that the proposal, rather than fostering inclusivity, might inadvertently increase visibility in a way that fuels further homophobia or social stigma.

The implications of these negative sentiments are important for understanding and addressing the concerns of those who oppose the initiative. Engaging in dialogue with these individuals and providing space for their concerns can help the college navigate differing views and find solutions accommodating various perspectives. From a policy standpoint, incorporating feedback from dissenting voices could inform the development of more inclusive and equitable guidelines. Open communication and stakeholder collaboration can enhance the implementation process, ensuring all voices are considered. Additionally, future research could explore the long-term outcomes of such initiatives on student inclusivity, well-being, and academic engagement, providing further evidence to guide policy adjustments and implementation strategies.

The negative sentiments extracted from the respondents' responses are shown in the word cloud presented in Figure 6. The word cloud provides a visual summary of the negative sentiments expressed by respondents regarding the proposed comfort room for LGBTQIA+ community members. Prominent terms such as *“uncomfortable,” “sharing,” “community,” “restroom,”* and *“nothing”* highlight specific areas of concern. The term *“uncomfortable”* suggests that some respondents may have reservations about the privacy or suitability of the space, potentially feeling uneasy about its use. The word *“sharing”* reflects concerns about the communal nature of the comfort room and whether it will truly provide a private and safe environment. The term *“community”* could imply skepticism about whether the facility will adequately address the needs of the LGBTQIA+ community or whether its intended beneficiaries will effectively use it. Using *“restroom”* might suggest that the comfort room could be just another restroom rather than a thoughtfully designed space with specific accommodations. Lastly, *“nothing”* suggests that some respondents believe the initiative might not significantly impact or that more pressing issues exist to address.

These negative sentiments underscore important considerations for the planning and implementation of the comfort room. Addressing these concerns is crucial for ensuring the facility meets the needs and expectations of all stakeholders. For instance, ensuring privacy, improving the design to make the space truly supportive and inclusive, and communicating the purpose and benefits of the comfort room can help counteract these negative perceptions. Engaging with those who expressed concerns and incorporating their feedback into the project can also enhance acceptance and support. By proactively addressing these issues, the college can work towards creating an effective and inclusive space, ultimately fostering a more supportive environment for LGBTQIA+ students.

This study examined the demographic profile, support for the LGBTQIA+ community, and sentiments of information technology students at the College of Information and Communications Technology regarding a dedicated comfort room for LGBTQIA+ members. The primary research questions focused on understanding the demographic breakdown of IT students, the support for LGBTQIA+ initiatives, and the overall sentiment toward establishing a gender-inclusive comfort room.

Regarding the dedicated comfort room, the sentiment analysis showed that 75.2% of students had positive sentiments toward the initiative, while 21.5% were neutral and 3.4% were negative. These sentiments were visualized through word clouds, which revealed recurring themes of support for inclusivity, comfort, and safety, with some concerns related to logistics and accessibility.

This study provides valuable insights into the perspectives of IT students, offering a comprehensive understanding of their demographic profiles, level of support for LGBTQIA+ initiatives, and sentiments regarding gender-inclusive spaces. The findings suggest that most students support a dedicated comfort room, but further advocacy and clarity may be needed to address the concerns of neutral respondents and ensure the effective implementation of such initiatives. This research contributes to the broader discussion on LGBTQIA+ inclusivity in higher education. It could serve as a basis for future policy development and research on the impact of gender-inclusive spaces in fostering student well-being and academic success.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

Suppose the proposed dedicated comfort room for the college becomes a reality. In that case, the College of Information and Communications Technology (CICT) should prioritize clear communication and address privacy concerns regarding the facility. Despite the strong support from 91.9% of respondents, 8.1% expressed reservations about the facility's design and potential effectiveness. To address these concerns, the college, through the Gender and Development Center (GDC), should engage in transparent discussions with students, incorporating their feedback into the design process. The comfort room must be designed to ensure privacy and comfort for all students. Additionally, establishing ongoing feedback mechanisms will be vital in continuously assessing and refining the facility to meet the evolving needs of students.

The Gender and Development Center can also use positive sentiment and demographic data to inform the development and promotion of broader inclusivity programs across the university. This includes designing educational initiatives and support services that address the unique needs of diverse student groups. Promoting the comfort room and other inclusivity measures will be essential in fostering a more inclusive academic environment. Regular monitoring and evaluation should be implemented to assess the effectiveness of these initiatives, making necessary adjustments as required. Collaborating with campus organizations like Diwata-O, which focuses on LGBTQIA+ issues, will ensure that all student voices are heard and considered when developing inclusive policies and practices.

In terms of future research, this study opens several avenues for further exploration. Future research could examine the long-term impact of gender-inclusive facilities on student well-being and academic performance, especially within traditionally non-inclusive educational settings. Additionally, exploring the effectiveness of different engagement strategies in enhancing support for LGBTQIA+ students could provide valuable insights into best practices for inclusivity in higher education. Further studies could also explore the role of educational institutions in shaping societal attitudes toward LGBTQIA+ individuals, contributing to the broader discourse on inclusivity in education.

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