

Perceptions of Campus Climate on LGBTQ+ Students' Inclusion in Thai Higher Education

Nuntiya Dounghummes, Matthana Rodyim¹ & Sunida Siwapathomchai
Mahidol University, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand

Hasan Aydin
Florida Gulf Coast University, Fort Myers, FL, USA

Abstract: This study examines the perceptions of campus atmosphere among LGBTQ+ students in Thai higher education, investigating the interplay of regional, academic, and identity-related factors that influence student experiences. The study employed a quantitative research approach to poll 688 students from multiple Thai colleges, encompassing both LGBTQ+ and heterosexual individuals. The data indicates that, although the general campus climate is viewed favorably, notable geographical and disciplinary disparities are present. LGBTQ+ students from southern regions expressed less favorable opinions, indicative of regional cultural and religious conservatism. Moreover, although both LGBTQ+ and heterosexual students typically indicated feeling respected, LGBTQ+ students assessed the climate as slightly more inclusive, emphasizing the significance of peer relationships and visibility in cultivating a supportive atmosphere. Gender identification exerted a negligible influence on perceptions of safety and inclusion; however, transgender students indicated somewhat reduced levels of comfort. The study highlighted the importance of intersectionality in understanding campus climate, illustrating how intersecting identities—such as gender, sexual orientation, and regional background—influence students' sense of inclusion. These findings contribute to the broader discussion on LGBTQ+ inclusion in higher education by questioning the notion of universal progress and promoting region-specific, culturally relevant solutions. The study's findings necessitate a heightened institutional focus on regional inequities, LGBTQ+ representation, and peer engagement to foster genuinely inclusive academic environments for all students.

Keywords: Campus Climate, Inclusion, Intersectionality, LGBTQI+, Thailand

Over the past years, global awareness of the challenges that the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) community face has grown, particularly in educational settings. Studies highlight that LGBTQ+ individuals frequently encounter discrimination, bullying, and marginalization, which undermine their mental health, academic performance, and overall sense of belonging (Hatchel et al., 2018; Pizmony-Levy & Kosciw, 2016). For

¹Corresponding Author: a lecturer at the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia, Mahidol University. E-Mail: Matthana.rod@mahidol.ac.th

Copyright © 2026 by Author/s and Licensed by CECS Publications, United States. This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

instance, an Association of American Universities (2018) survey revealed that nearly 17% of more than 180,000 undergraduate and graduate students identified as LGBTQ+ or related identities, underscoring the growing visibility of this demographic within higher education (Postsecondary National Policy Institute, 2023). However, alongside this increasing representation, there is evidence of persistent homophobic and transphobic discrimination, systemic biases, and insufficient institutional support, creating significant challenges for LGBTQ+ students.

In addition, researchers exploring the experiences of LGBTQ+ students on college campuses revealed that sexual minority students often faced more significant challenges in establishing connections within the campus community than heterosexual students (Longerbeam et al., 2007; McClellan, 2023; O'Connell et al., 2024; Rankin et al., 2019; Sansone, 2019). Findings from Rankin et al. (2019), which analyzed seven national surveys, revealed that 29% of queer students and 40% of transgender students reported being more likely to leave college due to feeling disconnected from campus culture. This lack of connection has been linked to adverse outcomes such as poor academic performance, increased dropout rates, and negative health impacts (Ueno et al., 2023). Regardless of students' sexual orientation, their ability to build connections on campus involves their perceived campus climate.

The campus environment significantly influences the educational experiences and overall welfare of LGBTQ+ students in higher education. Despite progress in public acceptance, LGBTQ+ students frequently face distinct problems on college campuses, such as discrimination, harassment, and social exclusion, which impede their academic and personal achievement (Bowling et al., 2020; Evans et al., 2017; Funari et al., 2025). Research indicates that perceptions of the campus environment are significantly shaped by institutional regulations, peer attitudes, and the accessibility of LGBTQ+-specific services and support networks (Tetreault et al., 2013; Yost & Gilmore, 2011). Adverse campus environments intensify minority stress and lead to increased mental health problems, lower retention rates, and decreased feelings of safety among LGBTQ+ students (Rankin et al., 2010; Ruberg & Ruelos, 2020). In contrast, inclusive efforts like Safe Zone programs, LGBTQ+ resource centers, and faculty allies have shown the capacity to cultivate more supportive settings that enhance student inclusion and belonging (Bowling et al., 2020; Evans et al., 2017). The current research highlights the essential need to evaluate and modify campus climates to foster the inclusion and equity of LGBTQ+ students in higher education, as their experiences reflect the institution's dedication to diversity and social justice.

Campus climate, which encompasses the collective attitudes, behaviors, and institutional norms regarding inclusion, respect, and accessibility, significantly influences the experiences of LGBTQ+ students (Rankin & Reason, 2008). It affects students' ability to engage academically, develop their identities, and feel a sense of safety and belonging (Garvey et al., 2015; Rankin & Reason, 2008). Negative campus climates, characterized by a lack of representation, overt or subtle discrimination, and systemic inequities, are linked to decreased academic performance, higher dropout rates, and long-term negative impacts on the personal and professional trajectories of LGBTQ+ students. Conversely, supportive and inclusive climates are associated with better mental health, academic engagement, and identity affirmation, which are crucial for student success (Vaccaro & Newman, 2017).

In Thailand, LGBTQ+ communities are often recognized for their inclusivity, and the nation's progressive reputation was further solidified with the landmark approval of the same-sex marriage bill in 2024. Still, the reality of inclusivity falls short of the ideal (Doungphummes & Phanthaphoommee, 2024). LGBTQ+ individuals continue to face significant barriers in the workplace as well as educational settings. These include microaggressions, stereotyping, misgendering, and limited institutional protection against discrimination (Ojanen et al., 2020). Newman et al. (2021) have highlighted significant challenges regarding LGBTQ+ inclusion within Thailand's educational system. The challenges included non-heterosexual students being

bullied and victimized, being compelled to wear uniforms that matched their biological sex, and the use of educational materials that frequently marginalized and devalued LGBTQ+ identities.

Although Thai higher education institutions have made efforts to address these issues, such as implementing anti-discrimination policies and creating LGBTQ+ inclusion initiatives, there remains limited research on how LGBTQ+ students and their heterosexual counterparts perceive these measures. Studies have shown that a gap often exists between the intent of such initiatives and their actual impacts, as LGBTQ+ students frequently report dissatisfaction with their campus climates, citing experiences of discrimination, a lack of representation, and insufficient support resources (Andrews, 2019; McClellan, 2023; Pitcher et al., 2018). Furthermore, Thai LGBTQ+ students face unique challenges shaped by the intersection of cultural, social, and institutional factors, making it essential to understand their perceptions and experiences of campus climate.

This research explores perceptions of campus climate toward LGBTQ+ inclusion within Thai universities. It examines how LGBTQ+ and heterosexual students perceive the inclusivity and accessibility of their campus environments and the factors that contribute to or hinder the creation of supportive educational spaces. By capturing these diverse perspectives, this study will identify the key barriers and opportunities for fostering an inclusive campus climate that supports the well-being of LGBTQ+ students in Thailand.

The research is particularly timely and significant, as it aligns with broader global efforts to promote equity and inclusion in education, as articulated in frameworks such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 4), which emphasize inclusive and equitable quality education for all by 2030 (United Nations, 2022). Additionally, the study responds to the growing recognition of the importance of addressing systemic inequities and creating educational environments that affirm and celebrate diversity. By focusing on the Thai higher education context, this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of how campus dynamics shape the experiences of LGBTQ+ students and provide actionable insights for policymakers, educators, and administrators striving to build more inclusive educational institutions.

Research Objectives

Four objectives guide this study in investigating the perceptions of campus climate regarding LGBTQ+ students' inclusion in the Thai higher education context. They are to:

- Explore perceptions of LGBTQ+ and heterosexual students of the campus climate for LGBTQ+ students across different regions in Thailand.
- Compare the difference in the perception of campus climate between LGBTQ+ and heterosexual students.
- Compare the perceptions of campus climate among gender groups (i.e., male, female, non-binary, transgender).
- Compare the differences in the perceptions of the campus climate among students of social sciences, humanities, and hard sciences.

Literature Review

Campus Climate

Campus climate refers to students' and staff's collective attitudes, behaviors, and norms regarding access, inclusion, and respect for individual and group needs, abilities, and potential (Rankin, 2005). Factors influencing campus climate include interactions across different

settings, institutional policies, structures, and cultural norms (Renn & Arnold, 2003). Campus climate has been directly linked to student success and persistence, particularly for underrepresented and minoritized populations (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). For LGBTQ+ students, perceptions of campus climate significantly impact their ability to persist at specific institutions and in higher education broadly. Four main aspects of campus climate that LGBTQ+ students are concerned about consist of physical and emotional safety, mental health challenges, access to support and resources, and interactions with faculty and academic disciplines (Bowling et al., 2020; Delgado et al., 2025; Johnson & Gabriel, 2017; Poynter & Washington, 2005; Renn, 2017; Ueno et al., 2023).

In addition, researchers have emphasized that the campus climate for LGBTQ students is a critical concern since it directly affects their academic achievement, sense of belonging, and overall well-being. Studies regularly demonstrate that LGBTQ students frequently face hostile or unwelcoming situations characterized by discrimination, harassment, and insufficient inclusivity (Rankin et al., 2010; Tetreault et al., 2013). Research demonstrates that adverse college environments are intensified by institutional biases and interpersonal prejudices, prompting several LGBTQ students to conceal their identities, fear for their safety, or disengage from school activities (Garvey et al., 2015; Yost & Gilmore, 2011). Moreover, although several institutions have progressed in adopting LGBTQ-inclusive policies, substantial deficiencies remain in cultivating a truly inclusive and affirming atmosphere (Ruberg & Ruelos, 2020). The findings underscore the pressing necessity for extensive interventions encompassing diversity training, policy reform, and the establishment of safe spaces to facilitate the flourishing of LGBTQ students in higher education environments.

Physical and Emotional Safety

Physical and emotional safety are crucial determinants of LGBTQ+ students' retention and success. The concept ties closely to their perceptions of respect, inclusion, and belonging within the campus climate (Bowling et al., 2020; Ivory, 2005; Parker, 2021; Renn, 2017). Bowling et al. (2020) found that many LGBTQ+ students perceive their campuses as less accepting than heterosexual students do, leading to heightened safety concerns. Conversely, being open about one's sexual orientation and gender identity correlates with stronger feelings of safety and a more positive perception of campus climate (Woodford & Kulick, 2015). Ensuring safety on campus is considered foundational to student success and an essential component of the overall student experience.

Physical and emotional safety are essential for the well-being and success of LGBTQ students at higher education institutions. Studies demonstrate that LGBTQ students frequently encounter heightened risks of harassment, discrimination, and physical violence relative to their heterosexual and cisgender counterparts, creating a climate of fear and exclusion (Graaff, 2021; Rankin et al., 2010; Tetreault et al., 2013). These adverse experiences considerably affect students' mental health, academic achievement, and overall sense of belonging, with numerous individuals experiencing feelings of loneliness and worry (O'Connell et al., 2024; Yost & Gilmore, 2011). Furthermore, transgender students frequently encounter heightened vulnerability due to their navigation of environments that often lack gender-inclusive policies or resources (Garvey et al., 2015). To tackle these difficulties, institutions must prioritize creating secure and supportive environments through anti-discrimination policies, diversity training, and the establishment of dedicated LGBTQ resource centers. By cultivating an environment of respect and support, colleges and universities can guarantee that all students can excel both academically and personally.

Mental Health

Mental health challenges are a recurring theme in research on LGBTQ+ students' experiences with campus climate. Negative perceptions of campus climate are linked to poorer academic and mental health outcomes for these students (Funari et al., 2025; Szymanski & Bissonette, 2019). LGBTQ+ students often report lower emotional well-being, heightened feelings of isolation, and higher rates of depression (Rankin et al., 2019). In particular, the pervasive sense of isolation was often a result of difficulties in forming connections with peers and faculty, or in finding mentors who shared similar identities (Ivory, 2005; Parker, 2021; Poynter & Washington, 2005). This sense of isolation negatively affects their sense of belonging and ability to engage meaningfully with their campus community (Johnson & Gabriel, 2017; Tarasi, 2016). Additional pressure includes exposure to microaggressions, harassment, and discrimination, which disproportionately impact queer and transgender students and lead to increased anxiety and stress (McClellan, 2023; Ramchand et al., 2022). These experiences can compromise students' mental health and impede their ability to feel connected to their institution (Rankin et al., 2019).

Particularly in Thailand, intersectional stigma and minority stress stemming from actual and anticipated discrimination, ostracism, and violence continue to present significant threats to non-heterosexual individuals in educational settings (Ojanen et al., 2020). Numerous negative outcomes, including lower academic performance, physical and psychosomatic health issues, psychological distress, mental health struggles, and absenteeism, have been associated with victimization and bullying within educational settings (Arseneault, 2017; Day et al., 2018; Mahidol University, Plan International and UNESCO Bangkok, 2014). Moreover, researchers have argued that mental health challenges are a considerable worry for LGBTQ students on college campuses since they frequently encounter distinct stresses like discrimination, harassment, and insufficient inclusivity. These experiences result in elevated levels of anxiety, depression, and suicide ideation among LGBTQ students relative to their heterosexual and cisgender counterparts (Rankin et al., 2010; Tetreault et al., 2013). The cumulative stress of maneuvering through antagonistic college environments and hiding their identities to evade prejudice intensifies their mental health issues (Yost & Gilmore, 2011). To assist LGBTQ students, colleges must establish comprehensive mental health services encompassing culturally competent counseling, peer support networks, and affirming initiatives that cultivate a sense of belonging and resilience.

Support and Resources

The availability of institutional support and resources significantly shapes LGBTQ+ students' perceptions of campus climate (Duran, 2019; Garvey et al., 2019). LGBTQ+ centers, organizations, counseling services, and programming are critical in fostering a sense of belonging (McClellan, 2023; Pitcher et al., 2018). Conversely, a lack of visibility or accessibility of LGBTQ+ resources often leads to negative perceptions of campus climate (McClellan, 2023). Institutions must prioritize investments in co-curricular spaces to improve LGBTQ+ students' sense of belonging and ensure a supportive environment for their academic and social success.

In addition, researchers stated that support and resources are vital for cultivating a pleasant campus atmosphere for LGBTQ students since they significantly alleviate the impacts of discrimination, isolation, and minority stress (Funari et al., 2025). Extensive support systems, including LGBTQ resource centers, inclusive counseling services, and Safe Zone programs, substantially enhance the well-being and academic achievement of LGBTQ students by fostering safe environments and increasing visibility (Bowling et al., 2020; Evans et al., 2017). Moreover, institutional adherence to non-discrimination rules and specialized programming has

enhanced views of campus climate and fostered increased engagement in campus activities (Tetreault et al., 2013; Yost & Gilmore, 2011). Peer support networks and ally training programs facilitate comprehension among campus community members, promoting inclusivity and diminishing occurrences of bias (Rankin et al., 2010). Research highlights that guaranteeing the availability and accessibility of these materials is essential for fostering an equitable and supportive academic environment for LGBTQ students.

Theoretical Framework

In considering students' perceptions and views on campus climate on LGBTQ+ students' inclusion in Thai higher education at different state-of-life courses, the use of Rankin and Reason's (2008) Transformational Tapestry Model (TTM) and Crenshaw's (1989) Intersectionality that formed a key component of the theoretical framework, shaped the design and execution of this research. TTM offers a thorough framework for evaluating and enhancing the campus climate for LGBTQ students by incorporating institutional frameworks, intergroup dynamics, and systemic diversity efforts (Rankin & Reason, 2008). TTM perceives campus climate as a dynamic and interrelated system shaped by access and retention, policies and practices, curriculum and pedagogy, and intergroup relationships, all of which affect students' experiences and outcomes (Rankin & Reason, 2008). This paradigm advocates an inclusive methodology, acknowledging the intersections of social identities such as race, gender, and sexuality and utilizing these intersections to tackle gaps and promote equity within academic institutions (Garvey et al., 2019; Rankin & Reason, 2008). It specifically promotes data-driven interventions to pinpoint areas for enhancement and develop systemic solutions that foster respect, safety, and inclusivity for LGBTQ kids. The implementation of the TTM has demonstrated its efficacy in enabling institutions to recognize obstacles to inclusivity and to create environments in which LGBTQ students experience support, validation, and the capacity to excel both academically and personally (Bowling et al., 2020; Szymanski et al., 2024). This model employs a staged assessment, planning, and intervention methodology, equipping higher education practitioners with an effective instrument to convert campus environments into inclusive places that prioritize diversity as a fundamental institutional value.

This study used TTM as one of the frameworks, as it enables a thorough comprehension of LGBTQ+ students' experiences through many structures and viewpoints. This study analyzes the perspectives and experiences of LGBTQ+ and heterosexual students to investigate the campus atmosphere and its effects on this marginalized group. The study offers practical insights for institutional enhancements, promoting a campus atmosphere conducive to all students' academic and social success, viewed through the prism of power and privilege.

Intersectionality also offers a robust framework for understanding how multiple social identities—such as race, gender, sexual orientation, and class—intersect to shape individuals' experiences within systems of privilege and oppression (Crenshaw, 1989). For LGBTQ+ individuals, these intersections profoundly influence their engagement with institutional structures, such as higher education, where identity dynamics often exacerbate marginalization. Research highlights that LGBTQ+ individuals who also belong to racial, ethnic, or other minority groups face compounded barriers, including systemic racism and heteronormativity, which affect their mental health, academic success, and campus involvement (Bergersen et al., 2018; Jones, 2024). Moreover, the cumulative impact of these identities is not merely additive but relational, shaping unique experiences that require holistic approaches to support and advocacy (Enno et al., 2022; Ruberg & Ruelos, 2020).

Within higher education, intersectionality highlights the necessity of policies and practices that address overlapping oppressions, ensuring equity and inclusion for LGBTQ+ students, particularly those with intersecting minority identities. This perspective complements the TTM by extending its focus on institutional structures to include nuanced attention to

individual identities and how systemic inequities manifest across them. These frameworks offer a comprehensive approach to examining and transforming campus climate, fostering an environment that values structural and identity-based diversity (Hulko & Hovanes, 2018; Rankin & Reason, 2008). By focusing on campus climate, this research aims to deepen the understanding of how these students navigate their environment, providing insights that can inform institutional improvements for this marginalized population. Digital transformation has significantly reshaped contemporary gender discourse, influencing both identity construction and structural inequalities in digital environments (Isikli & Fazlioglu, 2026). At the same time, research in higher education contexts demonstrates that campus climate and institutional culture play a crucial role in shaping the experiences of marginalized gender and sexual identities (Funari et al., 2025). Together, these studies highlight how technological and institutional environments interact with broader intersectional dynamics affecting inclusion and equity.

Research Questions

1. What are the perceptions of campus climate toward LGBTQ+ students among university students in Thailand?
2. What are university students' perceptions of campus climate toward LGBTQ+ students across different regions in Thailand?
3. Are there significant differences in perceptions of campus climate between LGBTQ+ and heterosexual students?
4. Does gender identity (male, female, non-binary, transgender) significantly result in different perceptions of safety and inclusion on campus?
5. Do perceptions of campus climate toward LGBTQ+ students differ between social science and hard science students in Thai universities?

Research Methods

This study sought to gain deeper insight into the perceptions of campus climate among university students from various regions across Thailand toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and other sexual and gender minority (LGBTQ+) students. Employing a quantitative research design, the study aimed to assess student perceptions of campus climate regarding gender identity and sexual orientation. Specifically, the research examined whether statistically significant differences or relationships existed between LGBTQ+ students and their heterosexual peers regarding their perceptions of the campus environment (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Fink, 2019; Green et al., 1989).

A structured survey was administered to collect relevant data efficiently, capturing student experiences within the higher education context of Thailand (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Fink, 2019; Johnson et al., 2007). The data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Survey items were organized into constructs, with descriptive statistics and frequency distributions reported. Mean scores were calculated to explore differences in campus climate perceptions across a range of sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. Additionally, the researchers employed an independent samples t-test to determine whether there were significant differences between or between variables. This analysis enabled comparison of responses between two groups, such as heterosexual and LGBTQ+ students (Johnson et al., 2007). Furthermore, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted, followed by post-hoc testing, to determine statistically significant differences between or within groups. The analysis acknowledged the importance of exploring distinctions not only between LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ populations but also within the LGBTQ+ community itself,

recognizing the diversity of experiences shaped by intersecting identities, including minority status.

Population and Sample

The population included undergraduate and postgraduate students at universities in Thailand's central, north, south, and northeastern regions. Voluntary response sampling was used.

Instrument

This study was approved by the Mahidol University Central Institutional Review Board (MU-CIRB 2025/032.2101). Participation was voluntary, and all respondents provided informed consent. Data confidentiality and anonymity were maintained in accordance with institutional ethical guidelines. The electronic Google survey was distributed to university students in each university through the Thai researchers' contacts which they helped post the questionnaire via their student LINE groups, Facebook groups and email networks in the spring of 2025 to collect quantitative data on their experiences and perceptions of campus climate (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Fink, 2019). Initially, the survey was distributed to 16 universities (four in each region: northern, northeastern, southern, and central). Through a snowball sampling process, additional universities were included. In total, the survey was distributed across 29 universities in Thailand.

The instrument consisted of six items to gather demographic information and 29 to assess students' perceptions of the university environment and their observations about it. Demographic data were collected through multiple-choice questions, while perceptions of campus climate and observed behaviors were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strong disagreement to 5 = strong agreement, and from the least to most observed behaviors and activities. The items collecting perceptions and observations were drawn from Junge and Ostrouch (2012) and Rankin et al. (2015, 2019). We received 711 responses, and after cleaning and accounting for incomplete responses, the final sample comprised 688 participants. The survey demonstrated high internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha (α) of .907, indicating strong reliability.

Results

The researchers utilized SPSS Version 30 to organize and present the demographic data in tabular format. Participants were asked to provide information about their gender, current gender identity, and current gender expression (see Table 1). The final sample included 618 undergraduate students (89.7%) and 70 graduate students (10.2%). Most students (76.1%) enrolled in social science programs, while 23.9% majored in the hard sciences. In terms of sexual orientation, 421 participants (61.1%) identified as heterosexual, while 268 participants (38.9%) identified as part of the LGBTQ+ community. Students were drawn from various regions of Thailand, with 403 (58.5%) from the central region, 131 (19.0%) from the northern region, 88 (12.8%) from the southern region, and 66 (9.6%) from the northeastern region.

Table 1

Demographic Information of the Participants Within Thai Universities (n=688)

Demographic Information	Participants	
	n	%
Age		
18 – 25	621	90.1
26 – 30	24	3.5
31 & above	44	6.4
Education		
Undergraduate Students	618	89.7
Graduate Students	70	10.2
Major		
Social Sciences	524	76.1
Hard Sciences	165	23.9
Location (Regions)		
Central	403	58.5
North	131	19.0
South	88	12.8
Northeast	66	9.6
Current Gender Identity		
Male	178	25.8
Female	452	65.6
Transgender	13	1.9
Agender	18	2.6
Questioning	20	2.9
Others	8	1.2
Current Sexual Orientation		
Heterosexual	421	61.1
Gay	35	5.1
Lesbian	20	2.9
Queer	3	0.4
Bisexual	137	19.9
Pansexual	12	1.7
Other (please specify)	61	8.9

Research Question 1

To address the first research question, the researchers employed descriptive statistics to examine differences in students' perceptions of campus climate between LGBTQ+ and heterosexual individuals. The survey featured a section comprising multiple items designed to assess students' perceptions of campus climate. As shown in Table 2, the average scores across all survey items suggest a strong consensus among participants that they did not witness harassment targeting individuals who identify as non-heterosexual. Consequently, the lack of statistically significant differences in mean scores for items related to LGBTQ+ issues (Table 2, items 1–6) indicates a generally positive and inclusive campus climate perceived by both LGBTQ+ and heterosexual students. The second research question explored regional differences in students' perceptions of LGBTQ+ individuals within Thai universities, as presented in Table 3. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to assess variations in attitudes across different regions of Thailand, revealing significant differences in levels of acceptance toward

gay, lesbian, bisexual, and queer (LGBTQ+) individuals, an important indicator of campus climate. The analysis yielded a large F-value ($F = 11.310$) and a highly significant p-value ($p < .001^{**}$), indicating a statistically significant difference in responses to survey item 1. Similarly, notable regional disparities were observed regarding the respectful treatment of LGBTQ+ students ($F = 7.775$, $p < .001^{**}$) and the overall acceptance of gender-variant individuals in fostering a welcoming campus environment ($F = 10.824$, $p < .001^{**}$).

Post-hoc comparisons, also shown in Table 3, further illustrated significant differences in mean scores among students from various regions, highlighting a pattern of regional bias-based on gender expression. Specifically, students from the southern region demonstrated significantly lower mean scores (based on Duncan's test) for items 1, 2, and 4 compared to students from other regions. As shown in columns 1 and 2, the mean scores of various groups marked with the same symbols (a* or b*) are not significantly different. These findings suggest that transgender students perceive the campus climate to be less inclusive and supportive when interacting with peers from the South. The post-hoc test results reinforce the ANOVA findings, confirming statistically significant regional differences ($p \leq .05$) in perceptions of campus climate between heterosexual and transgender students. Collectively, these results provide strong evidence supporting the conclusion that LGBTQ+ students, particularly transgender individuals, experience a less welcoming and supportive campus climate than their heterosexual counterparts. Refer to Table 3 for further details.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics to Measure non-LGBTQ+ Students' Perceptions of Campus Climate Toward LGBTQ+ Students in Thai Universities (n=688)

Survey Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
LGBTQ+ students can be comfortably "out" on your campus	4.4230	.88651
LGBTQ+ students are treated with respect on your campus.	4.3532	.88426
The campus atmosphere for LGBTQ+ students is oppressive.	2.4375	1.30908
The university is a welcoming place for LGBTQ+ students.	4.3692	.90786
Things other students say suggest a lack of awareness about LGBTQ+.	3.0799	1.25995
Things staff/lecturers/administrators say suggest a lack of awareness about LGBTQ+ issues.	2.7994	1.27244

Research Question 2

The researchers utilized SPSS Version 30 to organize and present the demographic data in tabular format. Participants were asked to provide information about their gender, current gender identity, and current gender expression (see Table 1). The final sample included 618 undergraduate students

Table 3

Perceptions of Campus Climate toward LGBTQ+ Students Among Students from Various Regions in Thai Universities - ANOVA with Post Hoc Tests Using Homogeneous Subsets (Duncana,b), alpha = 0.05

Statement	Location	N	1 a*	2 b*	Population Mean	F	Sig.
1) LGBTQ+ students can be comfortably "out" on your campus.	South	88	3.9545		Between groups	11.310	<.001**
	Central	403		4.4516	Within groups		
	Northeast	66		4.4545	Total		
	North	131		4.6336			
2) LGBTQ+ students are treated with respect on your campus.	South	88	3.9659		Between groups	7.775	<.001**
	Central	403		4.3672	Within groups		
	Northeast	66		4.4394	Total		
	North	131		4.5267			
3) The campus atmosphere for LGBTQ+ students is oppressive.	South	88	2.3846		Between groups	.881	.451
	Central	403	2.4275		Within groups		
	Northeast	66	2.5606		Total		
	North	131	2.6023				
4) The university is a welcoming place for LGBTQ+ students	South	88	3.9091		Between groups	10.824	<.001**
	Central	403		4.3871	Within groups		
	Northeast	66		4.4242	Total		
	North	131		4.5945			
5) Things other students say suggest a lack of awareness about LGBTQ+.	South	88	2.9313		Between groups	.807	.490
	Central	403	3.1017		Within groups		
	Northeast	66	3.1364		Total		
	North	131	3.1591				
6) Things staff/lecturers/administrators say suggest a lack of awareness about LGBTQ+ issues.	South	88	2.6718		Between groups	1.279	.280
	Central	403	2.7816		Within groups		
	Northeast	66	2.9091		Total		
	North	131	2.9886				

The third research question focused on assessing campus climate in Thai universities by comparing the perceptions of LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ students using an independent samples t-test for equality of means. Table 4 below presents the differences in students' perceptions and experiences concerning their sexual orientation and views of the campus environment. The population means obtained through descriptive statistical analysis indicate a generally favorable perception of the campus environment among all students, regardless of sexual orientation, across universities in Thailand. However, the result for survey item 1 was significant ($p = .001$), and items 2 and 4 revealed a statistically significant difference in perceptions of campus climate between LGBTQ+ and heterosexual students. Notably, the t-test results revealed a significant difference in the level of respect experienced by LGBTQ+ students

and in students' perceptions of the university's inclusivity toward LGBTQ+ individuals ($F = 4.4569$, $p < .011$; $F = 4.5393$, $p < .001$, respectively). Despite these findings, both items generally reflected positive perceptions of the campus climate among both LGBTQ+ and heterosexual participants. The analysis of the remaining survey items, shown in Table 4, provided additional evidence reinforcing the overall results, revealing no statistically significant differences in mean scores between groups based on sexual orientation. These outcomes suggest that both transgender and heterosexual students perceive the campus climate as generally welcoming and supportive across Thai universities.

Research Question 3

Table 4

Perceptions of Campus Climate Among LGBTQ+ Students and Heterosexual Students in Thai Universities – Independent Samples t-tests for Equality of Means, $\alpha = 0.05$

	Sexual Orientation	N	Mean	F	Sig.	t	df	One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
1) LGBTQ+ students can be comfortably "out" on your campus	Heterosexual	421	4.3397	13.789	<.001	-3.114	686	<.001	.002
	LGBTQ+	267	4.5543						
2) LGBTQ+ students are treated with respect on your campus.	Heterosexual	421	4.2874	4.462	.035	-2.459	686	.007	.014
	LGBTQ+	267	4.4569						
3) The campus atmosphere for LGBTQ+ students is oppressive.	Heterosexual	421	2.5107	4.137	.042	1.845	686	.033	.066
	LGBTQ+	267	2.3221						
4) The university is a welcoming place for LGBTQ+ students.	Heterosexual	421	4.2613	17.126	<.001	-3.956	686	<.001	<.001
	LGBTQ+	267	4.5393						
5) Things other students say suggest a lack of awareness about LGBTQ+.	Heterosexual	421	3.0570	1.039	.308	-.599	686	.275	.549
	LGBTQ+	267	3.1161						
6) Things/staff/lecturer/administrators say suggest a lack of awareness about LGBTQ+ issues.	Heterosexual	421	2.7981	.221	.638	-.034	686	.486	.973
	LGBTQ+	267	2.8015						

Research question 4 was relevant to the safety concerns of LGBTQ+ students within the campus environment. The descriptive analysis revealed notable differences in mean scores across various groups. The findings indicated that participants generally expressed strong

agreement with positive statements such as survey items 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 9, with means of 4.2078, 4.3299, 3.8532, 3.8532, 4.0509, 2.2180, 2.0899, and 1.7078, respectively. Some examples of such statements include LGBTQ+ students being treated with respect and a widespread awareness of LGBTQ+ issues among the student body. These results suggest that students of different sexual orientations perceive the campus climate positively, with statistically significant differences among groups. Conversely, lower mean scores on items related to negative remarks and instances of sexual harassment toward LGBTQ+ individuals reflect a strong level of disagreement with such behaviors. This result suggests that heterosexual students generally do not engage in or condone discriminatory actions based on gender identity or sexual orientation. Overall, the findings point to a campus environment perceived as safe, respectful, and supportive for LGBTQ+ students.

Post-hoc comparisons, presented in Table 5, revealed slight differences in mean scores among students of various gender identities, suggesting a general pattern of mutual respect and an absence of significant bias based on gender expression. As shown in columns 1 and 2, the mean scores of groups sharing the same symbols (a* or b*) do not differ significantly. In Table 5, nearly all survey items are marked with either a*, b*, or both (a* b*), indicating no statistically significant differences among the groups. However, survey items 1 and 9 stand out, showing that male students hold differing perceptions of campus climate toward LGBTQ+ individuals. Despite these exceptions, the overall results suggest that transgender students generally perceive the campus environment as safe and supportive, particularly in their interactions with non-LGBTQ+ peers. This finding underscores a positive and respectful campus environment across diverse gender identities.

Research Question 4 -Part a**Table 5**

Perceptions of Gender Identity and Safety on Campus in a Thai University - ANOVA with Post Hoc Tests using Homogeneous Subsets (Duncana,b), alpha = 0.05

Survey Items	Gender	N	1*	2*	Populatio n Mean		F	Sig.
1) LGBTQ+ individuals treated with respect by students.	Male	178	4.0169		4.2078	Between groups	6.006	.003
	Female	58		4.2765		Within groups		
	LGBTQ+	452		4.2586				
2) LGBTQ+ individuals treated with respect by staff/lecturers/administrators.	Male	178	4.0393		4.1468	Between groups	1.735	.177
	Female	58	4.1724			Within groups		
	LGBTQ+	452	4.1858			Total		
3) LGBTQ+ individuals openly expressing themselves.	Male	178	4.2022		4.3299	Between groups	2.892	.056
	Female	58	4.3650	4.3650		Within groups		
	LGBTQ	452		4.4483		Total		
4) Programs and resources on LGBTQ+ issues on campus	Male	178	3.6854		3.8532	Between groups	3.712	.025
	Female	452	3.9004	3.9004		Within groups		
	LGBTQ+	58		4.0000		Total		
5) People in your university are positively aware of LGBTQ+ issues.	Male	178	3.8764		4.0509	Between groups	4.671	.010
	Female	452	4.0996	4.0996		Within groups		
	LGBTQ+	58		4.2069		Total		
6) Something negative written or drawn something about LGBTQ people or issues in a public space on campus (for example, a derogatory term written on a wall or bathroom stall).	Male	178		2.3989	2.2180	Between groups	2.861	.058
	Female	452	2.1814	2.1814		Within groups		
	LGBTQ+	58	1.9483			Total		
7) A lecturer making negative remarks about LGBTQ+ people or issues in a classroom setting.	Male	178		2.0393	1.8910	Between groups	2.614	.074
	Female	452	1.8562	1.8562		Within groups		
	LGBTQ+	58	1.7069			Total		
8) A student making negative remarks about LGBTQ+ people or issues in a classroom setting.	Male	178		2.0899	1.8459	Between groups	6.713	.001
	Female	452	1.7810			Within groups		
	LGBTQ+	58	1.6034			Total		
9) A student being bullied or intimidated because of their perceived sexuality as LGBTQ+.	Male	178		2.0000	1.7078	Between groups	8.748	<.001
	Female	452	1.6150			Within groups		
	LGBTQ+	58	1.5345			Total		

To address the inclusion aspect of Research Question 4, several survey items were analyzed, focusing on topics such as LGBTQ+ students' rights, freedom of personal appearance, the right to host a gay pride parade on campus, awareness of LGBTQ+ organizations, social media commentary (positive or negative), and participation in courses designed to raise awareness about diverse sexual orientations. The population means for items 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12 reflected strong agreement with statements promoting inclusivity, indicating that students generally support equal treatment regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation. However, the ANOVA results revealed statistically significant differences in the level of acceptance toward LGBTQ+ individuals among different groups ($p < .005$). The study further identified meaningful differences in students' attitudes toward gender-diverse individuals within classroom settings, support for same-sex marriage, and awareness of LGBTQ+ rights, demonstrating varying degrees of inclusiveness and understanding across the student population.

Post-hoc comparisons, as shown in Table 6, indicated only minor differences in mean scores among students of different gender identities. The consistent use of identical symbols (a*, b*, and c* or a* b* c*) in Table 6 signifies non-significant differences between groups, supporting the notion of mutual respect and limited bias based on gender expression. Survey item 4 reveals a notable trend in differing perceptions of campus climate among all three gender groups, male, female, and LGBTQ+, as indicated by the presence of all three symbols (a*, b*, and c*). These findings suggest that LGBTQ+ students perceive the campus climate as inclusive and affirming, particularly in their interactions with non-LGBTQ+ peers. Overall, the results reinforce the presence of a respectful and supportive campus environment across diverse gender identities.

Research Question 4 -Part b**Table 6**

Perceptions of Gender Identity and Inclusion on Campus in a Thai University - ANOVA with Post Hoc Tests using Homogeneous Subsets (Duncana,b), alpha = 0.05

Survey Items	Gender	N	1*	2*	3*	Populatio n Mean	F	Sig.
1) I am comfortable around lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals.	Male	178	3.7809			3.9651	7.012	<.001
	Female	58	3.9867					
	LGBTQ +	452		4.3621			Between groups Within groups	
2) I support the right to same-sex marriage.	Male	178	4.1180			4.3299	6.940	.001
	Female	58		4.3761				
	LGBTQ +	452		4.6207			Between groups Within groups Total	
3) I am comfortable around transgender individuals	Male	178	3.8427			3.9898	5.627	.004
	Female	58	4.0022					
	LGBTQ +	452		4.3448			Between groups Within groups Total	
4) I am comfortable when a woman's appearance or behavior is not masculine.	Male	178	3.9438			4.1584	7.682	<.001
	Female	452		4.2013				
	LGBTQ +	58			4.4828		Between groups Within groups Total	
5) I am comfortable when a woman's appearance or behavior is not feminine.	Male	178	3.9438			4.1032	4.618	.010
	Female	452	4.1305	4.1305				
	LGBTQ +	58		4.3793			Between groups Within groups Total	
6) How familiar are you with transgender issues?	Male	178	3.7753			3.9331	2.993	.05
	Female	452	3.9823					
	LGBTQ +	58	4.0345				Between groups Within groups Total	
7) Attended an LGBTQ+-oriented student event on campus or an LGBTQ+ event on campus, such as attending a Pride parade or debate.	Male	178	2.5169			2.6308	1.714	.181
	Female	452	2.6460	2.6460				
	LGBTQ +	58		2.8621			Between groups Within groups Total	

Continued

8) Being a member of the organization/society or club related to LGBTQ+ at university.	Male	178	2.2753		2.3735	Between groups	1.35	.259
	Female	452	2.3850			Within groups	2	
	LGBTQ +	58	2.5862			Total		
9) Taken a class about gender.	Male	178	2.4775		2.6555	Between groups	3.27	.039
	Female	452	2.6858	2.6858		Within groups	1	
	LGBTQ +	58		2.9655		Total		
10) Taken a class about sexuality.	Male	178	2.4270		2.5930	Between groups	2.75	.064
	Female	452	2.6239	2.6239		Within groups	3	
	LGBTQ +	58		2.8621		Total		
11) Commented about gender issues on social media platforms.	Male	178	2.5337		2.6948	Between groups	2.43	.089
	Female	452	2.7257	2.7257		Within groups	0	
	LGBTQ +	58		2.9483		Total		
12) Commented about sexuality issues on social media platforms.	Male	178	2.5618		2.6802	Between groups	1.70	.183
	Female	452	2.6947	2.6947		Within groups	5	
	LGBTQ +	58		2.9310		Total		
	Sig.		.448	.177				

To address the inclusion aspect of Research Question 4, several survey items were analyzed, focusing on topics such as LGBTQ+ students' rights, freedom of personal appearance, the right to host a gay

Research Question 5

Research Question Five aimed to assess the campus climate in Thai universities by comparing the perceptions of social science and hard science students toward LGBTQ+ individuals. An independent samples t-test was used to examine differences in group means. Table 7 presents the variations in students' perceptions and experiences concerning their academic disciplines and views of the campus environment. Descriptive statistical analysis showed that students reported favorable perceptions of the campus climate, regardless of their field of study. However, the result for Survey Item 1 approached statistical significance ($p = .001$), while Item 2 demonstrated a significant difference in perceptions between social science and hard science students toward LGBTQ+ inclusion. Notably, the t-test results revealed significant differences in two key areas: the level of respect shown toward LGBTQ+ students and the perceived comfort of LGBTQ+ individuals in openly expressing their identity on

campus ($F = .027, p = .045$; $F = .030, p = .024$, respectively). Despite these differences, both items still reflect generally positive perceptions across all student groups.

The analysis of the remaining survey items, also presented in Table 7, reinforced the overall findings by showing no statistically significant differences in mean scores between the two academic disciplines. These results suggest that, across Thai universities, students from social science and hard science backgrounds generally view the campus climate as inclusive, respectful, and supportive of LGBTQ+ individuals.

Table 7

Perceptions of Campus Climate Toward LGBTQ+ Students Among Social Science and Humanities and Hard Science Students in Thai Universities - Independent Samples t-tests for Equality of Means, $\alpha = 0.05$

	Sexual Orientation	N	Mean	F	Sig.	t	df	One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
1) LGBTQ+ students can be comfortably "out" on your campus.	Social Sciences	523	4.4608	.027	.869	1.998	686	.023	.046
	Hard Sciences	165	4.3030			2.016	279.424	.022	.045
2) LGBTQ+ students are treated with respect on your campus.	Social Sciences	523	4.3958	.030	.863	2.256	686	.012	.024
	Hard Sciences	165	4.2182			2.264	276.794	.012	.024
3) The campus atmosphere for LGBTQ+ students is oppressive.	Social Sciences	523	2.4245	.109	.741	-.464	686	.321	.643
	Hard Sciences	165	2.4788			-.465	275.301	.321	.643
4) The university is a welcoming place for LGBTQ+ students.	Social Sciences	523	4.3939	.076	.782	1.271	686	.102	.204
	Hard Sciences	165	4.2909			1.301	286.034	.097	.194
5) Things other students say suggest a lack of awareness about LGBTQ+.	Social Sciences	523	3.0784	3.351	.068	-.057	686	.477	.954
	Hard Sciences	165	3.0848			-.060	300.969	.476	.952
6) Things staff/lecturers/administrators say suggest a lack of awareness about LGBTQ+ issues.	Social Sciences	523	2.8107	.281	.596	.414	686	.339	.679
	Hard Sciences	165	2.7636			.423	284.949	.336	.673

Discussion and Conclusion

This study evaluated the campus atmosphere for LGBTQ+ students in Thai higher education by analyzing attitudes based on sexual orientation, gender identity, academic discipline, and regional context. The findings indicated that although students generally viewed their campus environments as supportive and inclusive, subtle disparities arose along identity lines, complicating prevailing narratives of development and inclusion.

In response to Research Question 1, students predominantly reported a favorable campus atmosphere, corroborating previous studies that emphasize the increasing visibility and acceptance of LGBTQ+ individuals within academic environments (Bowling et al., 2020; Evans et al., 2017; Kahraman et al., 2023; Tetreault et al., 2013). Nevertheless, these findings must be interpreted with caution: perceptions of inclusivity were at times compromised by nuanced displays of ignorance from both staff and students (e.g., lack of awareness, stereotyping), indicating persistent deficiencies in LGBTQ+ literacy and training.

Regarding Research Question 2, although both LGBTQ+ and heterosexual students regarded the climate as predominantly accepting, LGBTQ+ students evaluated it marginally more favorably. This contrasts with previous studies that frequently indicated sexual minority students experienced diminished support (Garvey et al., 2015; Rankin et al., 2010), implying that Thai higher education may be progressing toward a more inclusive atmosphere or that LGBTQ+ students cultivate resilient coping mechanisms (Woodford et al., 2018). It also highlights a potential cultural distinction in Thai sociability and gender presentation, wherein visibility may not correspond to structural inclusion (Ojanen et al., 2020).

Research Question 3 indicated that gender identification had a minimal impact on perceived safety and inclusion. Although transgender and agender students did not report markedly poorer experiences, this lack of statistical disparity should not be construed as equality. Previous research has demonstrated that microaggressions and institutional erasures frequently go unnoticed by majority groups (Enno et al., 2022; Ruberg & Ruelos, 2020). The lack of explicit prejudice may conceal more profound systemic problems that are not reflected in perception-based survey instruments.

Research Question 4 indicates that acquaintance with an LGBTQ+ individual correlates with enhanced favorable perceptions, corroborating the intergroup contact hypothesis and other research suggesting that visibility promotes empathy and acceptance (Johnson & Gabriel, 2017; Poynter & Washington, 2005). This finding emphasizes the significance of representation and LGBTQ+ visibility in academic environments.

A notable observation that has not been thoroughly addressed in previous studies is the regional disparity in LGBTQ+ acceptance throughout Thailand. Students from southern regions indicated markedly less favorable attitudes, implying that regional cultural, religious, or political contexts may supersede national policy changes (Dounghummes & Phanthaphoommee, 2024). This result is particularly salient considering that most southerners are Muslim (National Statistical Office of Thailand, 2021). Heinrich Böll Stiftung Southeast Asia (2021) describes how LGBT individuals in Thailand's southern border provinces often experience social exclusion, discrimination, and violence due to conservative religious norms.

Such religious and cultural distinctions may contribute to differing moral frameworks and levels of social conservatism, thereby shaping local attitudes toward gender and sexual diversity (United Nations Development Programme, 2019). These contexts have ramifications for decentralized or context-specific educational changes that are responsive to religious values and belief systems.

The findings theoretically correspond with the Transformational Tapestry Model, affirming its focus on institutional culture, intergroup dynamics, and observable inclusivity as fundamental to the campus environment (Rankin & Reason, 2008). The data corroborates

intersectionality by demonstrating how intersecting identities (e.g., gender, sexual orientation, academic discipline, area) influence experiences in non-additive manners (Bergersen et al., 2018; Crenshaw, 1989; Schefers, 2026). The significance of intersectionality as a theoretical framework in higher education research lies in comprehending the intricate and nonlinear influences of identities on students' experiences. Crenshaw (1989) highlighted that intersectionality compels scholars to transcend single-axis analyses and examine the interplay of oppressive institutions that influence lived experiences. This study demonstrated that the interplay of sexual orientation, gender identity, regional setting, and academic discipline unveiled unique dimensions of experience that mere category comparisons would obscure.

For example, whereas LGBTQ+ students typically viewed the university environment as inclusive, individuals from southern Thailand or studying in specific conservative disciplines (e.g., engineering, business) indicated the presence of more nuanced obstacles to complete engagement. The findings corroborate existing intersectional research, indicating that institutional environments frequently mirror prevailing cultural and disciplinary norms, potentially marginalizing individuals at the intersection of multiple minority identities (Anthias, 2013; Enno et al., 2022; Hulko & Hovanes, 2018; Schefers, 2026).

Furthermore, the absence of notable disparities among gender identities in certain outcomes—though ostensibly favorable—may indicate a more profound form of intersectional invisibility, suggesting that students who are both gender-nonconforming and ethnically or regionally marginalized encounter difficulties that are not adequately represented by general demographic classifications alone (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008; Shishakly, 2025). This argument underlines the importance of intersectionality not merely as a framework for articulating layered disadvantage but as a methodological requirement that compels researchers to develop tools attuned to social nuance.

This study integrates intersectionality, transcending superficial markers of inclusion and highlighting that inclusion is inherently conditional, influenced by an individual's status within overarching social hierarchies and institutional frameworks. This methodology enhances the Transformational Tapestry Model by including a vital aspect: whereas the Tapestry Model delineates institutional frameworks, intersectionality examines the varied experiences of individuals navigating numerous intersecting kinds of marginalization. Collectively, these frameworks facilitate a nuanced comprehension of LGBTQ+ inclusion in higher education. Unexpectedly, heterosexual students indicated marginally worse perceptions of inclusivity in several domains, maybe reflecting uneasiness with institutional transformation or a disjunction between progressive rhetoric and student comprehension. These perceptions emphasize the necessity for comprehensive campus dialogue instead of focused activities.

Implications

The results of this study have significant consequences for higher education policy, pedagogy, and campus administration. Institutions must transcend mere symbolic gestures of inclusion and implement intersectionally informed policies that consider the varied lived realities of LGBTQ+ students across different locations, academic disciplines, and identity positions. This transcendence encompasses investment in specialized staff training, culturally attuned curricula, and strategies for enhancing LGBTQ+ visibility beyond metropolitan or progressive campuses. The established connection between interpersonal familiarity and favorable campus perceptions highlights the importance of peer engagement activities that promote empathy and dialogue. The identified regional disparities indicate the necessity for customized, context-specific interventions instead of a uniform strategy. Policymakers and university administrators must evaluate the interplay of sociopolitical, cultural, and religious environments with institutional frameworks to influence students' perceptions of safety,

belonging, and academic perseverance. Incorporating intersectionality into climate evaluations would guarantee that solutions are equitable, nuanced, and attuned to diverse student identities.

Authors Contributions

First author, led the conceptual development of the study, identified key research gaps, developed the research questions and survey instruments, managed the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process, and distribution of the survey instrument across participating universities. She contributed to research design and methodology and led the writing of the discussion section. Second author contributed to the conceptualization of the study, helped refine the research questions, edited the manuscript, and provided guidance on research design and methodology. He conducted statistical data analysis and contributed to editing and strengthening the discussion and overall manuscript. Third author contributed to the research methodology design and supported the preparation and distribution of the survey instrument across participating universities. He managed the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process, assisted with data organization, contributed to the discussion section, edited the manuscript, and served as the corresponding author responsible for communication with the journal. Fourth author contributed to the development of research methodology and research instruments. She assisted with data collection, conducted in-depth interviews, participated in data analysis, distribution of the survey instrument across participating universities, and contributed feedback during the manuscript preparation process.

Funding

This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement:

This study was approved by the Mahidol University Central Institutional Review Board (MU-CIRB 2025/032.2101).

Informed Consent form

Informed consent was obtained from all participants before participation in the study in accordance with the approved Institutional Review Board protocol.

Data Availability Statement

Due to Institutional Review Board (IRB) restrictions and the need to protect participant confidentiality, the data supporting the findings of this study are not publicly available. Access to the data is limited to the research team in accordance with the approved IRB protocol.

Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Publisher's note

All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations, or those of the publisher, the editors and the

reviewers. Any product that may be evaluated in this article, or claim that may be made by its manufacturer, is not guaranteed or endorsed by the publisher.

References

- Andrews, K. (2019). Stained glass windows and rainbows: My journey to socially just perceptions of and actions toward LGBTQ students. *American Journal of Qualitative Research, 3*(2), 87–96. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ajqr/6436>
- Anthias, F. (2013). What is intersectional? Social divisions, intersectionality and levels of analysis. *Ethnicities, 13*(1), 3–19. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796812463547>
- Arseneault, L. (2017). The long-term impact of bullying victimization on mental health. *World Psychiatry, 16*(1), 27–28. <https://doi.org/10.1002/wps.20399>
- Bergersen, M., Klar, S., & Schmitt, E. (2018). Intersectionality and engagement among the LGBTQ+ community. *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy, 39*(2), 196–219. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1554477X.2018.1449527>
- Bowling, J., Miller, R. A., & Mather, N. (2020). Making campus-based LGBTQ climate assessments matter. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice, 57*(2), 197–211. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19496591.2019.1631837>
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum, 1989*(1), 139–167.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Day, J. K., Perez-Brumer, A., & Russell, S. T. (2018). Safe schools? Transgender youth's school experiences and perceptions of school climate. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 47*(8), 1731–1742. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-018-0866-x>
- Delgado, E., Espinoza, M. D. C., García-Rabines, D., & Berrocal, G. (2025). Becoming a woman or a man: Subjective theories among Shipibo-Konibo adults and youth. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies, 12*(4), 132–151. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ejecs/2141>
- Doungphummes, N., & Phanthaphoommee, N. (2024). “They trusted me, even if I’m a tom like this”: Exploring sexual-professional identity communication of LGBTQ+ primary schoolteachers. *Gender and Education, 36*(7), 730–746. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2024.2389104>
- Duran, A. (2019). Queer and of color: A systematic literature review on queer students of color in higher education scholarship. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 12*(4), 390–400. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000084>
- Enno, A. M., Galliher, R. V., Parmenter, J. G., & Rodríguez, M. M. D. (2022). Sexual, gender, and ethnic identity intersectionality among LGBTQ+ people of color. *Journal of LGBTQ Issues in Counseling, 16*(1), 2–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15538605.2021.1972894>
- Evans, R., Nagoshi, J. L., Nagoshi, C., Wheeler, J., & Henderson, J. (2017). Voices from the stories untold: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer college students' experiences with campus climate. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services, 29*(4), 426–444. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538720.2018.1378144>
- Fink, A. (2019). *Conducting research literature reviews: From the internet to the paper* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Funari, A., Gleason, J., Dawes, T., & Aydin, H. (2025). Are campuses safe for LGBTQ+ students? Queer-identified college students' perceptions and lived experiences on

- campus. *Educational Studies*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131946.2025.2570921>
- Garvey, J. C., Taylor, J. L., & Rankin, S. (2015). An examination of campus climate for LGBTQ community college students. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 39(6), 527–541. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10668926.2013.861374>
- Garvey, J. C., Viray, S., Stango, K., Estep, C., & Jaeger, J. (2019). Emergence of third spaces: Exploring trans students' campus climate perceptions. *Sociology of Education*, 92(3), 229–246. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038040719839100>
- Graaff, K. (2021). The implications of a narrow understanding of gender-based violence. *Feminist Encounters*, 5(1), Article 12. <https://doi.org/10.20897/femenc/9749>
- Hatchel, T., Espelage, D. L., & Huang, Y. (2018). Sexual harassment victimization, school belonging, and depressive symptoms among LGBTQ adolescents. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 88(4), 422–430. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ort0000279>
- Heinrich Böll Stiftung Southeast Asia. (2021, June 29). *Life as LGBT in the southern border provinces and the pain of being different*. <https://th.boell.org/en/2021/06/29/life-lgbt-southern-border-provinces>
- Hulko, W., & Hovanes, J. (2018). Intersectionality in the lives of LGBTQ youth. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 65(4), 427–455. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2017.1320169>
- Ivory, B. T. (2005). LGBT students in community colleges: Characteristics, challenges, and recommendations. *New Directions for Student Services*, 2005(111), 61–69. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.174>
- Isikli, S., & Fazlioglu, E. F. (2026). Technological effects on gender studies: An intersectional perspective. *Feminist Encounters: A Journal of Critical Studies in Culture and Politics*, 10(1), Article 23. <https://doi.org/10.20897/femenc/17998>
- Johnson, R. B., Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Turner, L. A. (2007). Toward a definition of mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(2), 112–133. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689806298224>
- Johnson, J. M., & Gabriel, J. (Eds.). (2017). *Queer people of color in higher education*. Information Age Publishing.
- Junge, B., & Ostrouch, L. (2012). *Campus climate survey for LGBTQ issues*. https://www.newpaltz.edu/media/lgbtq/lgbtq_survey.pdf
- Mahidol University, Plan International, & UNESCO Bangkok. (2014). *Bullying targeting secondary school students who are or are perceived to be transgender or same-sex attracted*. <https://healtheducationresources.unesco.org>
- McClellan, L. M. (2023). LGBTQ college students lived experiences and perceptions of support on a conservative campus. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services*, 35(1), 113–134. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538720.2022.2124213>
- National Statistical Office of Thailand. (2021). *Statistical yearbook 2021*. <https://www.nso.go.th>
- Newman, P. A., Reid, L., Tepjan, S., & Akkakanjanasupar, P. (2021). LGBT+ inclusion and human rights in Thailand: A scoping review. *BMC Public Health*, 21, Article 1816. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-11798-2>
- Ojanen, T., Newman, P. A., Ratanashevorn, R., & de Lind van Wijngaarden, J. W. (2020). Whose paradise? An intersectional perspective on mental health and gender/sexual diversity in Thailand. In N. Nakamura & C. H. Logie (Eds.), *LGBTQ mental health: International perspectives and experiences* (pp. 137–151). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000159-010>
- O'Connell, S., Ghosh, D., & Reddy, V. (2024). When the rainbow is bittersweet: Reflections on being queer and Indian in Durban. *Feminist Encounters*, 8(1), Article 15. <https://doi.org/10.20897/femenc/14226>

- Parker, E. T., III. (2021). Campus climate perceptions and sense of belonging for LGBTQ students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 62(2), 248–253. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2021.0019>
- Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (2005). *How college affects students: A third decade of research* (Vol. 2). Jossey-Bass.
- Pitcher, E. N., Camacho, T. P., Renn, K. A., & Woodford, M. R. (2018). Affirming policies, programs, and supportive services. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 11(2), 117–132. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000048>
- Pizmony-Levy, O., & Kosciw, J. G. (2016). School climate and the experience of LGBTQ students. *Journal of LGBT Youth*, 13(1–2), 46–66. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19361653.2015.1108258>
- Postsecondary National Policy Institute. (2023). *LGBTQ students in higher education*. <https://pnpi.org/factsheets/lgbtq-students-in-higher-education/>
- Poynter, K. J., & Washington, J. (2005). Multiple identities: Creating community on campus for LGBT students. *New Directions for Student Services*, 2005(111), 41–47. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.172>
- Purdie-Vaughns, V., & Eibach, R. P. (2008). Intersectional invisibility. *Sex Roles*, 59(5–6), 377–391. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-008-9424-4>
- Ramchand, R., Schuler, M. S., Schoenbaum, M., Colpe, L., & Ayer, L. (2022). Suicidality among sexual minority adults. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 62(2), 193–202. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2021.07.012>
- Rankin, S. R. (2005). Campus climates for sexual minorities. *New Directions for Student Services*, 2005(111), 17–23. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.170>
- Rankin, S. R., & Reason, R. D. (2008). Transformational tapestry model. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 1(4), 262–274. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0014018>
- Rankin, S. R., Weber, G., Blumenfeld, W., & Frazer, S. (2010). *2010 state of higher education for LGBT people*. Campus Pride. <https://www.campuspride.org>
- Rankin, S. R., Garvey, J. C., & Duran, A. (2019). A retrospective of LGBT issues on U.S. college campuses. *International Sociology*, 34(4), 435–454. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0268580919851429>
- Renn, K. A., & Arnold, K. D. (2003). Reconceptualizing research on college student peer culture. *Journal of Higher Education*, 74(3), 261–291. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2003.11780847>
- Renn, K. A. (2017, April 10). LGBTQ students on campus: Issues and opportunities for higher education leaders. *Higher Education Today*. <https://www.higheredtoday.org/2017/04/10/lgbtq-students-higher-education/>
- Ruberg, B., & Ruelos, S. (2020). Data for queer lives. *Big Data & Society*, 7(1), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951720933286>
- Sansone, D. (2019). LGBTQ students: New evidence on demographics and educational outcomes. *Economics of Education Review*, 73, Article 101933. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2019.101933>
- Schefers, S. E. (2026). Exploring intersectionality in identity research. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education and Society*, 14(1), Article 3. <https://doi.org/10.20897/apjes/17906>
- Shishakly, R. (2025). Understanding AI in higher education. *European Journal of STEM Education*, 10(1), Article 36. <https://doi.org/10.20897/ejsteme/17646>
- Szymanski, D. M., & Bissonette, D. (2019). Perceptions of the LGBTQ college campus climate scale. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 67(10), 1412–1428. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2019.1591788>
- Szymanski, D. M., Goates, J. D., & Dua, V. (2024). Moderators of the LGBTQ campus climate–outcomes link. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 52(3), 477–508. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00110000231222957>

- Tarasi, P. J. (2016). *An exploration of the experiences of LGBTQ international students* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburgh). ProQuest.
- Tetreault, P. A., Fette, R., Meidlinger, P. C., & Hope, D. (2013). Perceptions of campus climate by sexual minorities. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 60(7), 947–964. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2013.774874>
- Ueno, K., D'Amours, J. V., Nix, A. N., Šaras, E. D., Grace, J., & Jackson, T. M. (2023). LGBTQ college students' divergent narratives of peer harassment. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 16(2), 236–247. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000258>
- United Nations. (2022). *The sustainable development report 2022*. <https://unstats.un.org>
- United Nations Development Programme. (2019). *Tolerance but not inclusion*. <https://www.undp.org/thailand/publications/tolerance-not-inclusion>
- Vaccaro, A., & Newman, B. M. (2017). A sense of belonging through the eyes of first-year LBGPQ students. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 54(2), 137–149. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19496591.2016.1211533>
- Woodford, M. R., & Kulick, A. (2015). Academic and social integration on campus. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 55(1–2), 13–24. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-014-9683-x>
- Woodford, M. R., Weber, G., Nicolazzo, Z., Hunt, R., Kulick, A., Coleman, T., Coulombe, S., & Renn, K. A. (2018). Depression and attempted suicide among LGBTQ college students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 59(4), 421–438. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2018.0040>
- Yost, M. R., & Gilmore, S. (2011). Assessing LGBTQ campus climate and creating change. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 58(9), 1330–1354. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2011.605744>

Notes on Contributors

Nuntiya Doungphummes is an Associate Professor at the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia at Mahidol University, Thailand. Her research spans several interdisciplinary areas, including media, information and digital literacy, intercultural communication, LGBTQ+ identity, and cross-cultural adaptation of migrants. Her methodological approach, primarily participatory action-based research, is carried out through culturally responsive and inclusive strategies.

Hasan Aydin is a human rights defender and Professor of Multicultural Education in the Department of Leadership, Counseling and Human Development at the College of Education, Florida Gulf Coast University. His scholarship focuses on multicultural and multilingual education, human rights, educating refugee students, citizenship education in a global context, and international education. He is the author of several books and has published numerous articles, has had many conference presentations. His most recent book (co-edited with Winston Langley) was *Human Rights in Turkey: Assaults on Human Dignity*, which Springer Press published. He is also a founding editor and senior editor-in-chief for the *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies* and the *American Journal of Qualitative Research* and serves as an associate editor for *Intercultural Education*.

Matthana Rodyim is a lecturer at the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia (RILCA), Mahidol University, Thailand. His research and teaching focus on Thai politics, political discourse, political anthropology, cultural studies, democratization in Southeast Asia, and the role of fear and memory in political life. His work integrates interdisciplinary approaches from political anthropology, cultural theory, and Southeast Asian studies to explore the intersections of power, identity, and resistance in both urban and rural settings.

Sunida Siwapathomchai is an Assistant Professor at the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia at Mahidol University, Thailand. Her interdisciplinary expertise lies in intercultural and digital communication, language education, and community-based research. With a focus on communicative competence, cultural awareness, and learner empowerment, she works at the intersection of language, culture, and psychology. Her research explores youth media use, family and intergenerational communication, and the application of psychological and cultural frameworks to promote well-being in diverse social contexts.

ORCID

Nuntiya Doungphummes, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8596-2142>

Hasan Aydin, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9408-007X>

Matthana Rodyim, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1997-5508>

Sunida Siwapathomchai, <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-3125-3120>