



The 2018 Dutch National School Climate Survey Report

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Methods and Sample

Participants completed an online survey about their experiences in school during the 2017-2018 school year, including hearing biased remarks, feeling safe, being harassed, and feeling comfortable at school. They were also asked about their academic experiences, attitudes about school, involvement in school, and availability of supportive school resources. Youth were eligible to participate in the survey if they were between the ages of 13 and 20, attended a primary or secondary school in the Netherlands during the 2017-2018 school year, and identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or a sexual orientation other than heterosexual (e.g., pansexual, questioning) or described themselves as transgender or as having another gender identity that is not cisgender (“cisgender” describes a person whose gender identity is aligned with the sex/gender they were assigned at birth). Data collection occurred between July-August 2018 and ended before the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year.

The school climate survey was conducted online. The survey instrument was modeled after GLSEN’s 2015 National School Climate Survey, and was appropriated and translated by Teachers College, Columbia University, and COC into the Dutch context. In order to obtain a large and diverse sample of LGBT youth in the Netherlands, we used advertising and promotion on social networking sites, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

The final sample consisted of a total of 1,065 students between the ages of 13 and 20. Approximately three out of four students (72.9%) lived in a city or city edge. Table 1.1 presents participants’ demographic characteristics, and Table 1.2 shows the characteristics of the schools attended by participants. Participants had an average age of 16.3 years old (SD=1.3). Two-thirds of the sample (65.4%) are female, about one-fourth is male (23.3%), with the rest choosing other gender identities. Two-fifths of the sample identifies as bisexual (40.8%); and about one fifth of the sample identifies as gay or lesbian (18.0% and 22.0% respectively). The rest identifies as pansexual, questioning, or queer (16.3%, 19.9%, and 15.0% respectively).

A vast majority of students in the sample have “came out” or shared their sexual orientation with at least one person (87.9%). About one in six students came out to at least one parent (59.5%). Figure 0.1 presents participant’s level of outness to students and school staff. Slightly more than two-fifths (43.3%) came out to most or all students in their school. However, only one-quarter of students (25.2%) came out to most or all school staff. Importantly, one-third of transgender students are out about being transgender (32.3%).

PART ONE: EXPERIENCES OF HOSTILE SCHOOL CLIMATE FOR LGBT STUDENTS

School Safety

Overall Safety at School

For LGBT youth, school can be an unsafe place for a variety of reasons. Students in our survey were asked whether they ever felt unsafe at school during the past year because of a personal characteristic, including: body size or weight, sexual orientation, gender, and gender expression (i.e., how traditionally “masculine” or “feminine” they were in appearance or behavior).¹ As shown in Figure 1.1, LGBT students most commonly felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation, and body size or weight:

- One-third (34.4%) reported feeling unsafe at school in the past year because of their sexual orientation.
- One fourth (25.2%) of LGBT students felt unsafe because of how their body size or weight.

Importantly, two-fifths (40.0%) of students said that they “do not feel unsafe at school”.

When students feel unsafe or uncomfortable in school they may choose to avoid the particular areas or activities where they feel most unwelcome or may feel that they need to avoid attending school altogether. Thus, a hostile school climate can impact an LGBT student’s ability to fully engage and participate with the school community. We asked LGBT students if there were particular spaces at school that they avoided specifically because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable. As shown in Figure 1.2, LGBT students most commonly avoided locker rooms and physical education/gym class, with about three in ten students avoiding each of these spaces because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable (28.7% and 27.3%, respectively). Over one in five (22.0%) LGBT students said that they avoided cafeteria or lunch room, and about one in five (18.8%) LGBT students said that they avoided the bathrooms.

Feeling unsafe uncomfortable at school can negatively affect the ability of students to succeed academically, particularly if it results in avoiding school or classes. When asked about absenteeism, nearly one in four LGBT students reported not attending school at least one day in the last month (22.1%) because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable (see Figure 1.3).

Exposure to Biased Language

Homophobic, sexist, racist, and other types of biased language can create a hostile school environment for all students. We asked LGBT students about their experiences with hearing anti-LGBT and other types of biased remarks while at school. Because homophobic remarks and negative remarks about gender expression are specifically relevant to LGBT students, we asked students in our survey additional questions about school staff’s use of and responses to hearing these types of anti-LGBT language.

Homophobic Remarks. We asked students about the frequency of hearing homophobic remarks (such as “that’s so gay” or gay/homo in a negative manner). As shown in Figure 1.4, majority (70.9%) of LGBT students reported hearing other students make derogatory remarks often or frequently in school. Further, we asked students who heard homophobic remarks in school how pervasive this behavior was among the student population. As shown in Figure 1.5, four fifths (79.9%) of the respondents said that these types of remarks were made by “some” or “most” students. In addition, almost half (46.4%) of LGBT students report they heard homophobic remarks from teachers or staff (see Figure 1.6). One in ten students (12.5%) reported that they heard homophobic remarks from teachers and school staff “sometimes,” “often,” or “frequently.”

¹ The share of students who feel unsafe because of gender expression is much higher (40.9%) among students who are transgender, intersex, non-binary, or other.

Hearing pejorative remarks in school can have negative effects on students. We asked the LGBT students in our survey how bothered or distressed they were by these remarks - and more than half (57.6%) reported that they were bothered "pretty much" or "extremely" (see Figure 1.7).

Students who reported hearing homophobic remarks at school were asked how often teachers or other school staff intervened if they were present. One sixth (15.8%) reported that these school personnel intervened "most of the time" or "always" when homophobic remarks were made in their presence, and nearly half (47.1%) reported that staff never intervened when present (see Figure 1.8).

One would expect teachers and school staff to bear the responsibility for addressing problems of biased language in school. However, students may also intervene when hearing biased language, especially given that school personnel are often not present during such times. Thus, other students' willingness to intervene when hearing this language may be another important indicator of school climate. However, few students reported that their peers intervened "always" or "most of the time" when hearing homophobic remarks (6.9%), and six in ten students (62.9%) said that their peers never intervened (see Figure 1.8).

The majority of LGBT students report rampant use of homophobic remarks in their schools, and this behavior contributes to a hostile learning environment for this population. Infrequent intervention by school authorities when hearing biased language in school may send a message to students that homophobic language is tolerated. Furthermore, school staff may themselves be modeling poor behavior and legitimizing the use of homophobic language in that most students heard school staff make homophobic remarks at some time.

Negative Remarks about Gender Expression. Society often imposes norms for what is considered appropriate expression of one's gender. Those who express themselves in a manner considered to be atypical may experience criticism, harassment, and sometimes violence. Thus, we asked students two separate questions about hearing comments related to a student's gender expression — one question asked how often they heard remarks about someone not acting "masculine" enough, and another question asked how often they heard comments about someone not acting "feminine" enough.

Findings from this survey demonstrate that negative remarks about someone's gender expression were pervasive in schools. As shown in Figure 1.9, LGBT students reported hearing either type of remark about someone's gender expression often or frequently at school (10.4% and 11.6%, respectively). Remarks about students not acting "feminine" were as common as remarks about students not acting "masculine" enough. When asked how much of the student population made these types of remarks, over one-fourths (27.3%) of students reported that most or some of their peers made negative remarks about someone's gender expression (see Figure 1.10). In addition, 6.0% of LGBT students reported that they heard these types of remarks from teachers and other school staff "Sometimes", "Often", or "Frequently" (see Figure 1.11).

Negative Remarks about Transgender People. Similar to negative comments about gender expression, people may make negative comments about transgender people because they can pose a challenge to "traditional" ideas about gender. Therefore, we asked students about how often they heard negative remarks specifically about transgender people. About a third (29.0%) of LGBT students in our survey reported hearing these comments frequently or often (see Figure 1.12). The pervasiveness of anti-LGBT remarks is a concerning contribution to hostile school climates for all LGBT students. Any negative remark about sexual orientation, gender, or gender expression may signal to LGBT students that they are unwelcome in their school communities, even if a specific negative comment is not directly aligned to the individual sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression of the LGBT student who hears it. For example, negative comments about gender expression may disparage transgender or LGB people, even if transgender-specific or homophobic slurs are not used.

Other Types of Biased Remarks at School. In addition to hearing anti-LGBT remarks at school, hearing other types of biased language is an important indicator of school climate for LGBT students. We asked students about their experiences hearing racist or xenophobic remarks, and sexist remarks (such as someone being called "bitch" or "hoer"). As shown in Figure 1.12, the LGBT students in the survey

reported that these types of comments were very common in their schools, although some were more prevalent than others. A majority of LGBT students heard sexist remarks and biased remarks on people's physical ability in their school "often" or "frequently" (72.0% and 57.0%, respectively). About half of LGBT students heard racist and body size/weight remarks in their school "often" or "frequently" (47.0% and 45.0%, respectively).

Experiences of Harassment and Assault at School

Hearing anti-LGBT remarks in school can contribute to feeling unsafe at school and create a negative learning environment. However, direct experiences with harassment and assault may have even more serious consequences on the lives of these students. We asked survey participants how often ("never," "rarely," "sometimes," "often," or "frequently") they had been verbally harassed, physically harassed, or physically assaulted at school during the past year specifically because of a personal characteristic, including sexual orientation, gender, gender expression (e.g., not acting "masculine" or "feminine" enough), and ethnic origin.

Verbal Harassment

Students in our survey were asked how often in the past year they had been verbally harassed (e.g., being called names or threatened) at school specifically because of personal characteristics. Approximately two-thirds (62.3%) reported being verbally harassed at some point in the past year based on any of these personal characteristics. LGBT students most commonly reported experiencing verbal harassment at school because of their sexual orientation or how they expressed their gender (see Figure 1.13):

- More than two-fifths of LGBT students (43.6%) had been verbally harassed because of their sexual orientation.
- More than one-fourth of LGBT students (27.5%) were verbally harassed at school because of their gender expression.

Physical Harassment

With regard to physical harassment, one in four (23.4%) LGBT students had been physically harassed (e.g., shoved or pushed) at some point at school during the past year based on any personal characteristic. Their experiences of physical harassment followed a pattern similar to verbal harassment — students most commonly reported being physically harassed at school because of their sexual orientation, or gender expression (see Figure 1.14):

- 13.4% of LGBT students had been physically harassed at school because of their sexual orientation
- 7.7% had been physically harassed at school because of their gender expression, and 5.2% had been physically harassed at school because of their gender

Although reported as rarely, many LGBT students were physically harassed in school in the past year because of their disability (5.4%) or gender (5.2%).

Physical Assault

LGBT students were less likely to report experiencing physical assault (e.g., punched, kicked, or injured with a weapon) at school than verbal or physical harassment, which is not surprising given the more severe nature of assault. Nonetheless, 14.0% of LGBT students in our survey were assaulted at school during the past year for any personal characteristic (see Figure 1.15):

- 6.4% of LGBT students were assaulted at school because of their sexual orientation;
- 3.4% were assaulted at school because of their disability
- 2.7% were assaulted at school because of their gender expression

Physical assault based on sexual orientation more common than physical assault based on other personal characteristics.

Experiences of Other Types of Harassment and Negative Events

LGBT students may be harassed or experience other negative events at school for reasons that are not clearly related to sexual orientation, gender expression, or another personal characteristic. In our survey, we also asked students how often they experienced these other types of events in the past year, such as being sexually harassed or deliberately excluded by their peers.

Relational Aggression. Research on school-based bullying and harassment often focuses on physical or overt acts of aggressive behavior; however, it is also important to examine relational forms of aggression that can damage peer relationships, such as spreading rumors or excluding students from peer activities. We asked participants how often they experience two common forms of relational aggression: being purposefully excluded by peers and being the target of mean rumors or lies. As illustrated in Figure 1.16, the vast majority of LGBT students (72.8%) in our survey reported that they had felt deliberately excluded or “left out” by other students, and nearly one fourth (23.9%) experienced this often or frequently. Two-thirds of students (66.8%) had mean rumors or lies told about them at school, and about one in five (18.7%) experienced this often or frequently.

Sexual Harassment. Harassment experienced by LGBT students in school can often be sexual in nature. Survey participants were asked how often they had experienced sexual harassment at school, such as unwanted touching or sexual remarks directed at them. As shown in Figure 1.16, about half (44.9%) of LGBT students had been sexually harassed at school, and about 4% report that such events occurred often or frequently.

Electronic Harassment or “Cyberbullying.” Electronic harassment (often called “cyberbullying”) is using an electronic medium, such as a mobile phone or Internet communications, to threaten or harm others. In recent years there has been much attention given to this type of harassment, as access to the Internet, mobile phones, and other electronic forms of communication has increased for many youth. We asked students in our survey how often they were harassed or threatened by students at their school via electronic mediums (telephone, internet, sms, e-mails, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or Snapchat?), nearly a third (28.7%) of LGBT students reported experiencing this type of harassment in the past year; 4.7% had experienced it often or frequently (see also Figure 1.16).

Property Theft or Damage at School. Having one’s personal property damaged or stolen is yet another dimension of a hostile school climate for students. About one in five (21.6%) LGBT students reported that their property had been stolen or purposefully damaged by other students at school in the past year (see Figure 1.16).

Reporting of School-Based Harassment and Assault

When harassment and assault occurs in school, we expect the teachers and school personnel to address the problems effectively. However, students may not always feel comfortable reporting these events to staff. In our survey, we asked those students who had experienced harassment or assault in the past school year how often they had reported the incidents to school staff. As shown in Figure 1.17, six in ten of these students reported incidents to staff (61.8%), and about one-fourth of students indicated that they regularly reported incidents of harassment or assault (25.9% reporting “most of the time” or “always” to staff). Students in our survey who said that they had reported incidents of victimization to school staff were also asked how effective staff members were in addressing the problem. As shown in Figure 1.18, less than two-fifths (37.8%) of students believed that staff responded effectively (“Somewhat Effective” or “Very Effective”) to their reports of victimization.

Given that family members may be able to advocate on behalf of the student with school personnel, we also asked students if they reported harassment or assault to a family member (i.e., to their parent or guardian or to another family member), and only half of the students (48.6%) said that they had ever told a family member (see also Figure 1.17). Students who had reported incidents to a family member were asked how often a family member had talked to school staff about the incident, and more than one-third of students (37.4%) said that the family member never addressed the issue with school staff (see Figure 1.19).

Hostile School Climate and Educational Outcomes

Although all students deserve equal access to education, LGBT students can face a variety of obstacles to academic success and opportunity. Given the hostile climates encountered by LGBT students, it is understandable that some students could have poorer outcomes in school. In this section, we examine in closer detail the educational experiences of LGBT students, particularly how they might be affected by hostile school climate.

Educational Aspirations and Future Plans

In order to examine the relationship between school climate and educational outcomes, we asked students about their aspirations with regard to post-secondary education, including plans to graduate versus dropping out of school, as well as their highest level of expected educational attainment and intended field of study beyond high school.

Educational Aspirations. When asked about their aspirations with regard to post-secondary education, only 1.8% of LGBT students indicated that they did not plan to pursue any type of post-secondary education (i.e., that they only planned to obtain a high school diploma, did not plan to finish high school, or were unsure of their plans). About one-fifth (21.2%) reported they are not sure yet; and 8.7% indicated they aspire to attain MBO-Diploma. About one in seven students (68.3%) reported that they planned to get at least a bachelor degree. It is important to note that the survey only included students who were in school during the 2017-2018 school year. Thus, the percentage of LGBT students not pursuing post-secondary education would be higher with the inclusion of students who had already left high school without finishing.

Although most students planned on finishing secondary and go attain an academic degree, we find an association between victimization and educational aspiration. As shown in Figure 1.21, students who reported frequent verbal harassment because of their sexual orientation were less likely than other students to aspire for a post-secondary academic degree (63.1% vs. 72.1%). Figure 1.21 also shows the same relationship between verbal harassment based on gender expression and academic aspirations.

Absenteeism. Students who are regularly harassed or assaulted in school may attempt to avoid these hurtful experiences by not attending school and, accordingly, may be more likely to miss school than students who do not experience such victimization. We found that experiences of harassment and assault were, in fact, related to missing days of school. As shown in Figure 1.22 students were twice as likely to have missed school in the past month if they had experienced higher levels of victimization related to their sexual orientation (31.7% versus 14.6%) or gender expression (32.9% vs. 17.7%).

Sense of School Belonging. The degree to which students feel accepted by and a part of their school community is another important indicator of school climate and is related to a number of educational outcomes. Students who experience victimization or discrimination at school may feel excluded and disconnected from their school community. In order to assess LGBT students' sense of belonging to their school community, survey participants were given a series of statements about feeling like a part of their school and were asked to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with the statements.² Figure 1.23A presents students' responses to these statements. Overall and across items, more than half of the students reported on positive feelings towards school belonging.

Figure 1.23B compares LGBT students with a representative sample of 15 year-old students in the Netherlands. Data for the general population come from the 2015 OECD Programme for International Student Assessment. The wording of four items is identical, and the wording of two other items is slightly different. Compared to the general population of 15 year-old students, LGBT students in the Netherlands report on lower sense of school belonging.

² Items assessing school belonging were taken from the 2012 survey of the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment.

As illustrated in Figure 1.23C, students who experienced victimization based on sexual orientation or gender expression had lower levels of school belonging than students who experienced did not experience victimization in school. For example, more than three fifths (64.8%) of students who did not experience victimization based on their sexual orientation reported a positive sense of connection to their school, compared to two fifths (41.5%) of students who experienced victimization based on sexual orientation.

Overall, these findings illustrate that direct victimization may lead to less welcoming schools and more negative educational outcomes for LGBT students. In order to ensure that LGBT students are afforded a supportive learning environment and educational opportunities, community and school advocates should work to prevent and respond to in-school victimization. In Part 2 of this report, we will examine the availability of supports in school that may benefit the educational experience for LGBT students.

PART 2: SCHOOL-BASED RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS

Availability of School-Based Resources and Supports

LGBT students may not have the same types of support from peers at their schools and in their communities. As shown in Figure 2.1, about half (49.5%) of LGBT students in the Netherlands reported that other students at school were accepting of LGBT people ("very accepting" or "somewhat accepting") with nearly one in four students (23.9%) reporting that other students at school were not very accepting or not at all accepting of LGBT people. Over 83.4% of students reported that there are numerous LGBT students in their school (see Figure 2.2.). Still, as shown in Figure 2.3, vast majority (75.0%) of LGBT students report having never attended programs or groups for LGBT youth outside of school. Thus, the availability of resources and supports in school for LGBT students can be extremely important for this population of youth. There are several key resources that may help to promote a safer climate and more positive school experiences for students: school personnel who are supportive of LGBT students, LGBT-inclusive curricular materials, and school policies for addressing incidents of harassment and assault. Thus, we examined the availability of these resources and supports among LGBT students.

Supportive School Personnel

Supportive teachers, principals, and other school staff serve as another important resource for LGBT students. Being able to speak with a caring adult in school may have a significant positive impact on the school experiences for students, particularly those who feel marginalized or experience harassment. In our survey, the overwhelming majority of students (98.2%) could identify at least one school staff member whom they believed was supportive of LGBT students at their school, and two thirds (65.1%) could identify ten or more supportive school staff (see Figure 2.4).

To understand whether certain types of school personnel were more likely to be seen as supportive, we asked LGBT students how comfortable they would feel talking one-on-one with various school personnel about LGBT-related issues. As shown in Figure 2.5, students reported that they would feel most comfortable talking with confidential counselor (52.4%) or mentor (48.1%). Four out of ten LGBT students (41.4%) said they would be somewhat or very comfortable talking with a teacher and one-third (34.8%) said they would be comfortable talking with other school employee. Fewer students in our survey said they would feel comfortable talking one-on-one with Conrector or Director / Rector of the school.

Inclusive Curricular Resources

LGBT student experiences may also be shaped by inclusion of LGBT-related information in the curriculum. Learning about LGBT historical events and positive role models may enhance their engagement with the school community and provide valuable information about the LGBT community. Students in our survey were asked whether they had been exposed to positive representations of LGBT people, history, or events in lessons at school, and vast majority (78.3%) of respondents said that their

classes did not include these topics. Among the students who had been taught positive things about LGBT-related topics in class, history, biology, English, Dutch, and Religion were the classes most often mentioned as being inclusive of these topics (see Table 2.1).

Schools often have programs specifically about bullying, harassment and violence. But these programs may not specifically include information about victimization directed toward students who are often commonly targeted, such as LGBT students. We asked students if they had ever been taught about harassment and violence and whether it included information about LGBT-related victimization.

As shown in Figure 2.7, half LGBT students reported being taught about bullying (for example, in an assembly, lesson, or bullying prevention program). However, only 14.5% said that it included information about sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

We also asked students about their ability to access information about LGBT issues that teachers may not be covering in class, such as additional reading materials featuring information about LGBT issues. As least one of these types of LGBT-related curricular resources were available for majority of the LGBT students in our survey, as shown in Figure 2.8.

School Policies for Addressing Bullying, Harassment, and Assault

School policies that address in-school bullying, harassment, and assault are powerful tools for creating school environments where students feel safe. These types of policies can explicitly state protections based on personal characteristics, such as sexual orientation and gender identity/ expression, among others. In this report, we refer to a “comprehensive” policy as one that explicitly enumerates protections based on personal characteristics, including both sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. When a school has and enforces a comprehensive policy, especially one which also includes procedures for reporting incidents to school authorities, it can send a message that bullying, harassment, and assault are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Comprehensive school policies may also provide students with greater protection against victimization because they make clear the various forms of bullying, harassment, and assault that will not be tolerated. It may also demonstrate that student safety, including the safety of LGBT students, is taken seriously by school administrators.

Students were asked whether their school had a policy about in-school bullying, harassment, or assault, and if that policy explicitly included sexual orientation and gender expression. As shown in Table 2.3, the majority of students (55.0%) did not have any policy in their school or did not know about one. And of the students who did report that their school had a policy, very few students said that it mentioned sexual orientation or gender identity/expression (9.4%).

Utility of School-Based Resources and Supports

School-based resources, such as supportive school personnel, LGBT-inclusive curricula, and enumerated policies for reporting bullying, harassment and assault, may help create a more positive school environment for LGBT students. In this section, we examine the relationship between school-based institutional supports and school climate, as well as educational indicators such as absenteeism, academic achievement, and educational aspirations.

Supportive School Personnel

Having supportive teachers and school staff can have a positive effect on the educational experiences of any student, increasing student motivation to learn and positive engagement in school. Given that LGBT students often feel unsafe and unwelcome in school, having access to school personnel who provide support may be critical for creating better learning environments for LGBT students. Therefore, we examined the relationships between the presence of supportive staff and several indicators of school climate, finding that the presence of school staff supportive of LGBT students is one critical piece in improving the school climate.

School Safety and Absenteeism. Having staff supportive of LGBT students was directly related to LGBT students reporting more positive feelings about their school and their education. As shown in Figure 2.9, students who reported having a higher number of teachers and school staff who support LGBT students were:

- More likely to report that the general student body is more accepting of LGBT people (55.8% vs. 16.5%).
- More likely to feel like they belong in their school (72.4% vs. 37.2%); and
- Less likely to miss days of school because of feeling unsafe (12.4% vs. 31.5%).

School staff members serve a vital role in ensuring a safe learning environment for all students, and as such, should respond to biased language and bias-based victimization. When staff members intervened in homophobic remarks, LGBT students reported more positive feelings about their school and education. As shown in Figure 2.10, when students said that teachers and school staff intervened more often, they also were:

- More likely to report that the general student body is more accepting of LGBT people (49.3% vs. 42.2%);
- More likely to feel like they belong in their school (55.9% vs. 42.2%); and
- Less likely to miss days of school because of feeling unsafe (23.1% vs. 25.2%).

Inclusive Curriculum

Including LGBT-related issues in the curriculum in a positive manner may make LGBT students feel like more valued members of the school community, and it may also promote more positive feelings about LGBT issues and persons among their peers, thereby resulting in a more positive school climate. In fact, as shown in Figure 2.11, LGBT students who were taught positive information about LGBT people, history and events were:

- More likely to report that the general student body is more accepting of LGBT people (61.5% vs. 46.2%);
- More likely to feel like they belong in their school (73.0% vs. 49.6%); and
- Less likely to miss days of school because of feeling unsafe (16.8% vs. 23.6%).

Gender Sexuality Alliances (GSA)

The inclusion of LGBT-related issues can be achieved not only through the formal curriculum, but also through co-curricular activities, such as student organizations and clubs. Slightly more than two-fifths of students (41.4%) reported having a Gender Sexuality Alliances (GSA) in their school (see Figure 2.8). However, only half of the students who reported on having GSA in their school (50.1%) have been active members. As illustrated in Figure 2.12 the top two reasons for being inactive are fear of “being outed, stigmatized, discriminated against, or victimized” (33.3%) and lack of time or time conflict (32.9%). Regardless of whether they participate in GSA or not, students reported that the GSA club in their schools engages with different activities, including Purple Friday (95.9%), regular meetings (62.4%), and peer education (43.9%; see Figure 2.13).

Having a GSA club in school may affect LGBT students and the larger school community, promoting a more positive school climate. In fact, as shown in Figures 2.14 and 2.15, LGBT students who had a GSA club in their school were:

- More likely to report that the general student body is more accepting of LGBT people (60.1% vs. 41.7%);
- More likely to feel like they belong in their school (69.9% vs. 47.9%); and
- Less likely to miss days of school because of feeling unsafe (16.3% vs. 26.4%).

- Less likely to hear biased remarks – such as “that’s so gay” – at school.

Table 1.1: Characteristics of Survey Participants		
Age (n=1,065)		
13	2.8%	n=30
14	7.6%	n=81
15	13.7%	n=146
16	29.2%	n=311
17	30.5%	n=325
18	14.3%	n=152
19	1.7%	n=18
20	0.2%	n=2
Average Age = 16.3 years (SD 1.30)		
Sexual Orientation (n=1,065)		
Gay	18.0%	n=192
Lesbian	22.0%	n=234
Bisexual	40.8%	n=434
Pansexual	16.3%	n=174
Straight/Heterosexual	1.9%	n=20
Zoekende	19.9%	n=212
Queer	15.0%	n=160
Other Sexual Orientation	5.7%	n=61
Sex/Gender (n=1,065)		
Male	23.3%	n=248
Female	65.4%	n=696
Transgender	6.9%	n=73
Intersex	0.2%	n=2
Gender Non-Binary	13.2%	n=141
Other	3.2%	n=34
Born in the Netherlands		
	95.9%	n=1,019

Table 1.2: Characteristics of Participants' Schools		
Community Type (n=1,040)		
City or City Edge	72.9%	n=758
Rural Area or Village	27.1%	n=282
School Level (n=997)		
Praktijkonderwijs	1.7%	n=17
Vmbo-b	1.3%	n=13
Vmbo-k	3.5%	n=35
Vmbo-gl	1.8%	n=18
Vmbo-t	11.4%	n=114
Vmbo-t/havo/vwo	0.3%	n=3
Vmbo-t/havo	1.9%	n=19
Havo/vwo	2.6%	n=26
Havo	28.2%	n=281
Vwo	47.3%	n=471
School Size (n=1,046)		
Less Than 500 Students	9.4%	n=98
501 to 1000 Students	28.8%	n=301
1001 to 1500 Students	35.7%	n=373
Over 1500 Students	26.2%	n=274

**Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.*

Table 2.1. Positive Representations of LGBT-Related Topics Taught in Class*

	% among Students Taught Positive Rep of LGBT-Related Topics	% of all Students in Survey
History	7.7%	35.5%
Biology	7.6%	35.1%
Other class	5.6%	26.0%
English	4.9%	22.5%
Dutch	4.7%	21.6%
Religion	4.3%	19.9%
Maatschappijleer	3.8%	17.3%
Physical Education	1.1%	5.2%
Geography	0.8%	3.9%
Economy	0.5%	2.2%
French	0.4%	1.7%
Mathematics	0.3%	1.3%
Physics	0.1%	0.4%
*Because respondents could select multiple responses, the categories are not mutually exclusive. The percentages do not add up to 100%.		

Table 2.3 LGBT Students' Reports of Bullying, Harassment, and Assault Policies

No Policy/Don't Know	55.0%
Any Policy	
General Policy	35.6%
Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity/Expression mentioned	9.4%

Figure 0.1: LGBT Students' Level of Outness to Peers and School Staff

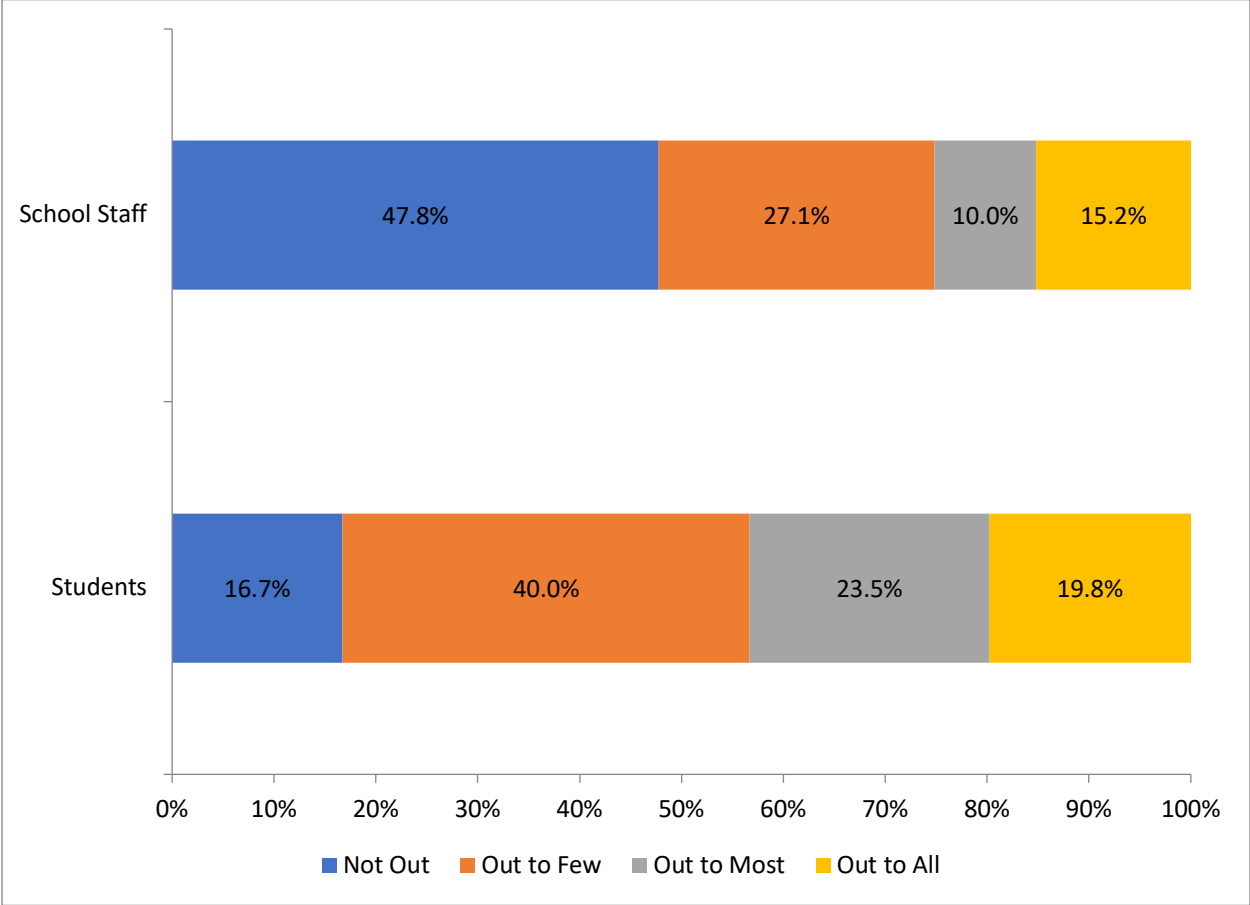


Figure 1.1: LGBT Students Who Felt Unsafe at School Because of Actual or Perceived Personal Characteristics

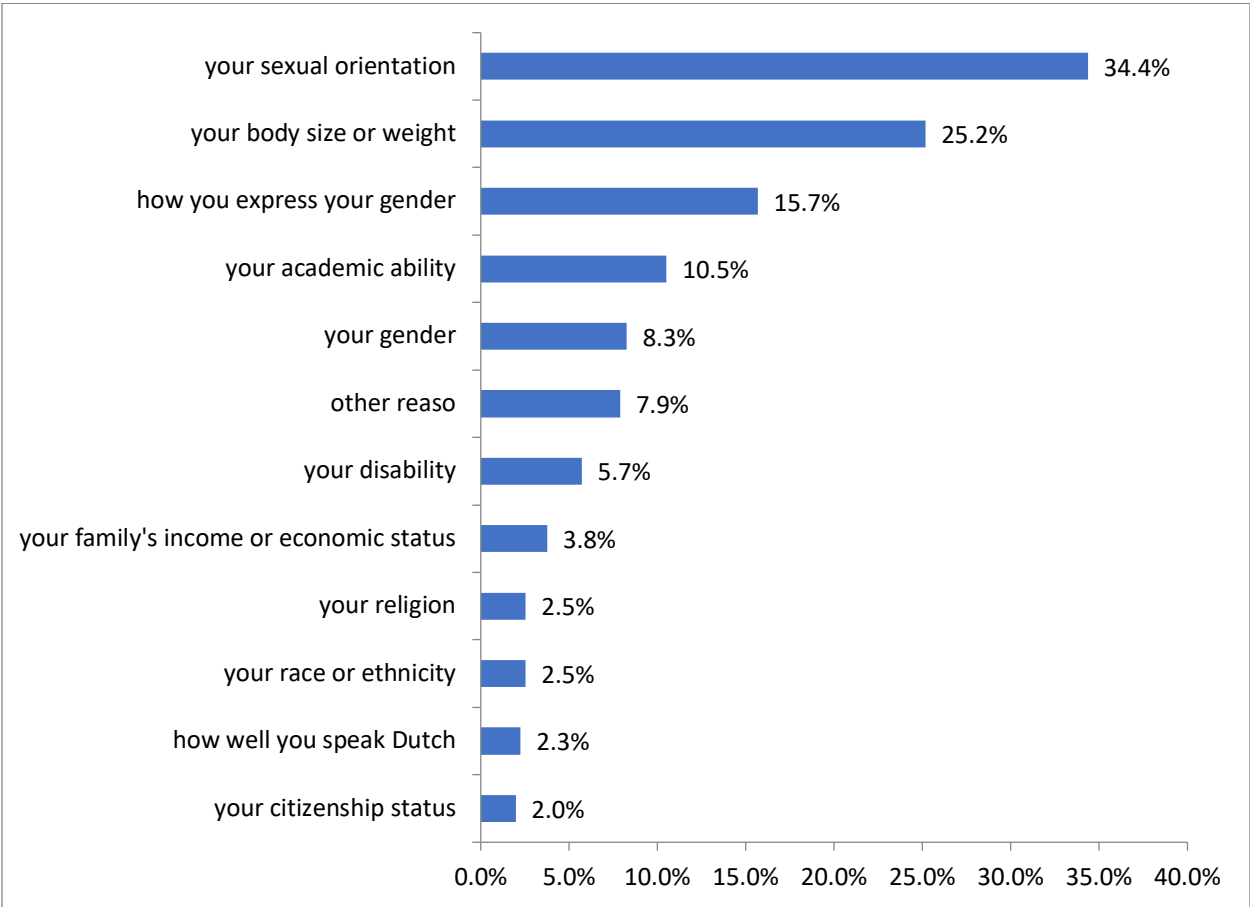


Figure 1.2: Percentage of LGBT Students Who Avoid Spaces at School Because They Feel Unsafe or Uncomfortable

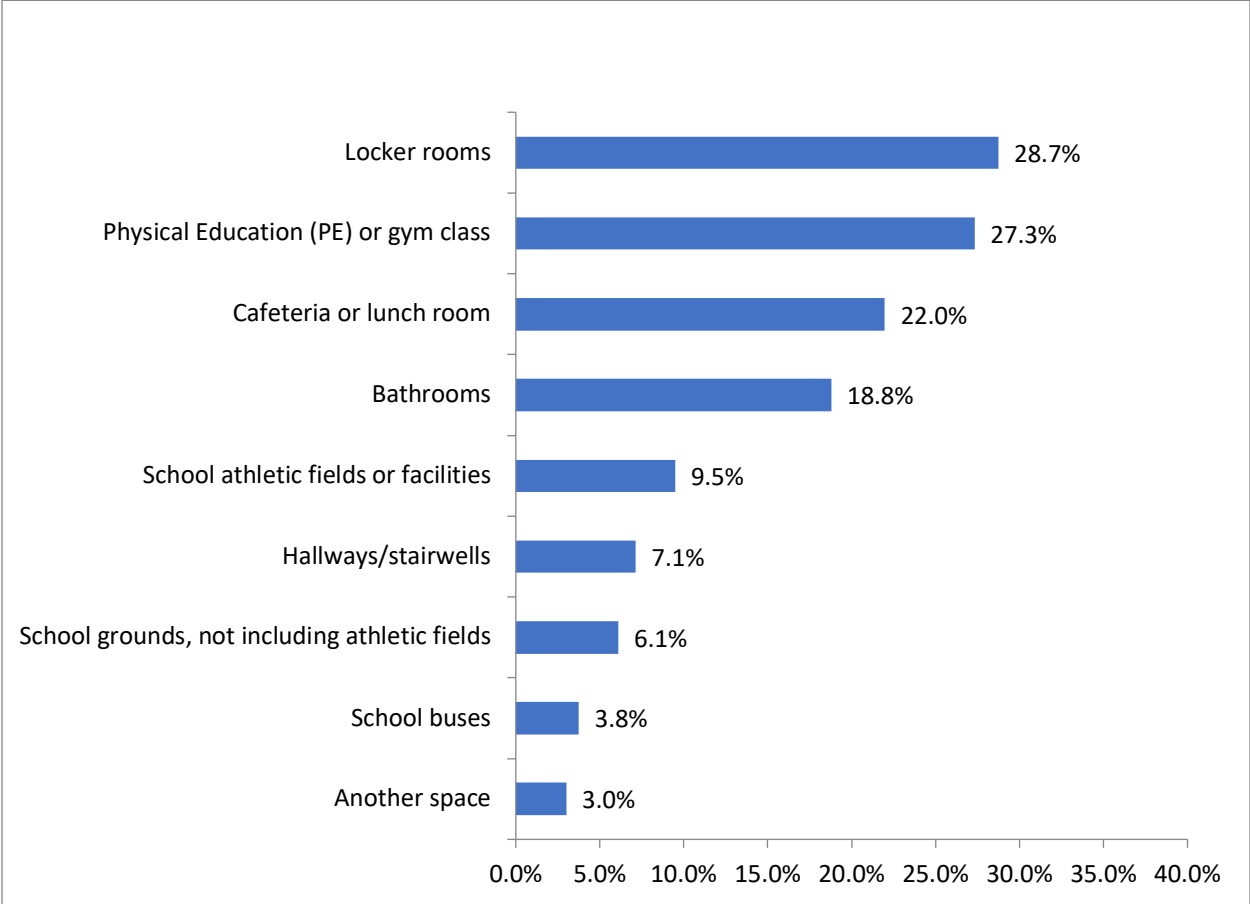


Figure 1.3: Frequency of Missing Days of School in the Past Month Because of Feeling Unsafe or Uncomfortable

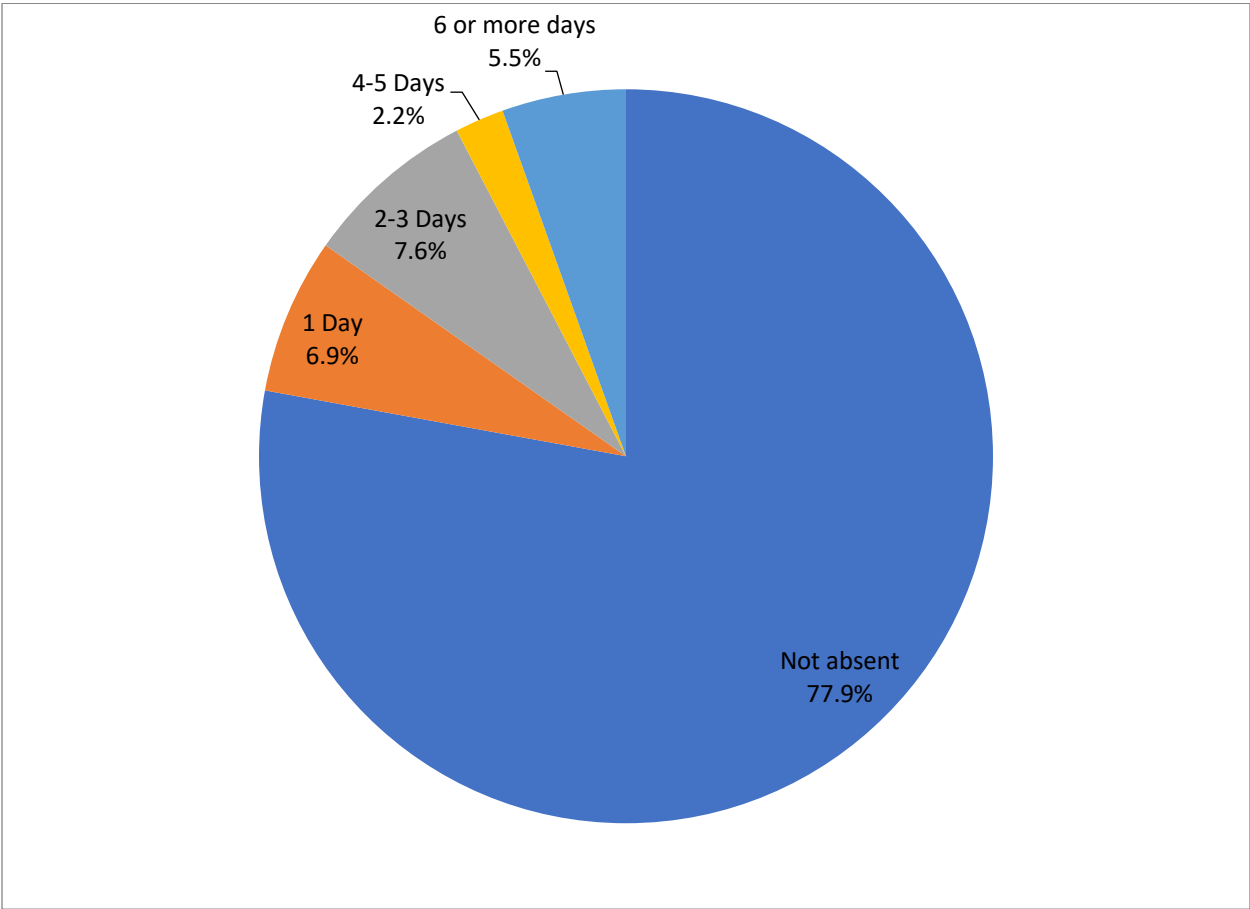


Figure 1.4: Frequency that LGBT Students Hear Anti-LGBT Remarks at School

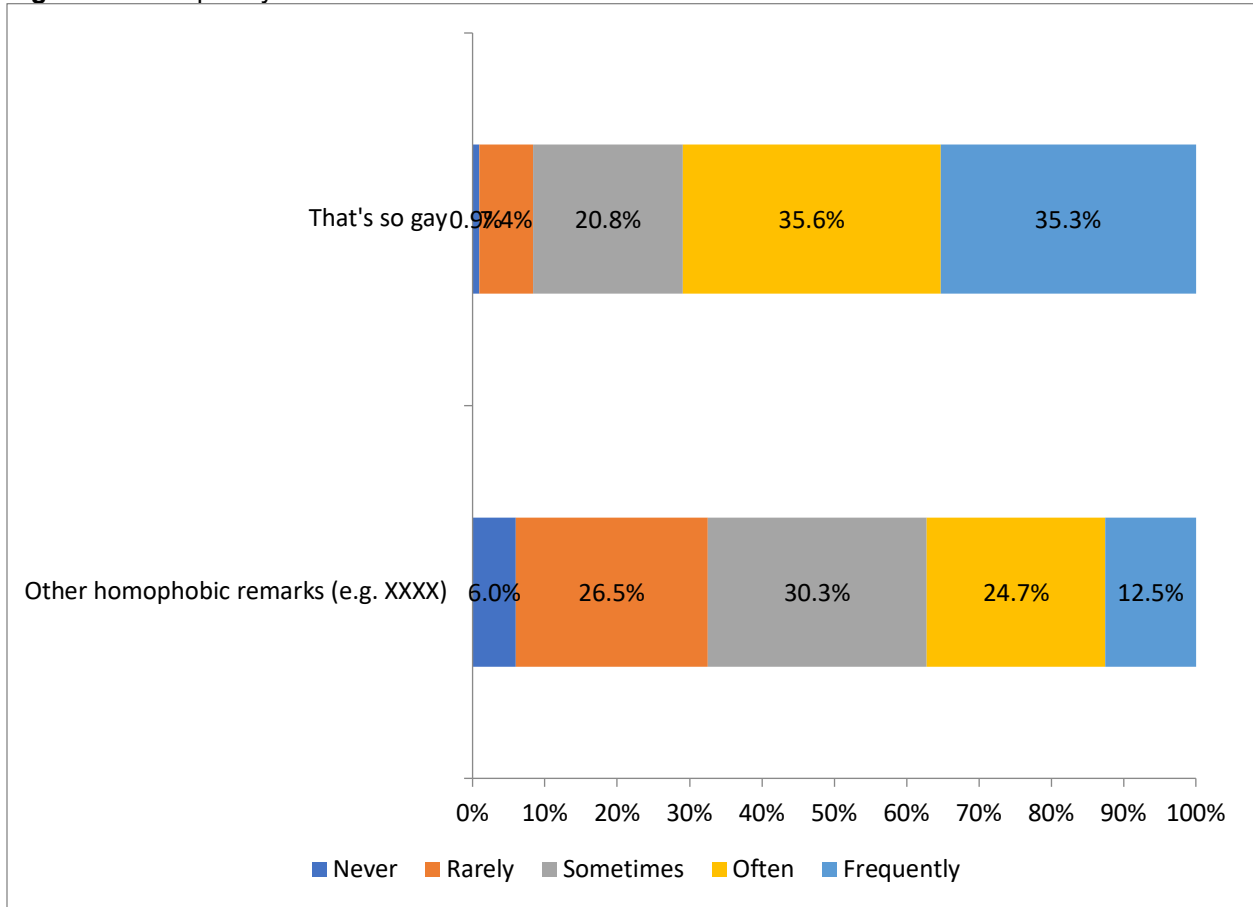


Figure 1.5: LGBT Students' Reports of How Many Students Make Homophobic Remarks

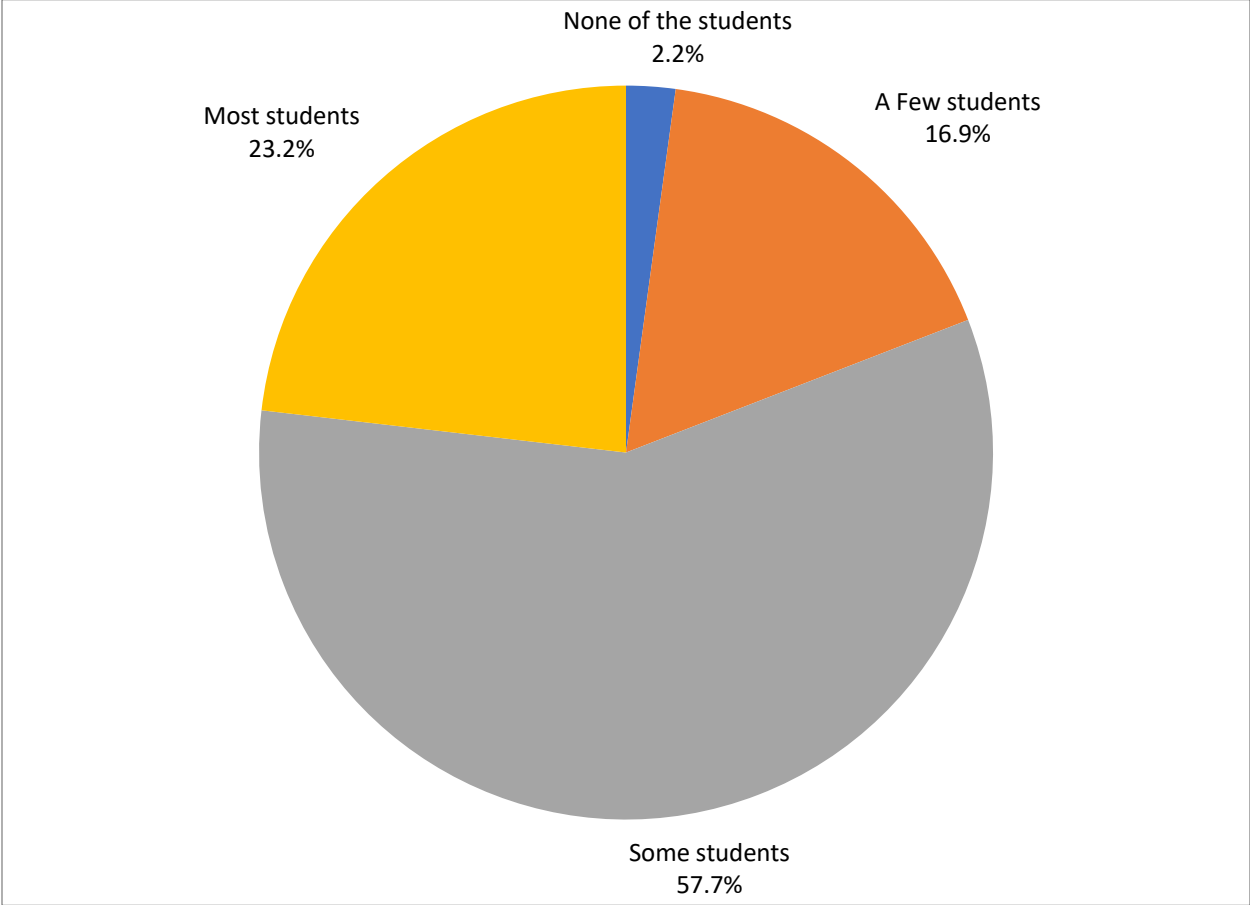


Figure 1.6: LGBT Students Hearing Homophobic Remarks from Teachers or Other School Staff

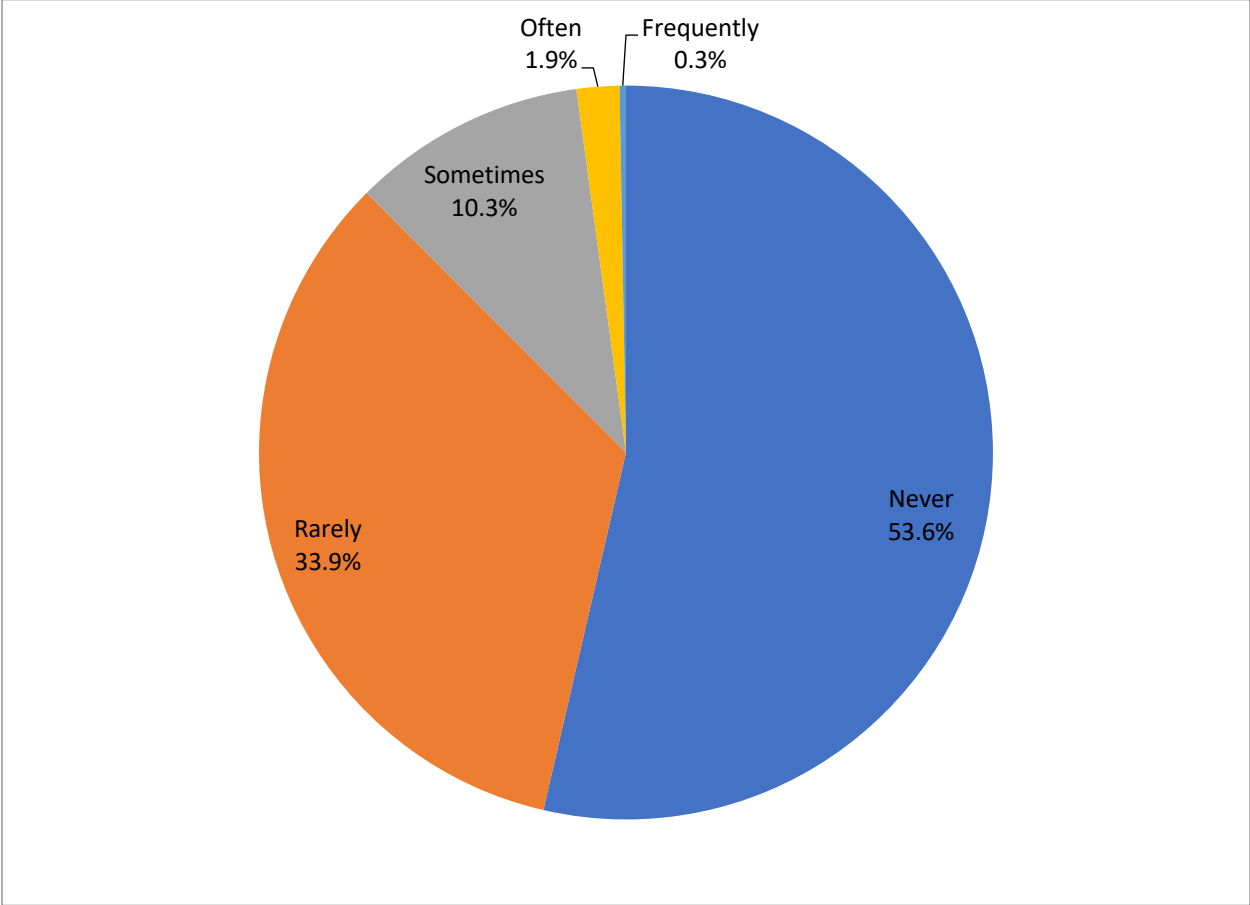


Figure 1.7: Degree that LGBT Students Were Bothered or Distressed as a Result of Hearing "Gay" Used in a Derogatory Way

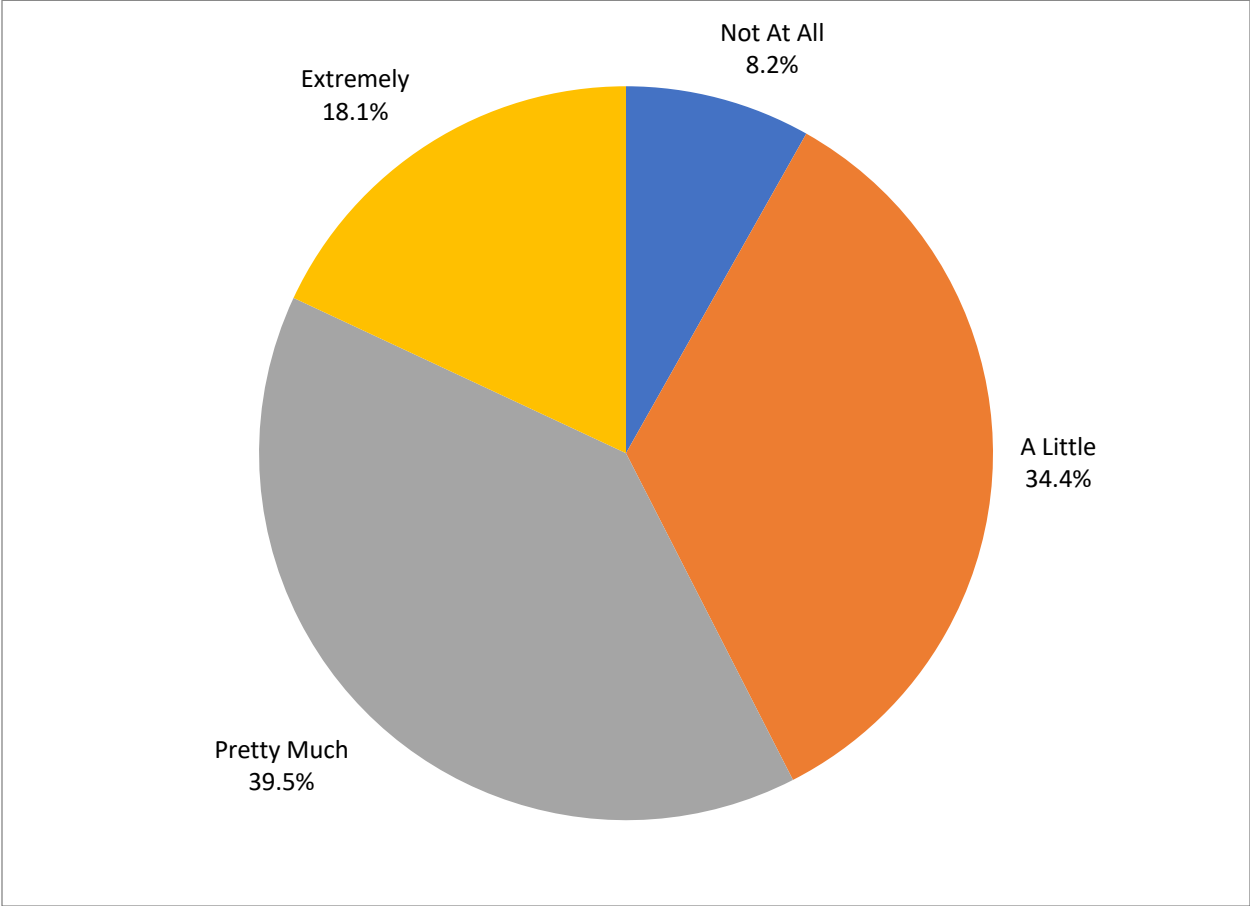


Figure 1.8: LGBT Students Reports on School Staff and Student Intervention in Homophobic Remarks

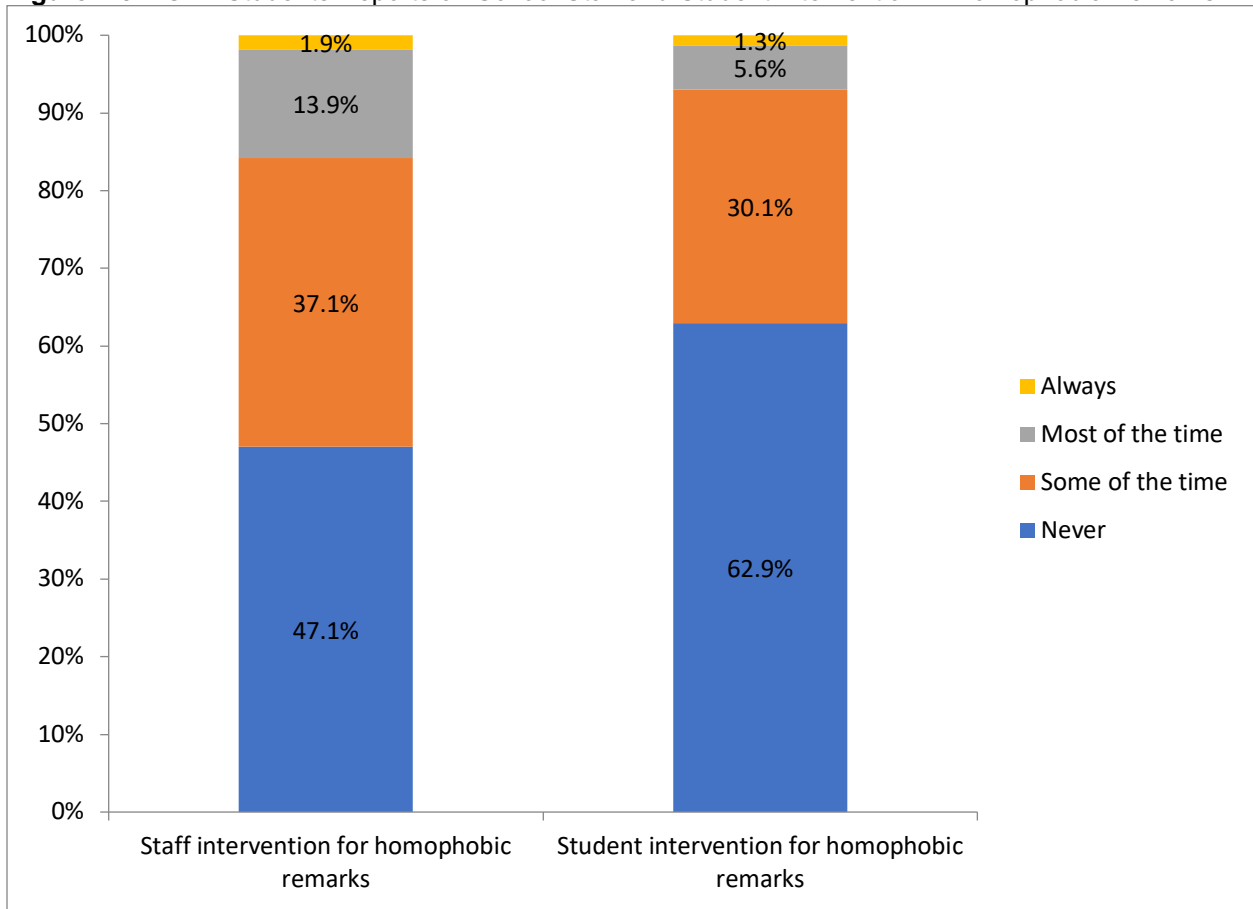


Figure 1.9: Frequency of LGBT Students Hearing Different Types of Remarks about Students' Gender Expression

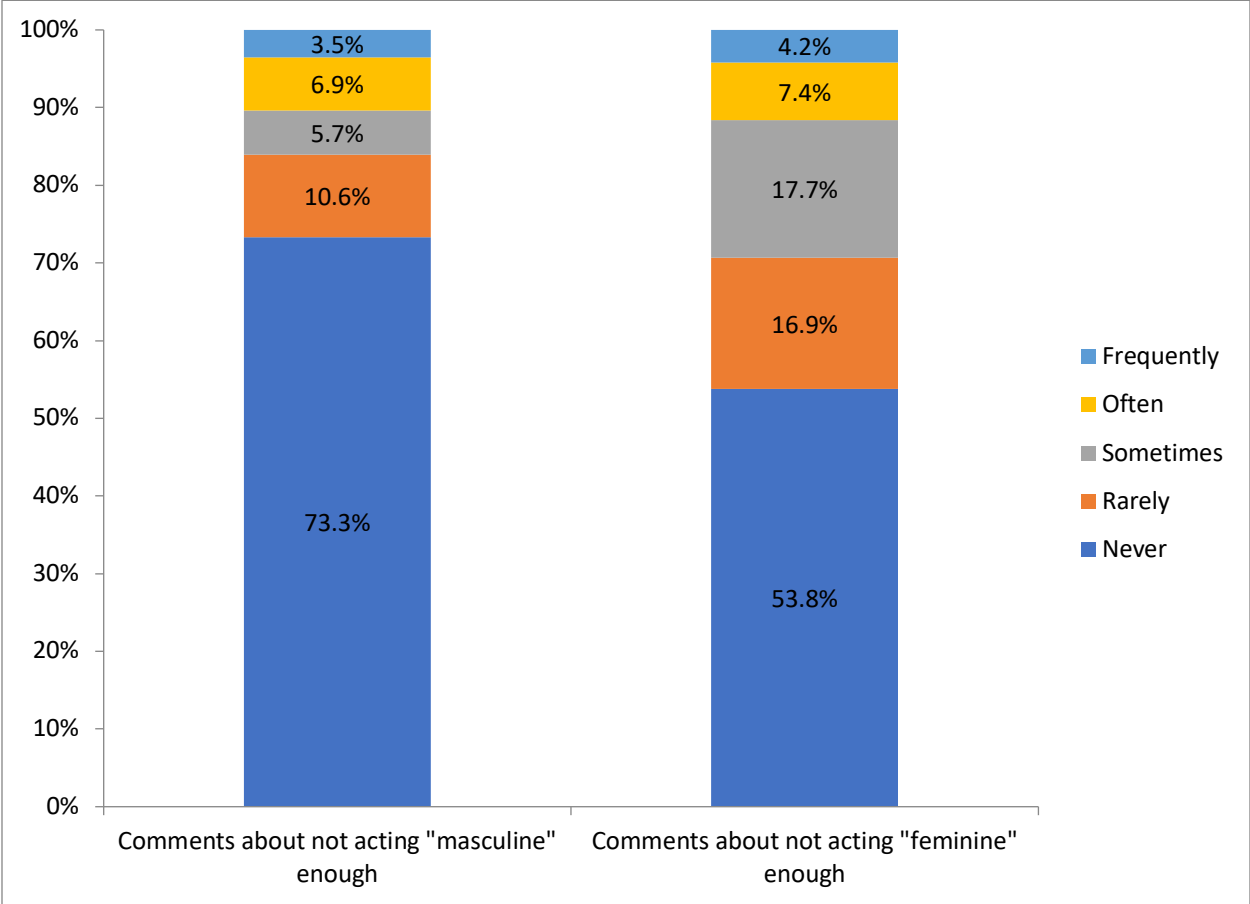


Figure 1.10: LGBT Students' Reports on How Many Students Make Negative Remarks about Gender Expression

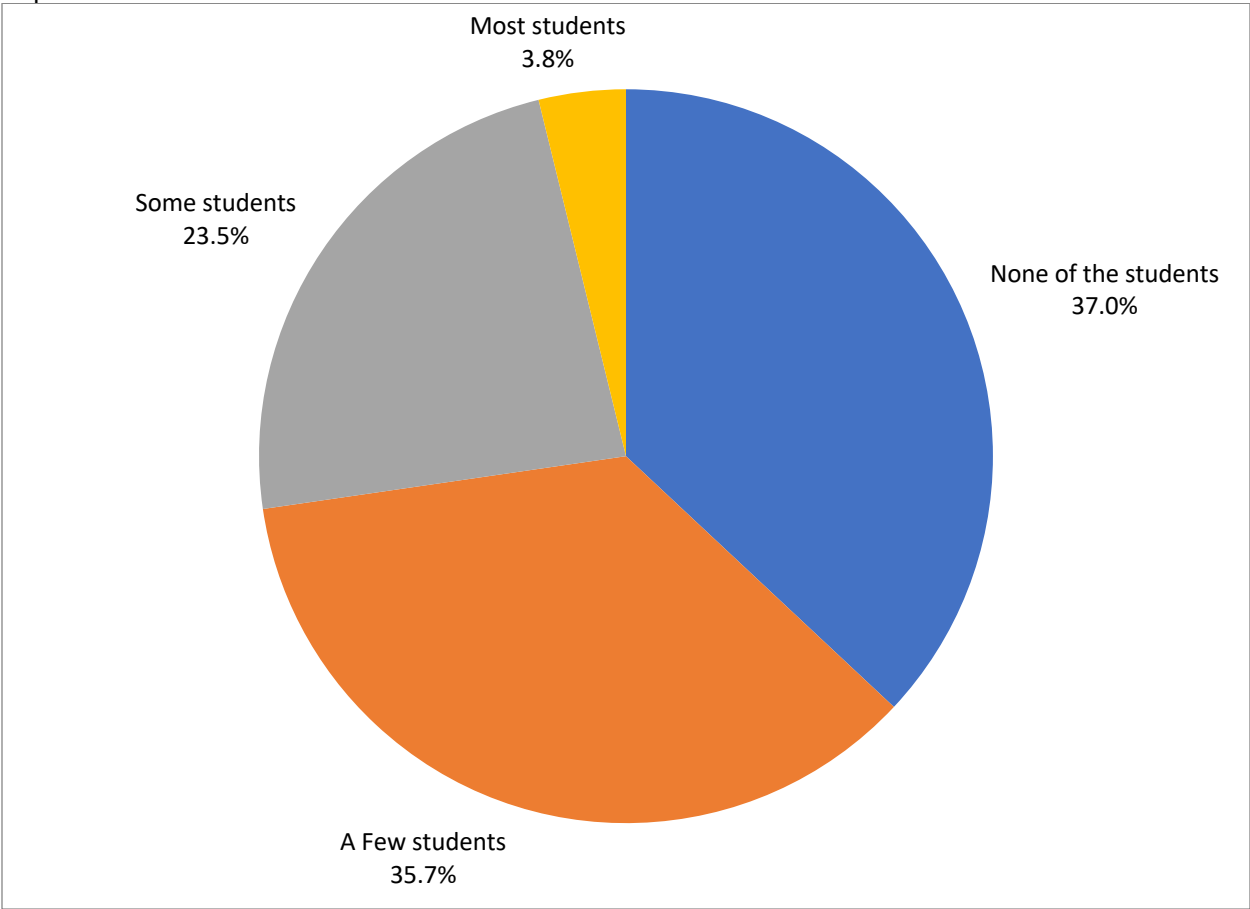


Figure 1.11: LGBT Students' Reports of School Staff for Remarks about Gender Expression

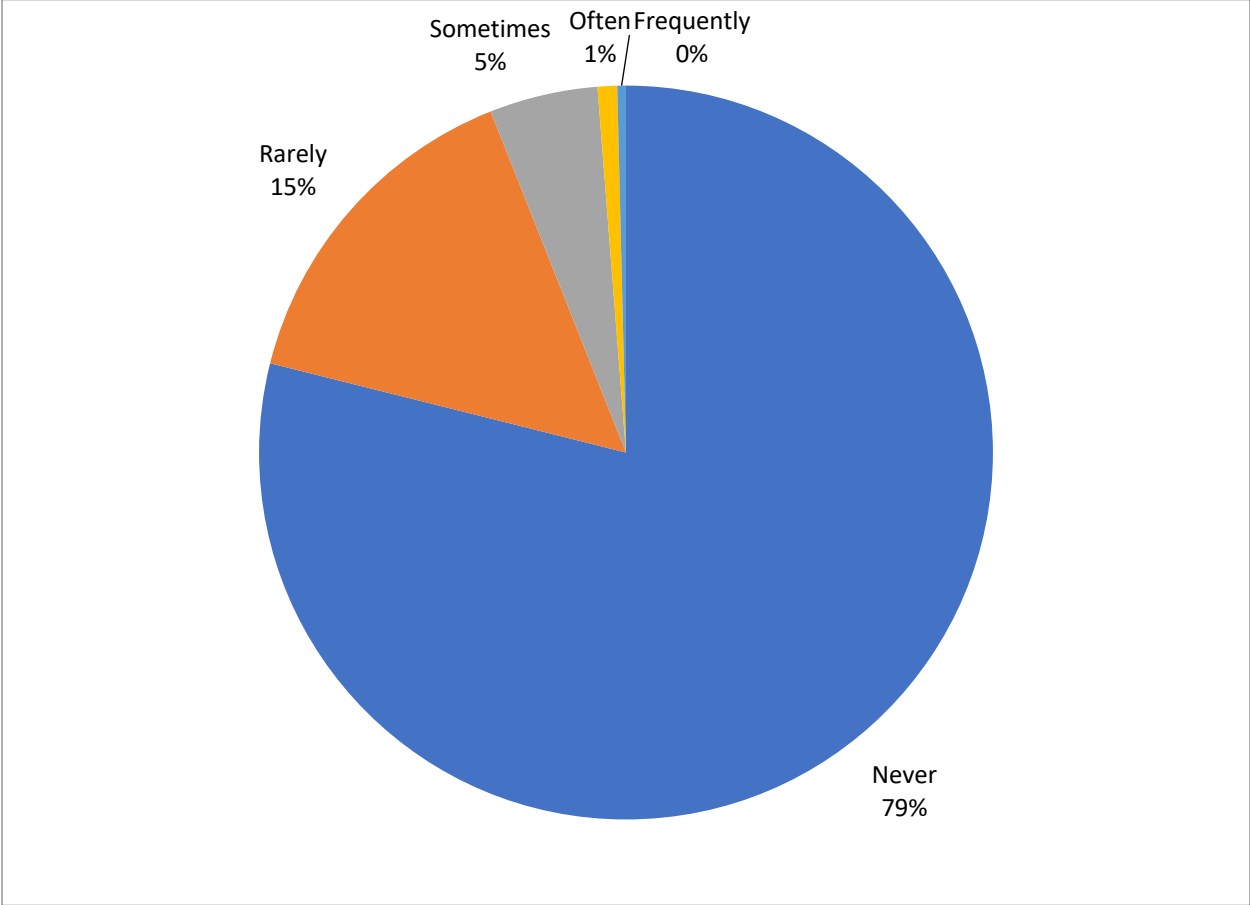


Figure 1.12: Frequency that LGBT Students Hear Other Biased Remarks at School

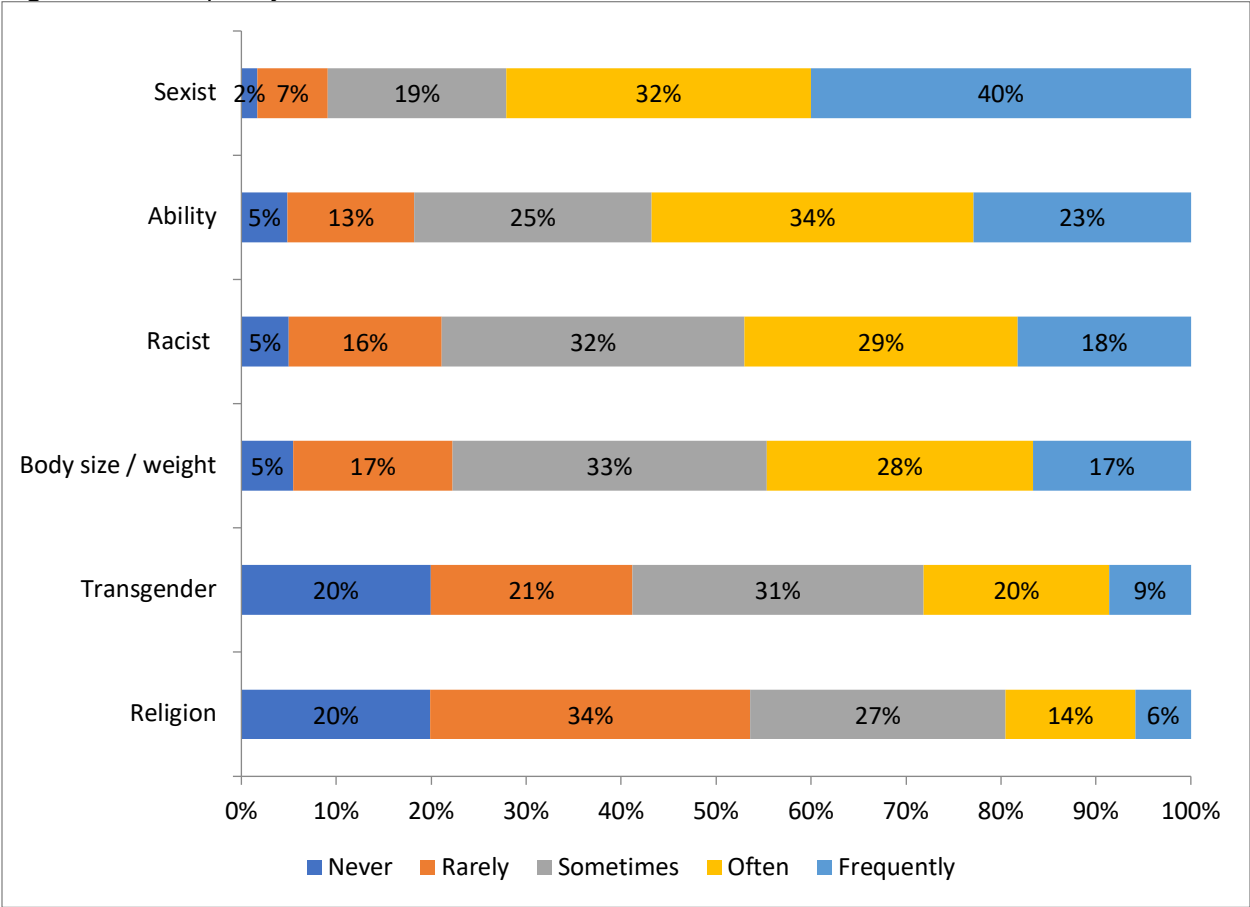


Figure 1.13: Frequency of Verbal Harassment Experienced by LGBT Students in the Past School Year

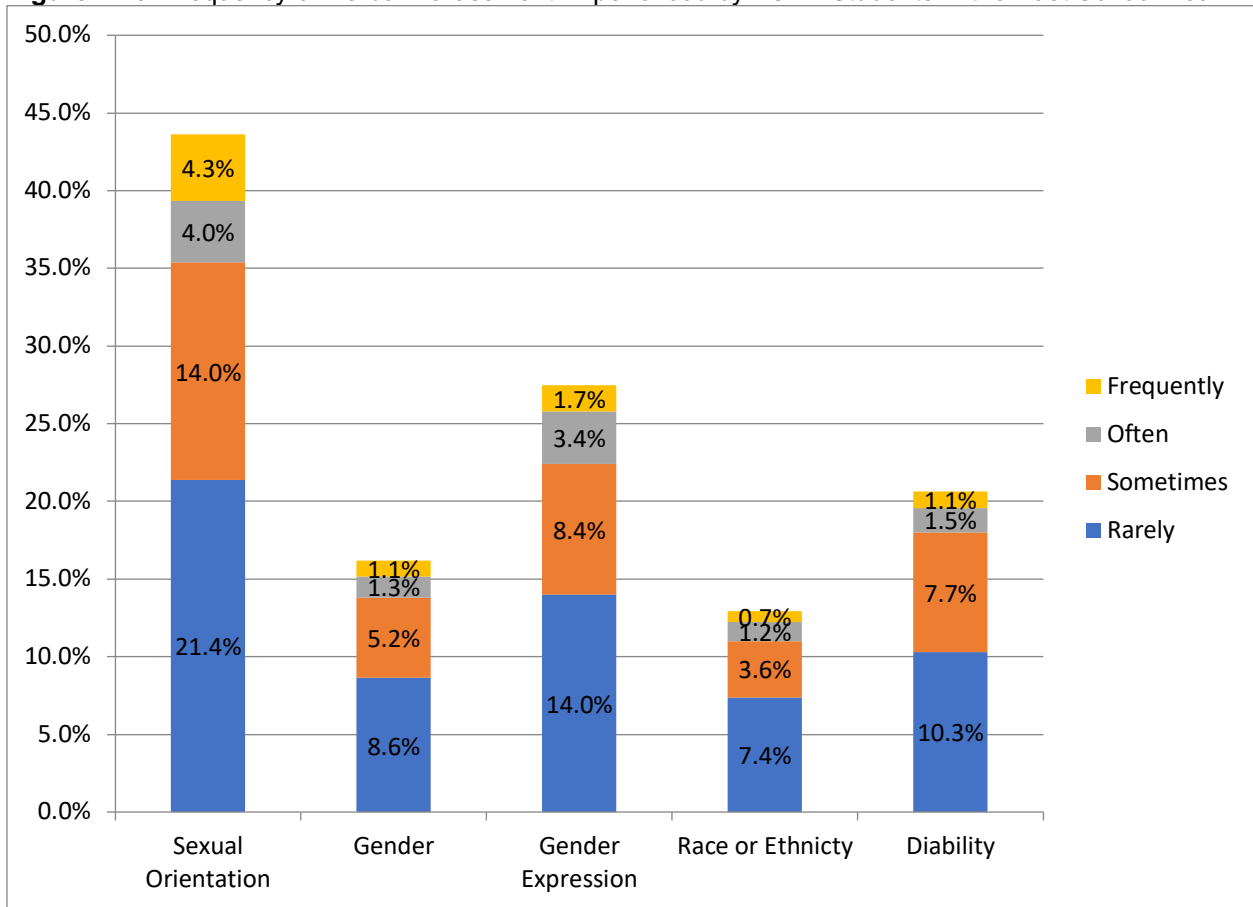


Figure 1.14: Frequency of Physical Harassment Experienced by LGBT Students in the Past School Year

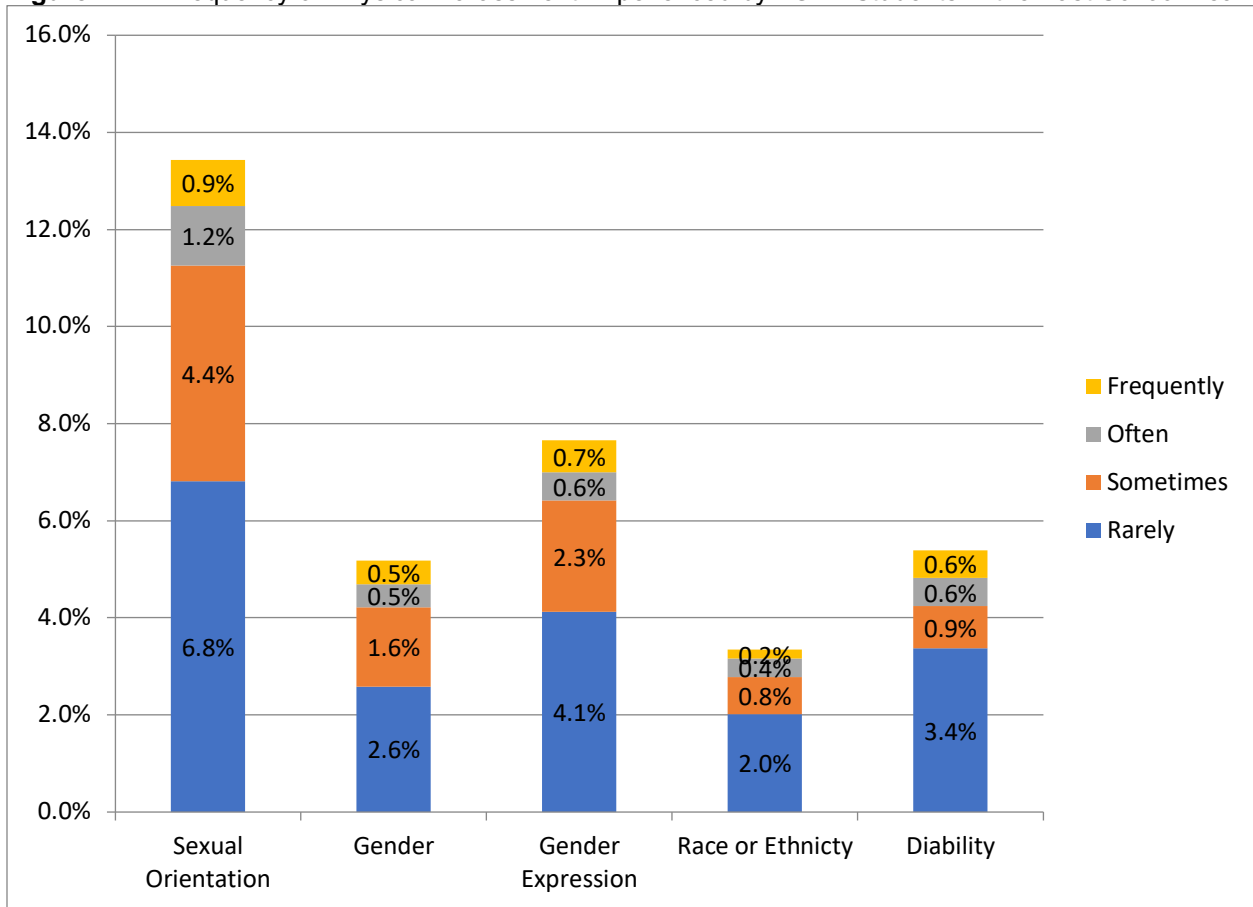


Figure 1.15: Frequency of Physical Assault Experienced by LGBT Students in the Past School Year

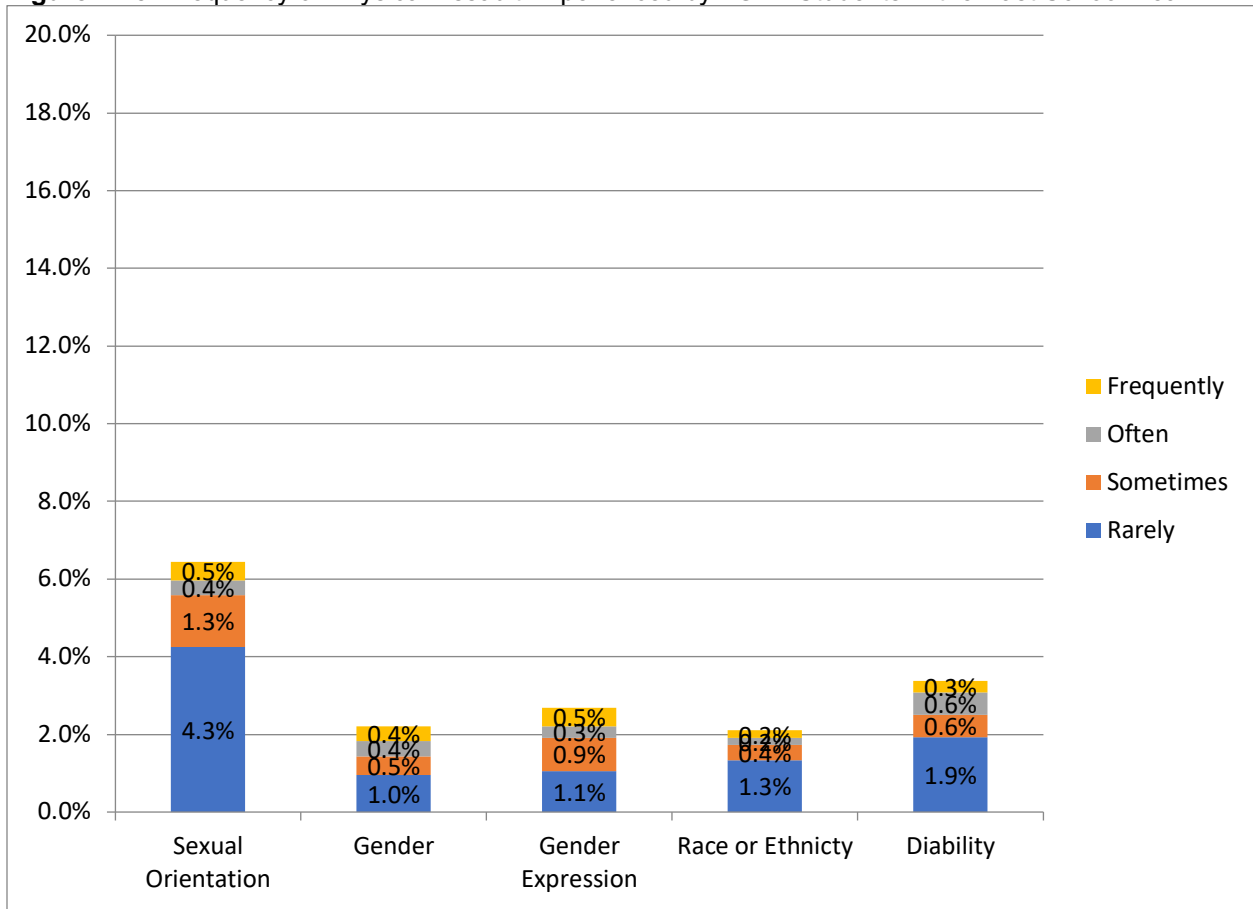


Figure 1.16: Frequency of Other Types of Harassment Experienced by LGBT Students in the Past Year

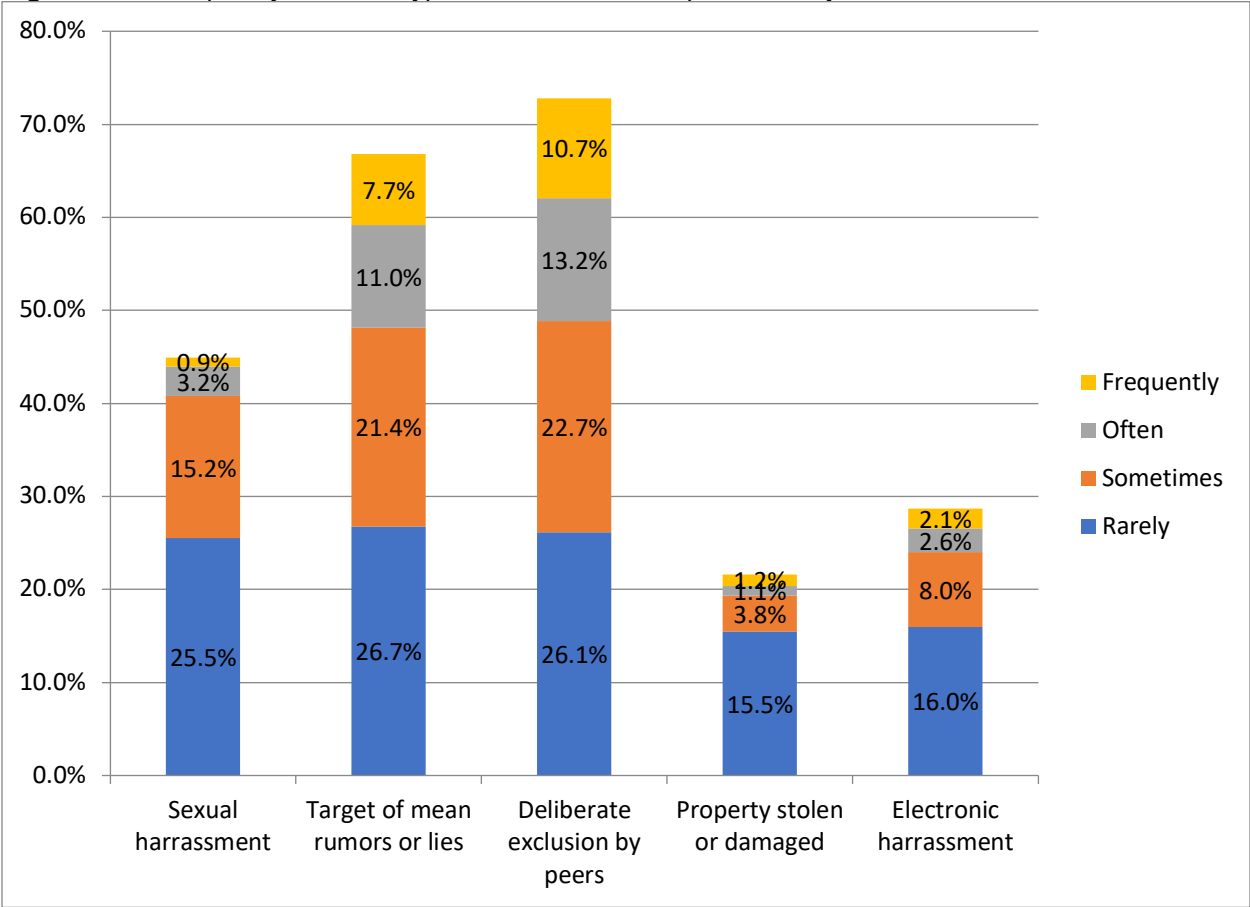


Figure 1.17: Frequency of LGBT Students Reporting Incidents of Harassment and Assault

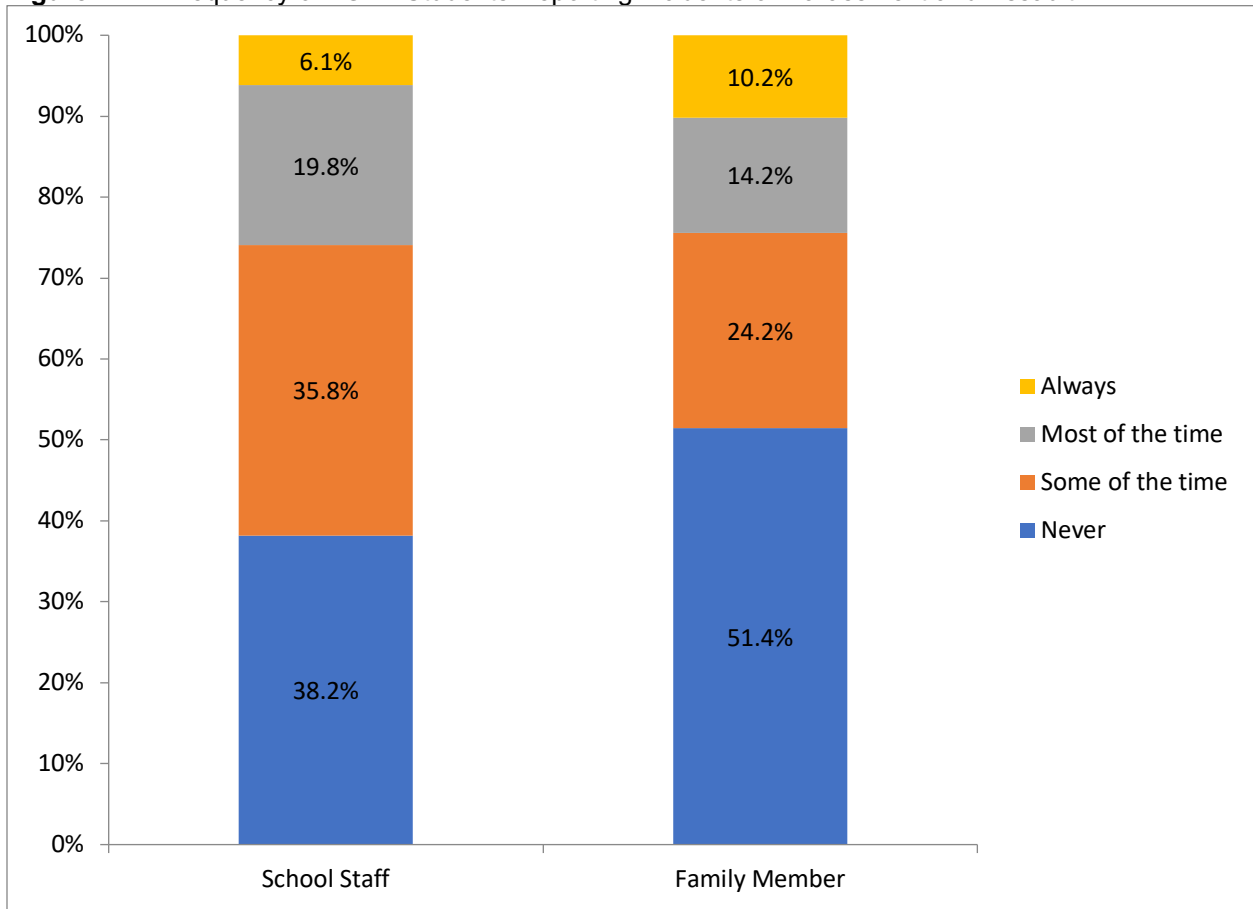


Figure 1.18: LGBT Students' Perceptions of Effectiveness of Reporting Incidences of Harassment and Assault to School Staff

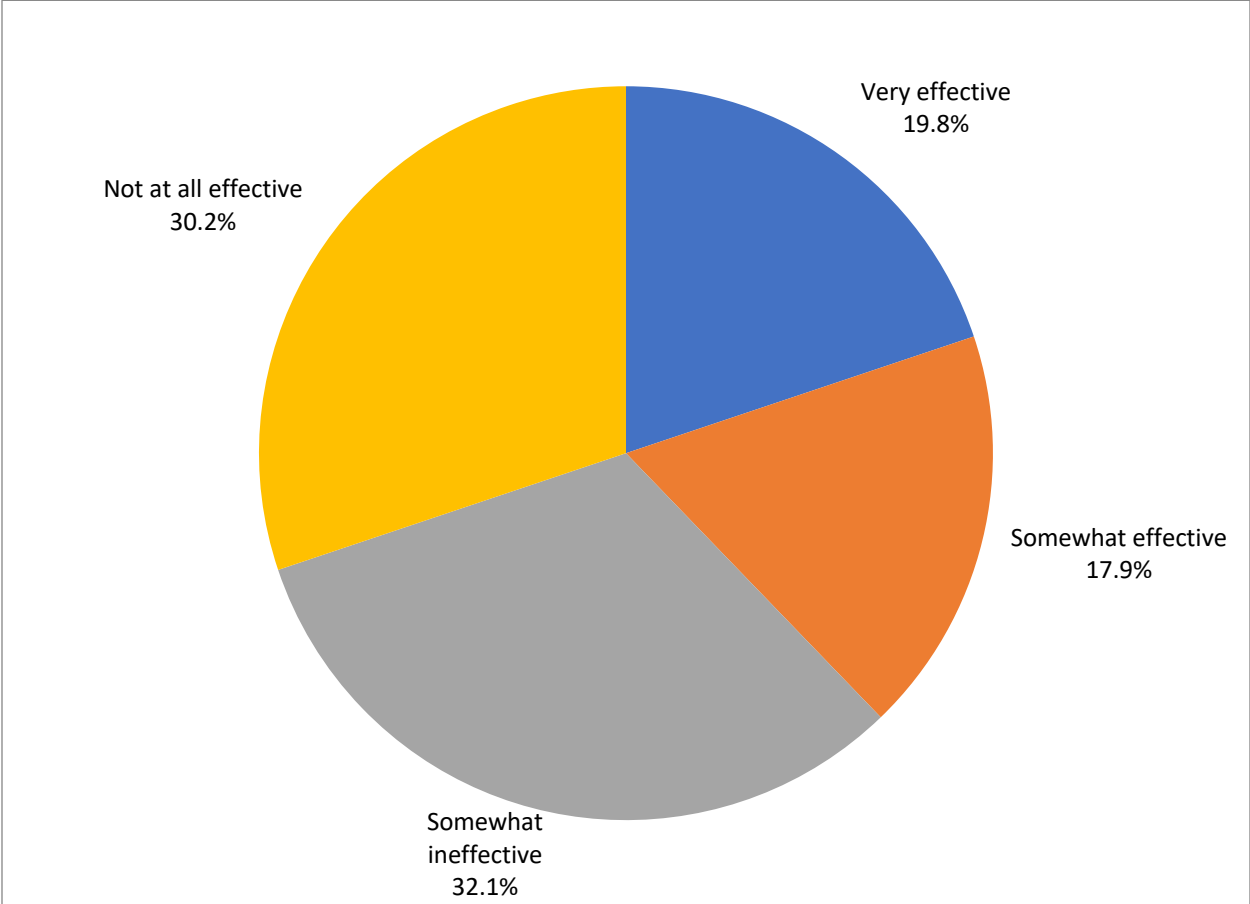


Figure 1.19: Frequency of Intervention by LGBT Students' Family Members

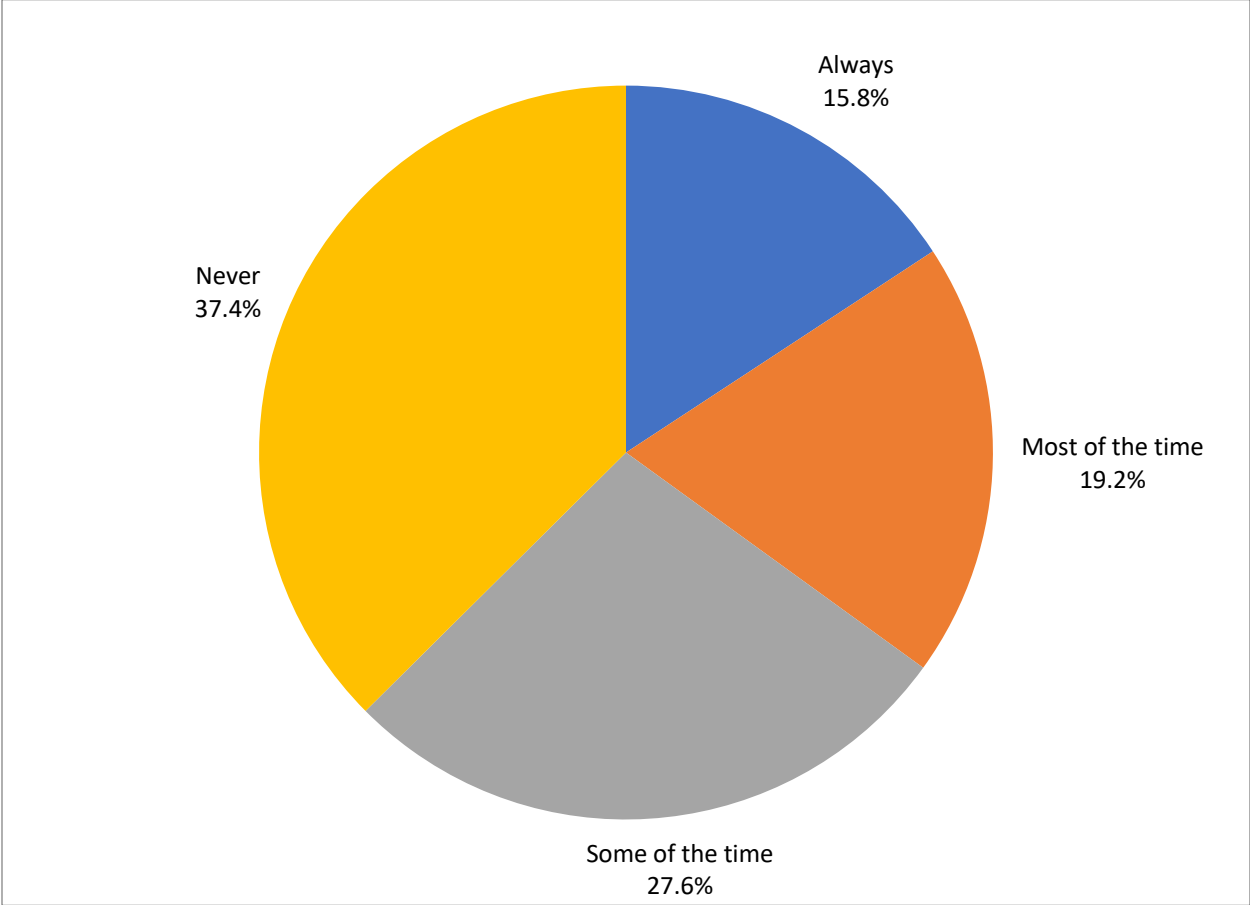


Figure 1.20: Educational Aspirations of LGBT Students

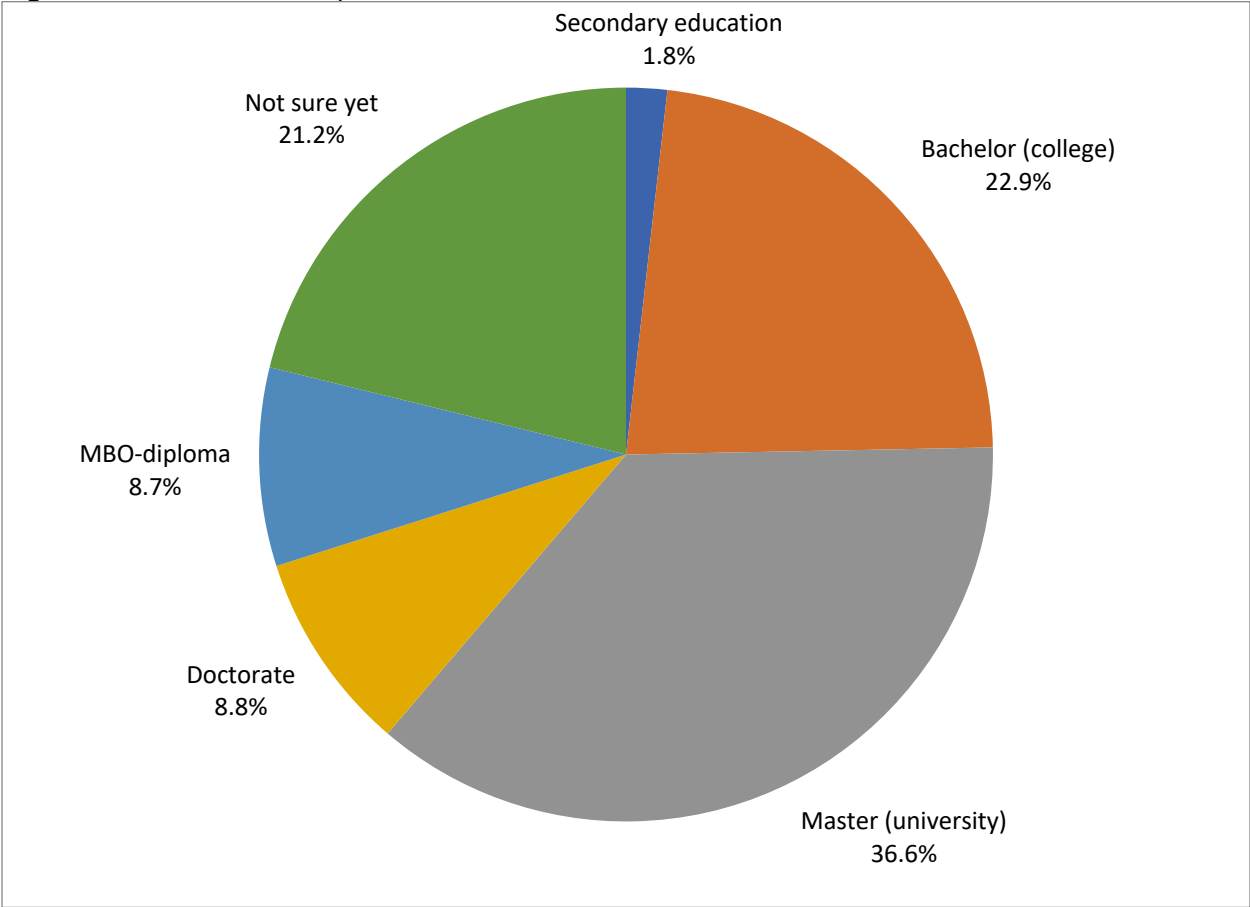


Figure 1.21: Educational Aspiration by Experiences of Victimization and Discrimination

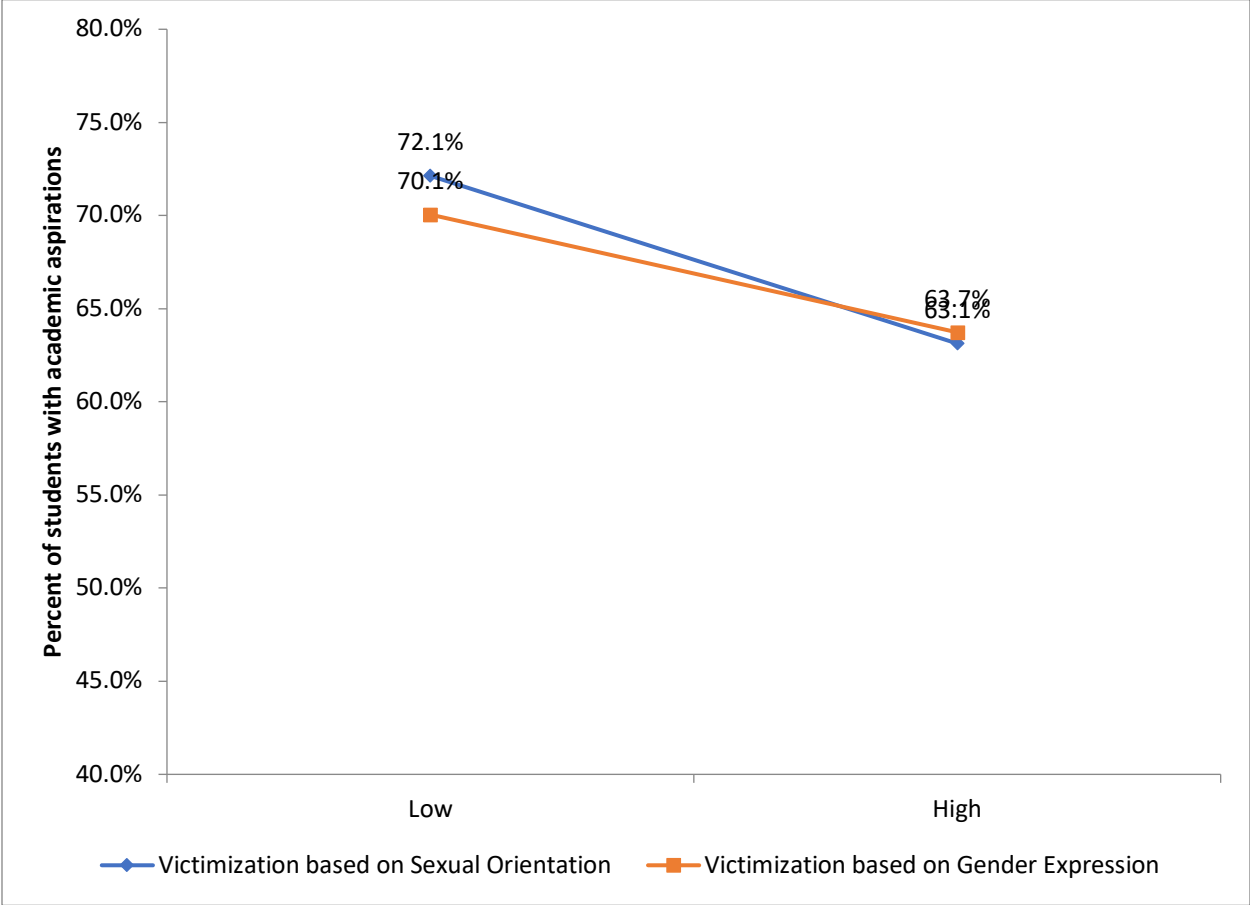


Figure 1.22: Absenteeism by Experiences of Victimization and Discrimination

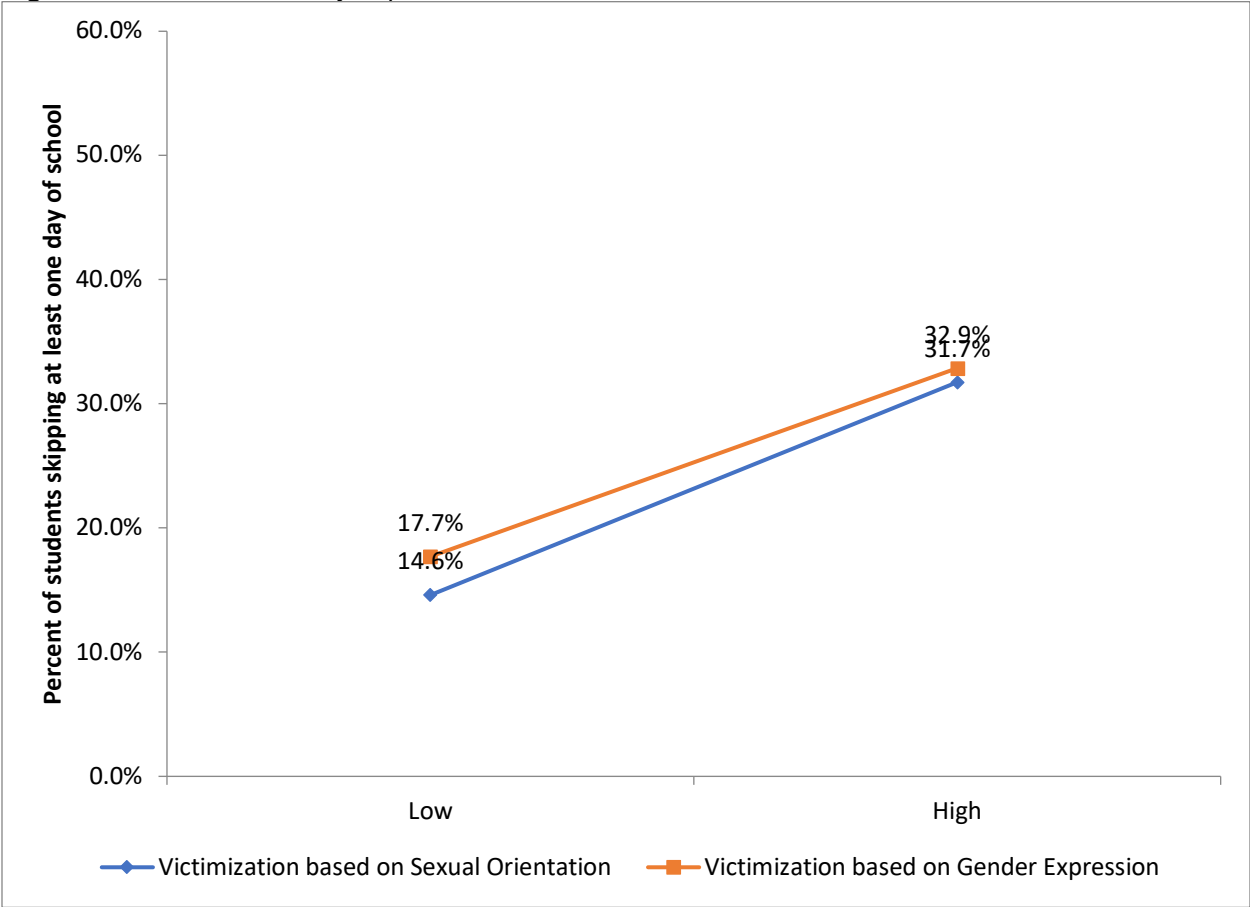


Figure 1.23A: School Belonging

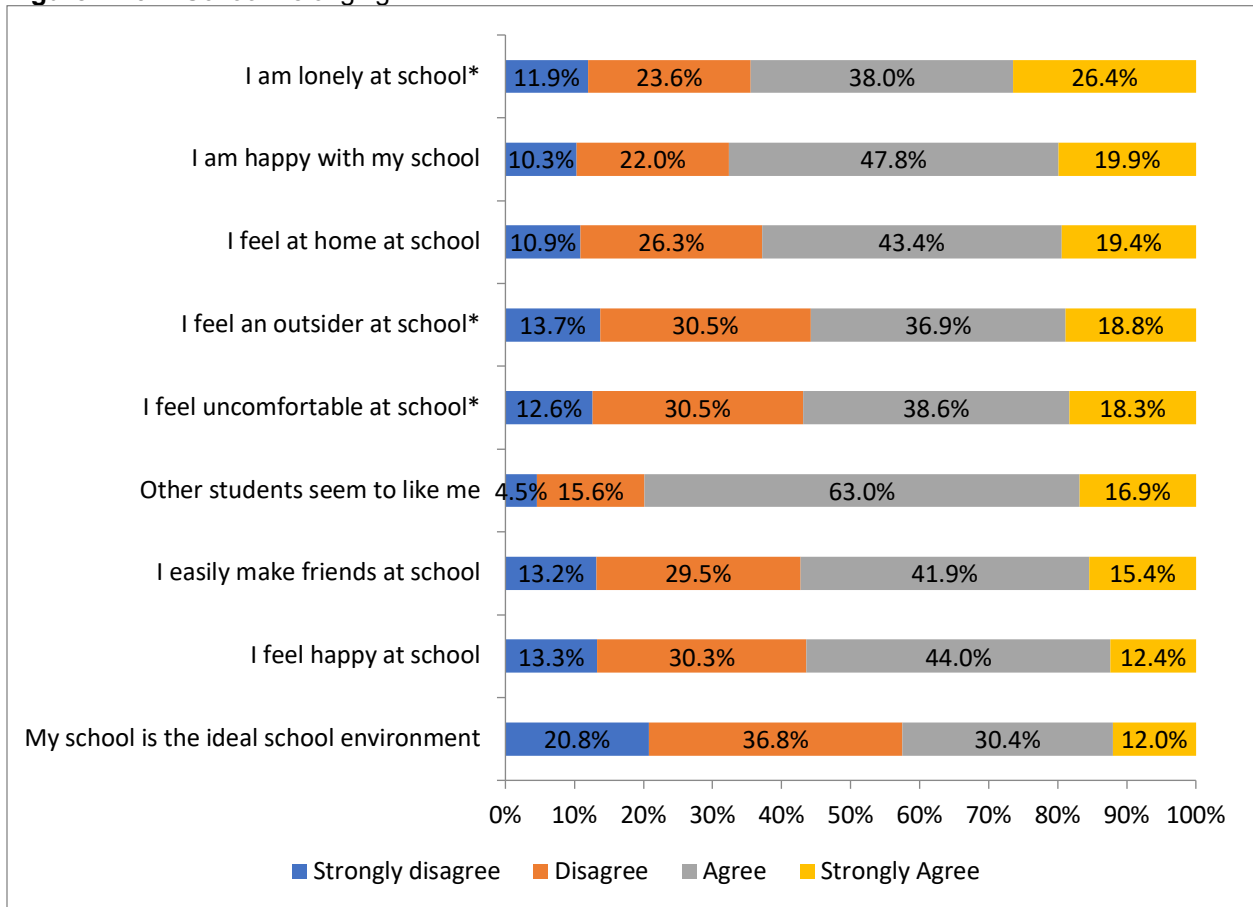


Figure 1.23B: School Belonging, LGBT Students and the General Population of 15 Year-Old Students

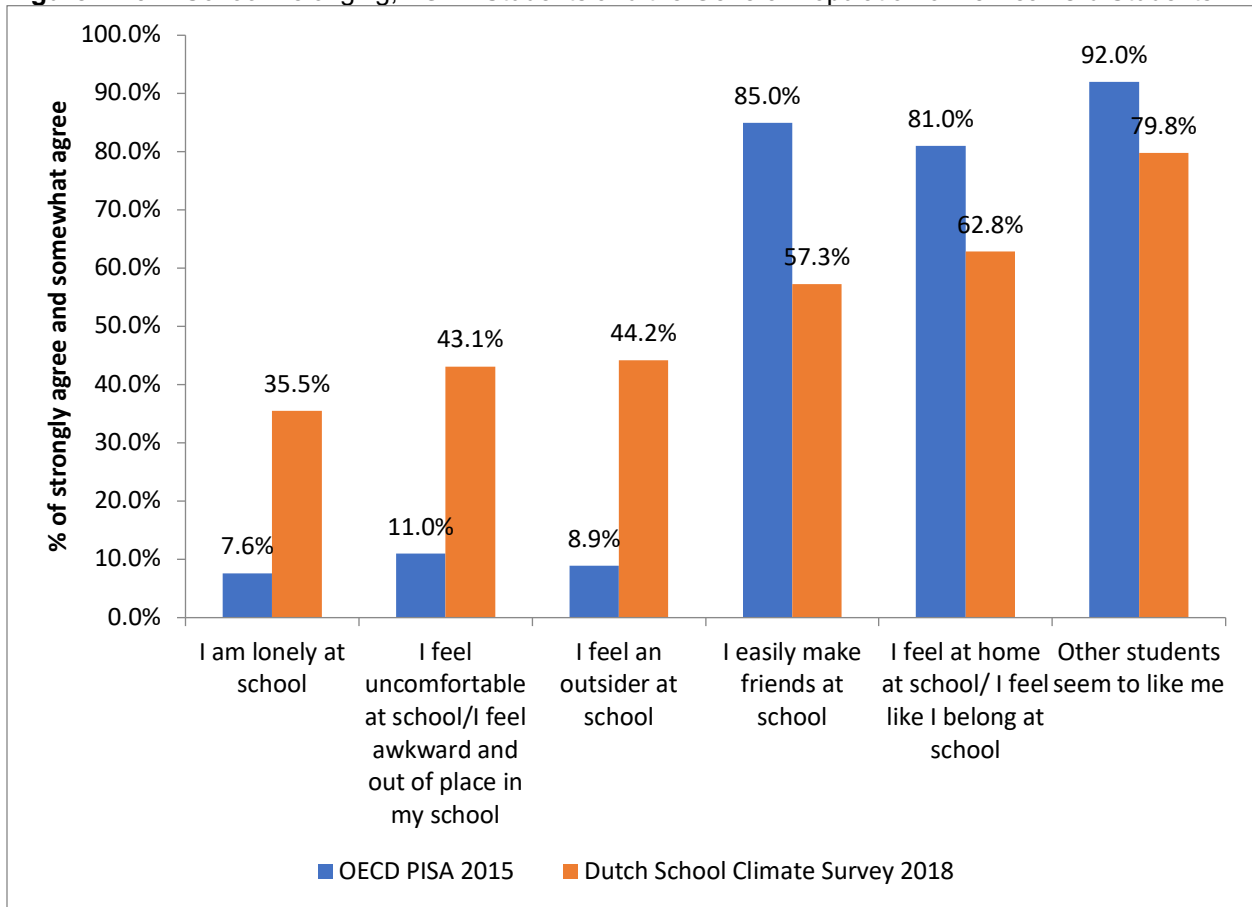


Figure 1.23C: School Belonging by Experiences of Victimization and Discrimination

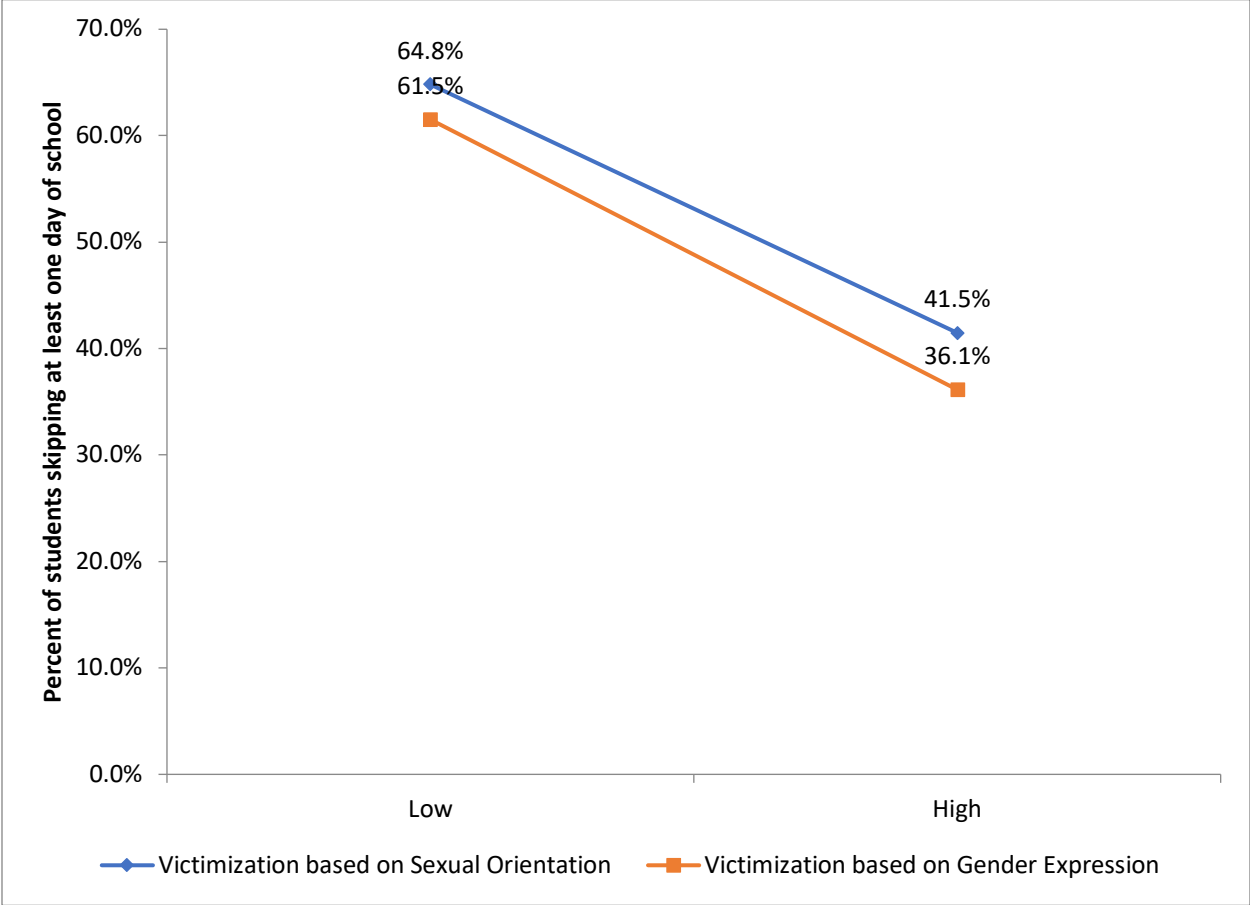


Figure 2.1: LGBT Students' Reports on How Accepting Their School's Students are of LGBT People

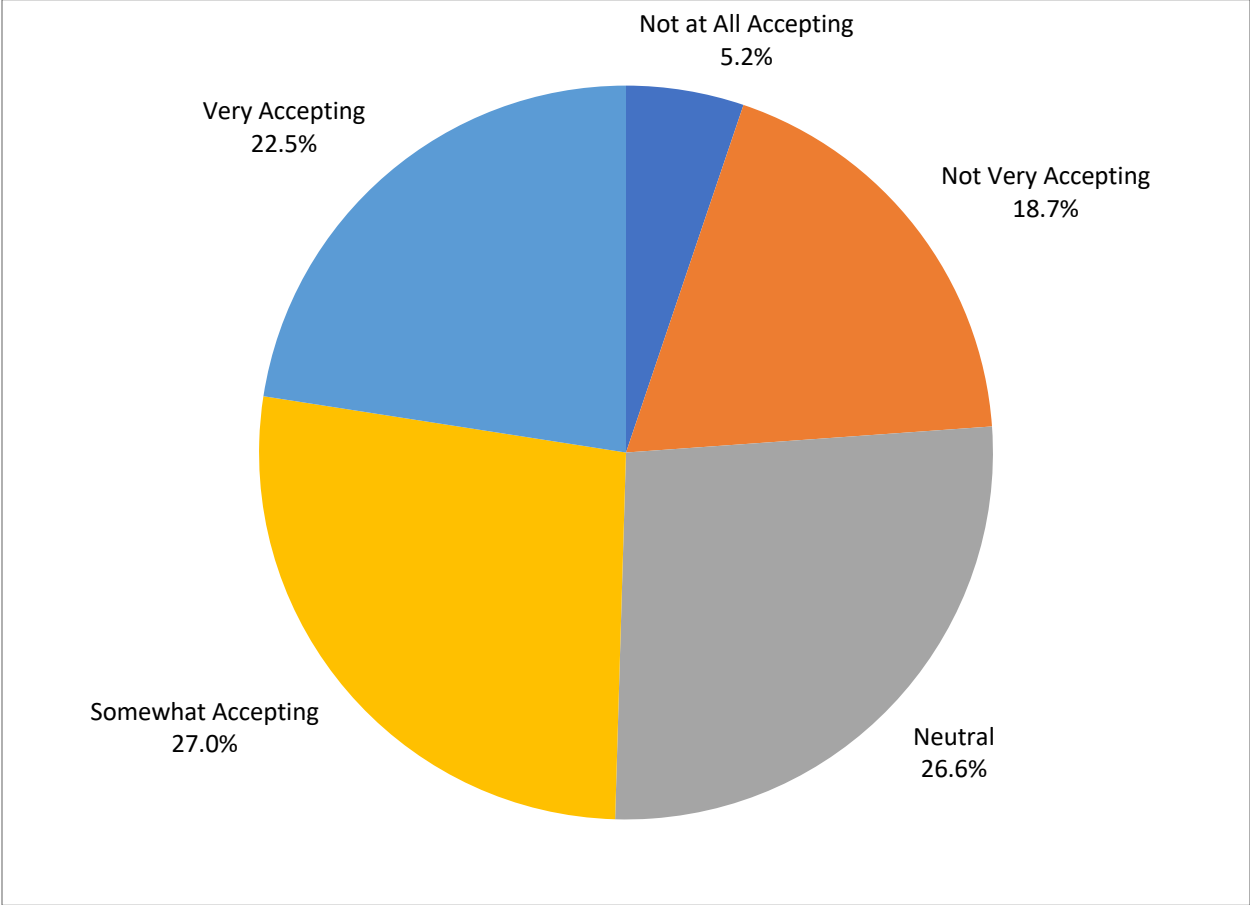


Figure 2.2: LGBT Students' Reports on the Number of LGBT Students at their School

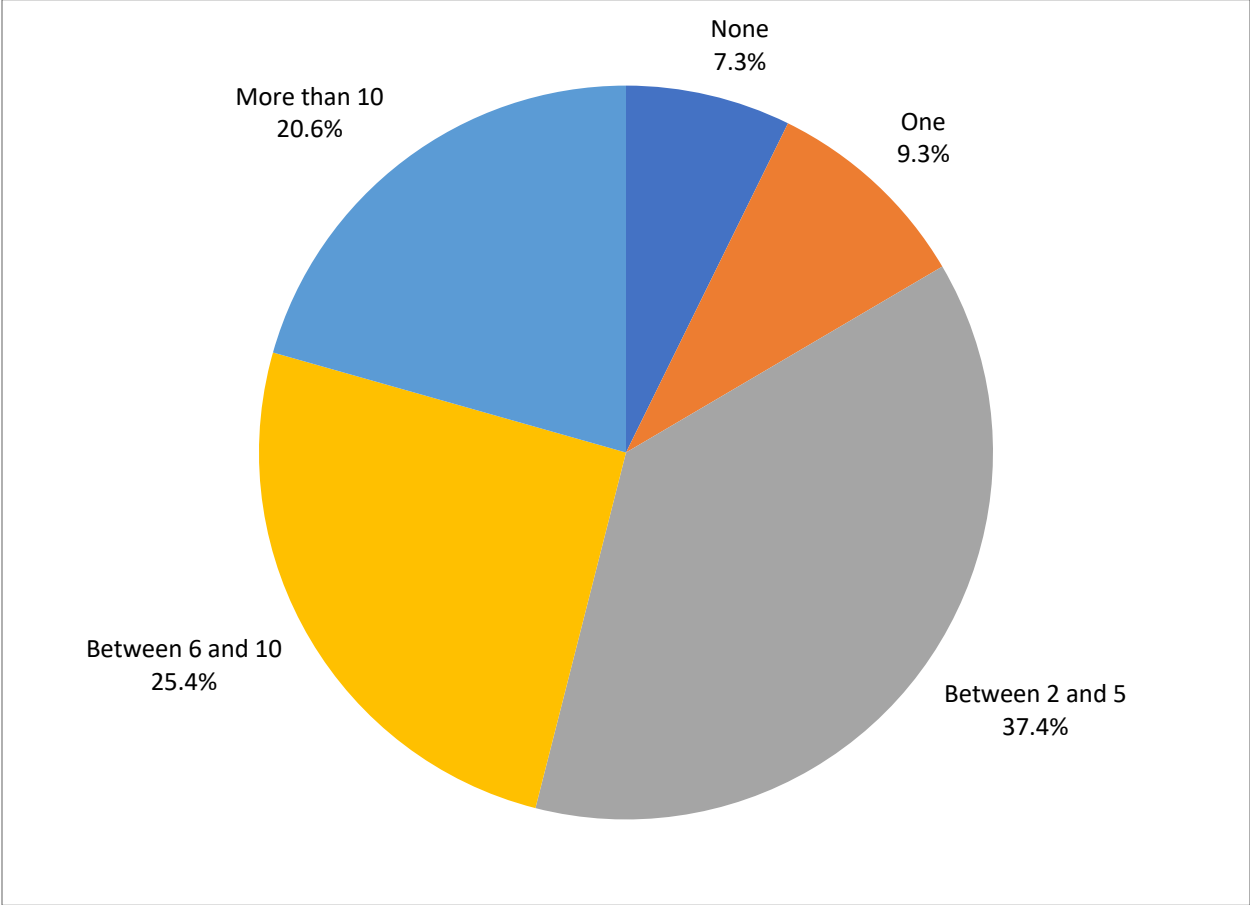


Figure 2.3: Frequency of Attending a Program or Group for LGBT Youth Outside Their School

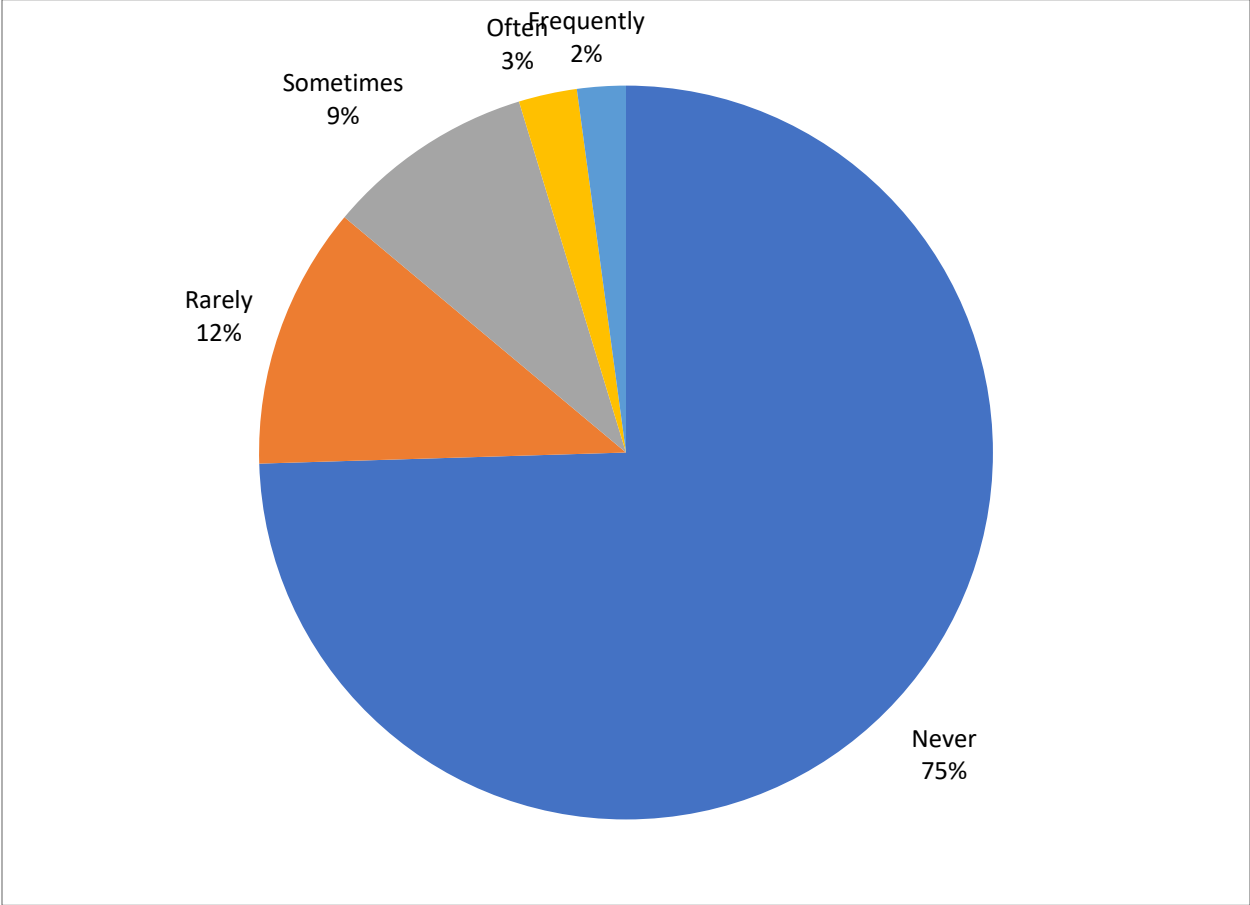


Figure 2.4: LGBT Students' Reports on Number of Teachers and Other School Staff Who are Supportive of LGBT Students

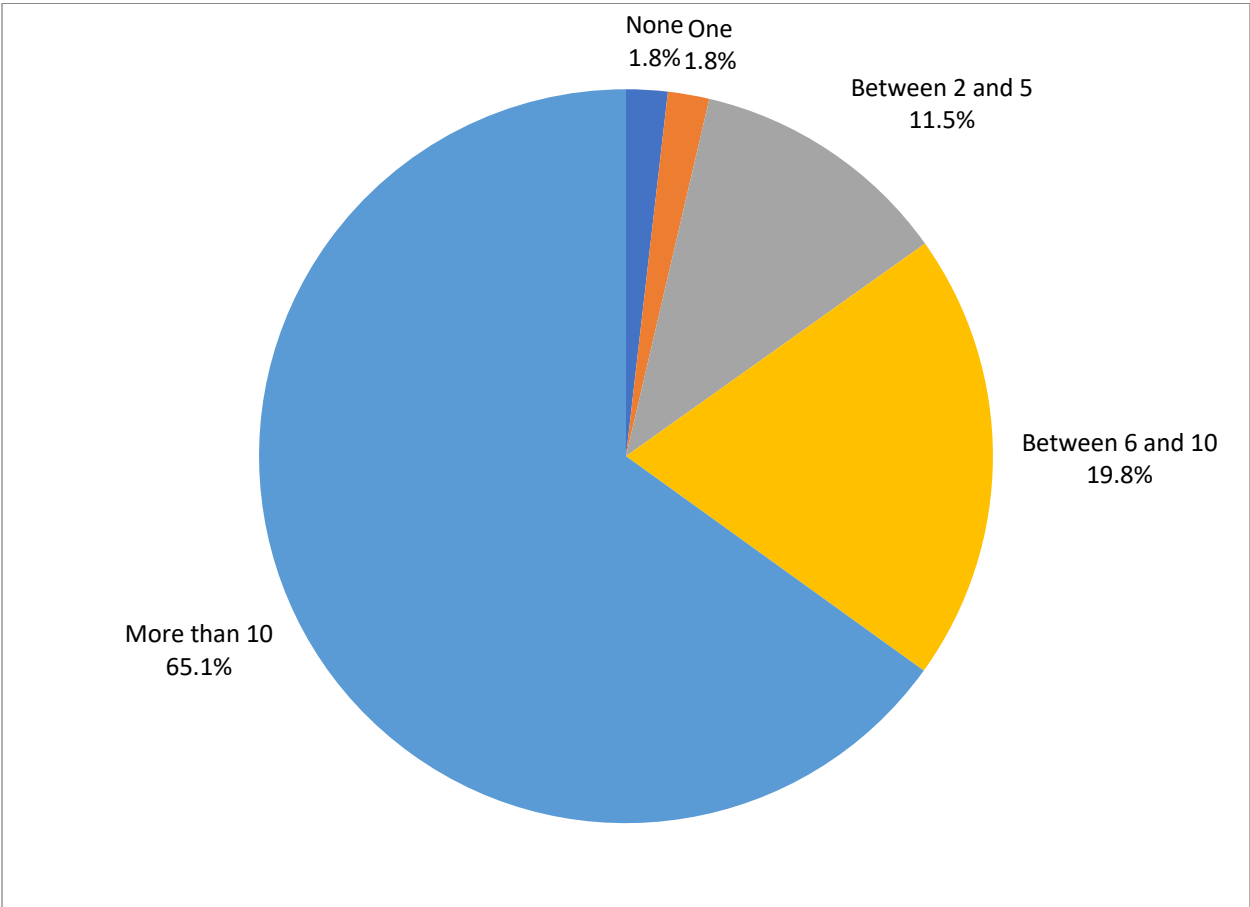


Figure 2.5: Comfort Talking with School Personnel about LGBT Issues

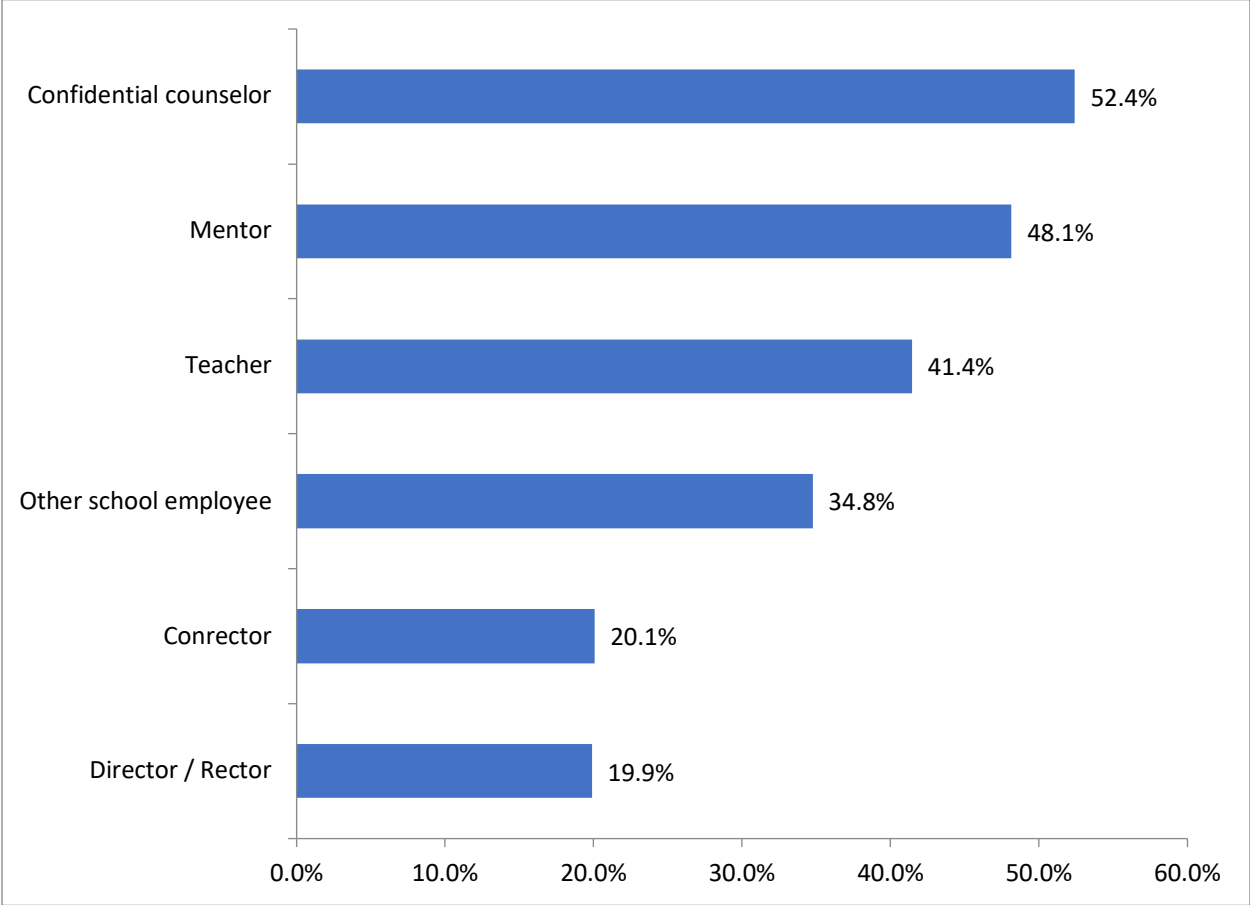


Figure 2.7: Percentage of LGBT Students Taught Bullying in School

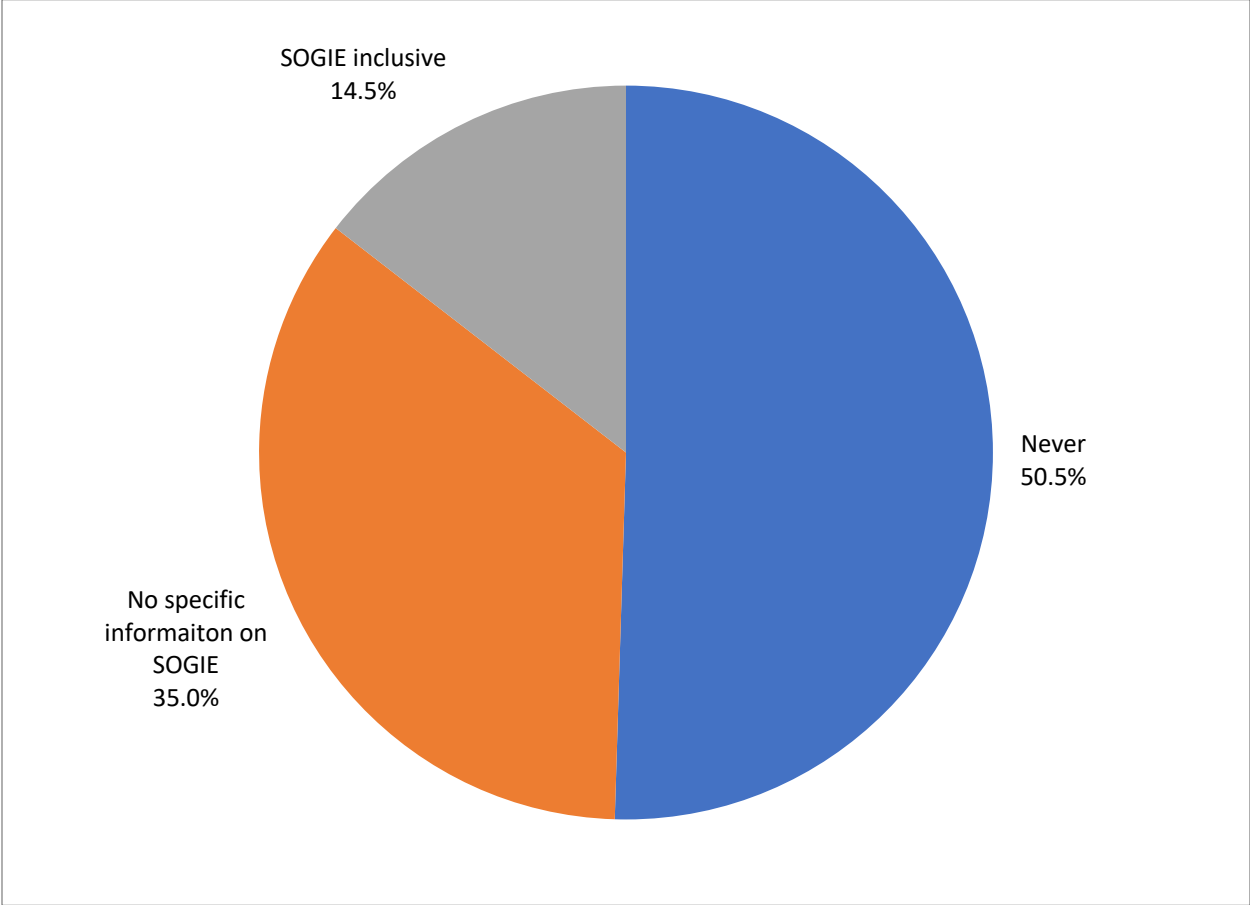


Figure 2.8: Availability of LGBT-Related Curricular Resources

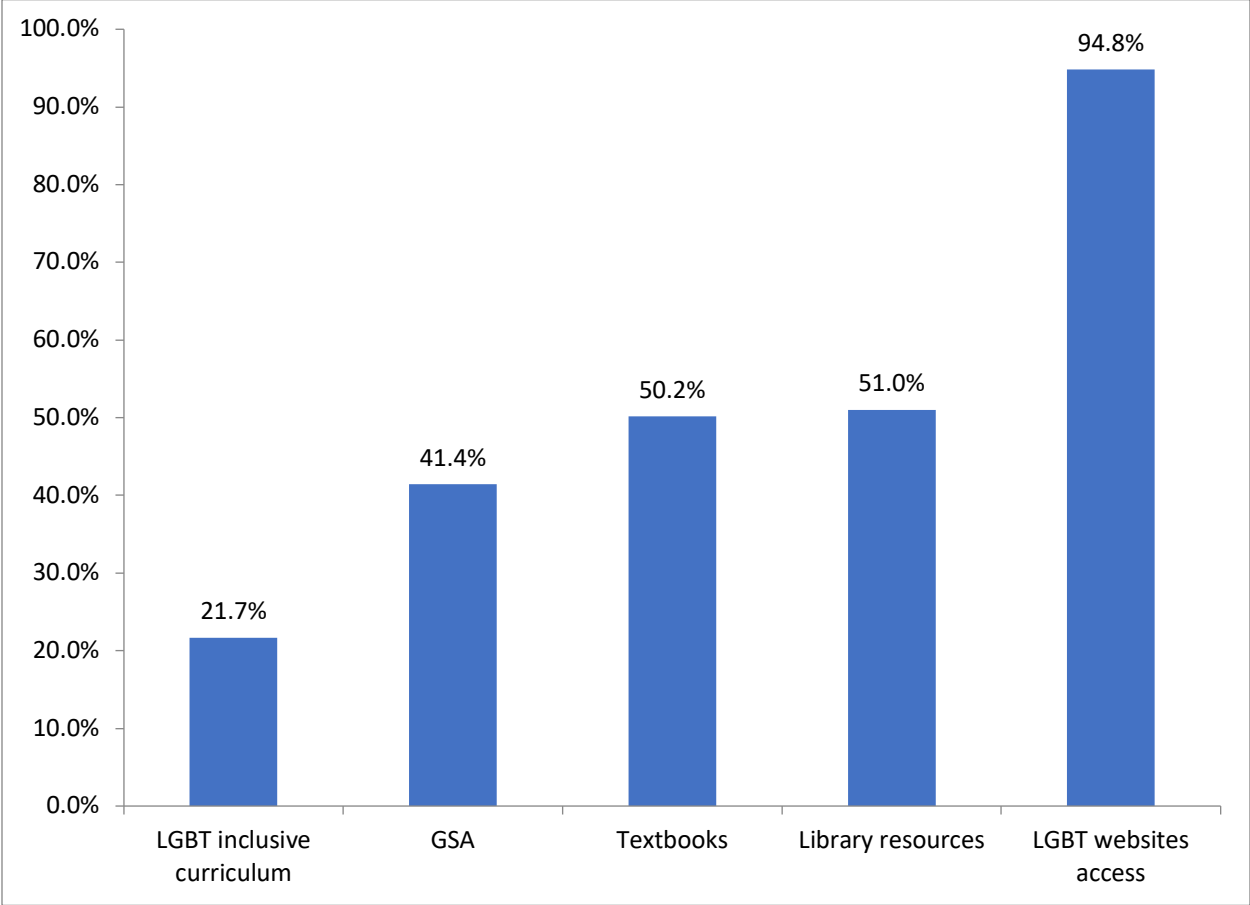


Figure 2.9: The Number of Teacher and School Personnel Who Support LGBT Students and the LGBT Student Experience

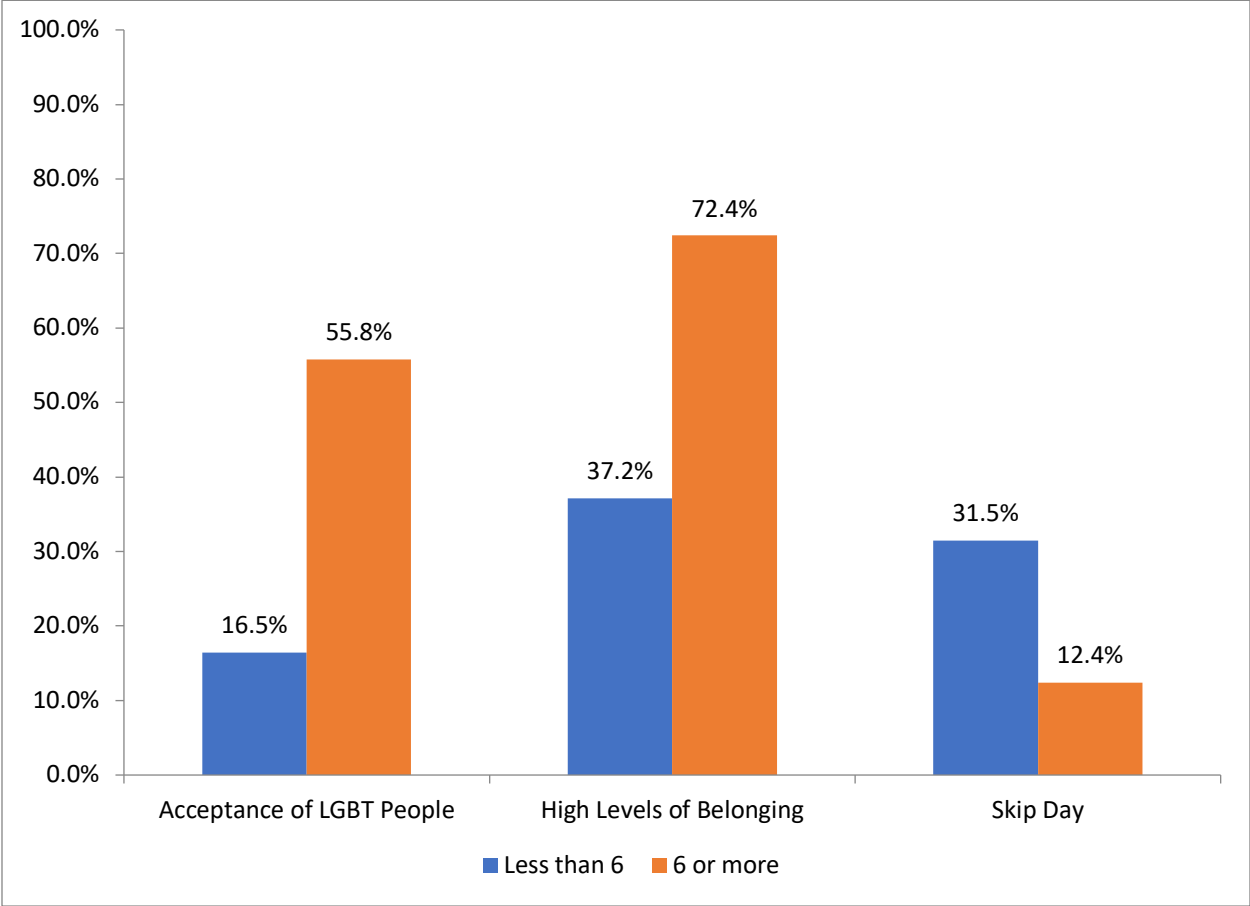


Figure 2.10: Staff Intervention on Homophobic Comments and the Experience of LGBT Students

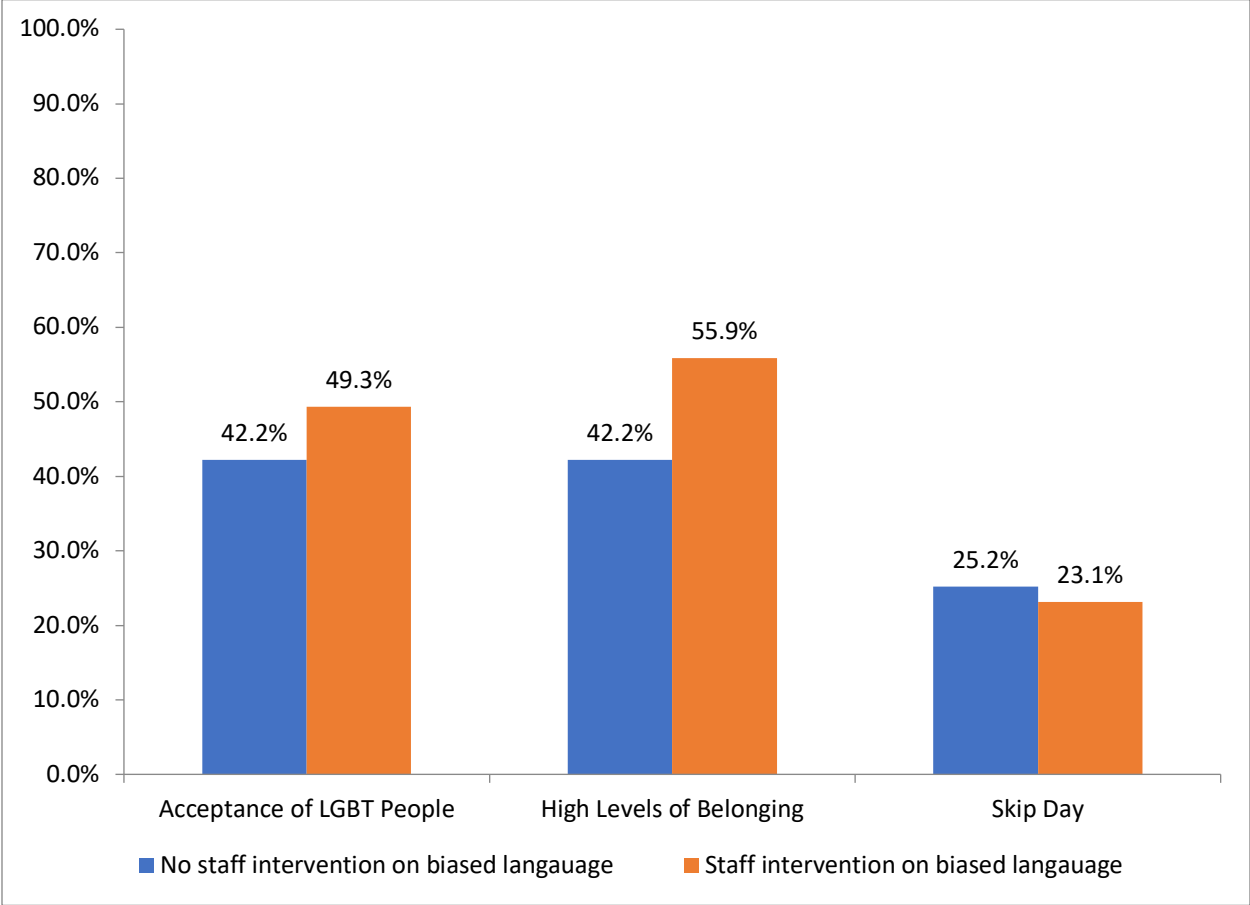


Figure 2.11: Inclusive Curriculum and the Experience of LGBT Students

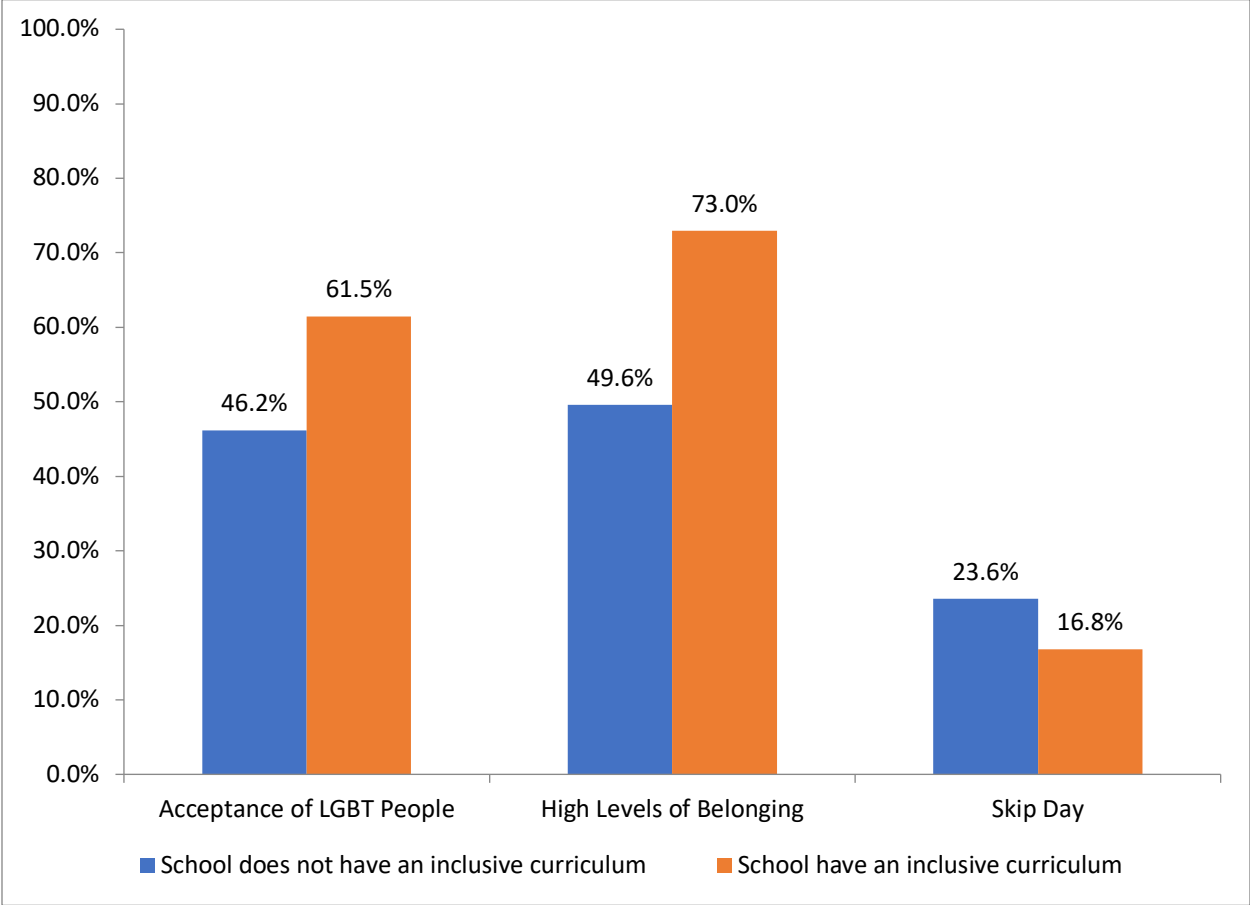


Figure 2.12: Reasons for not being active in school GSA

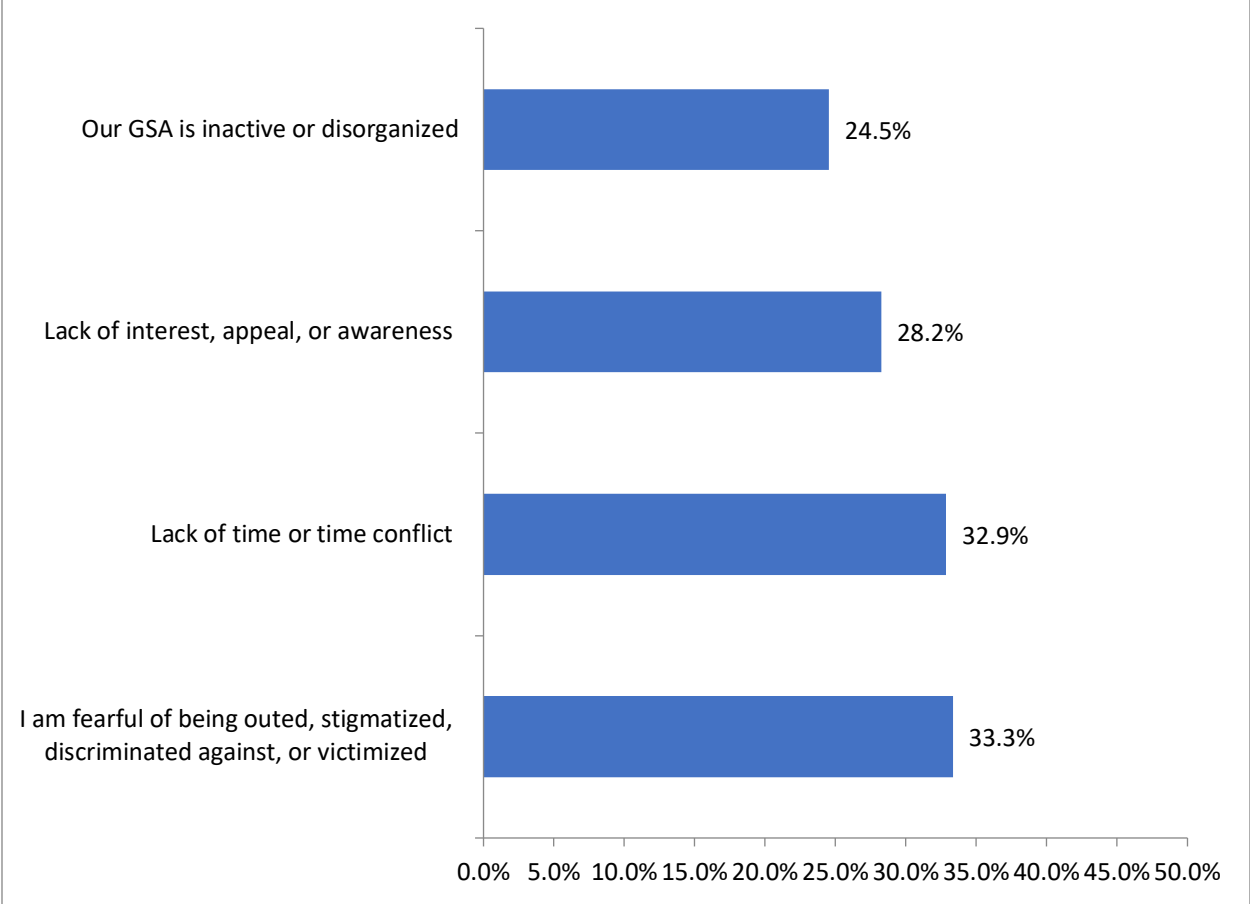


Figure 2.13: Actions / Activities in the context of school GSA

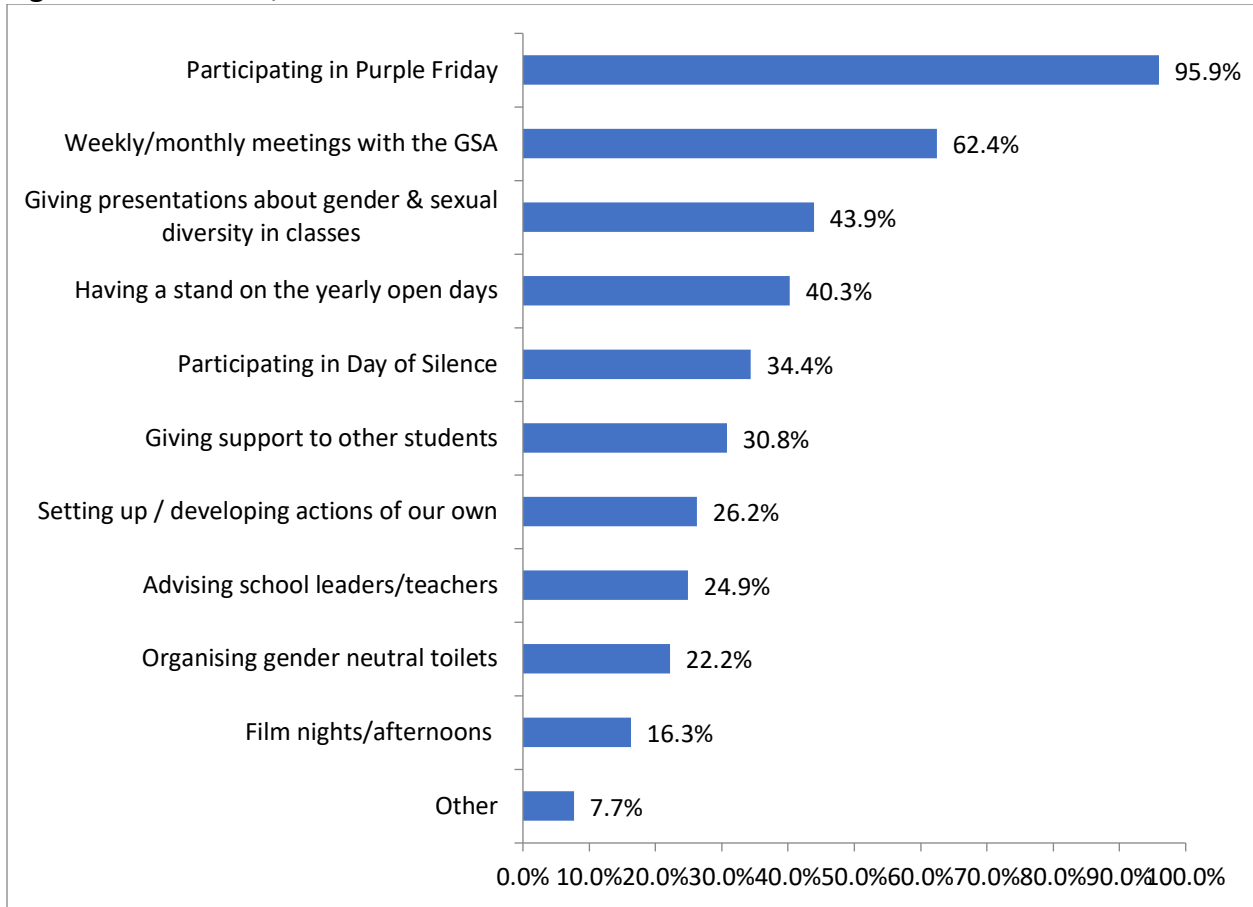


Figure 2.14: GSA Clubs and the Experience of LGBT Students

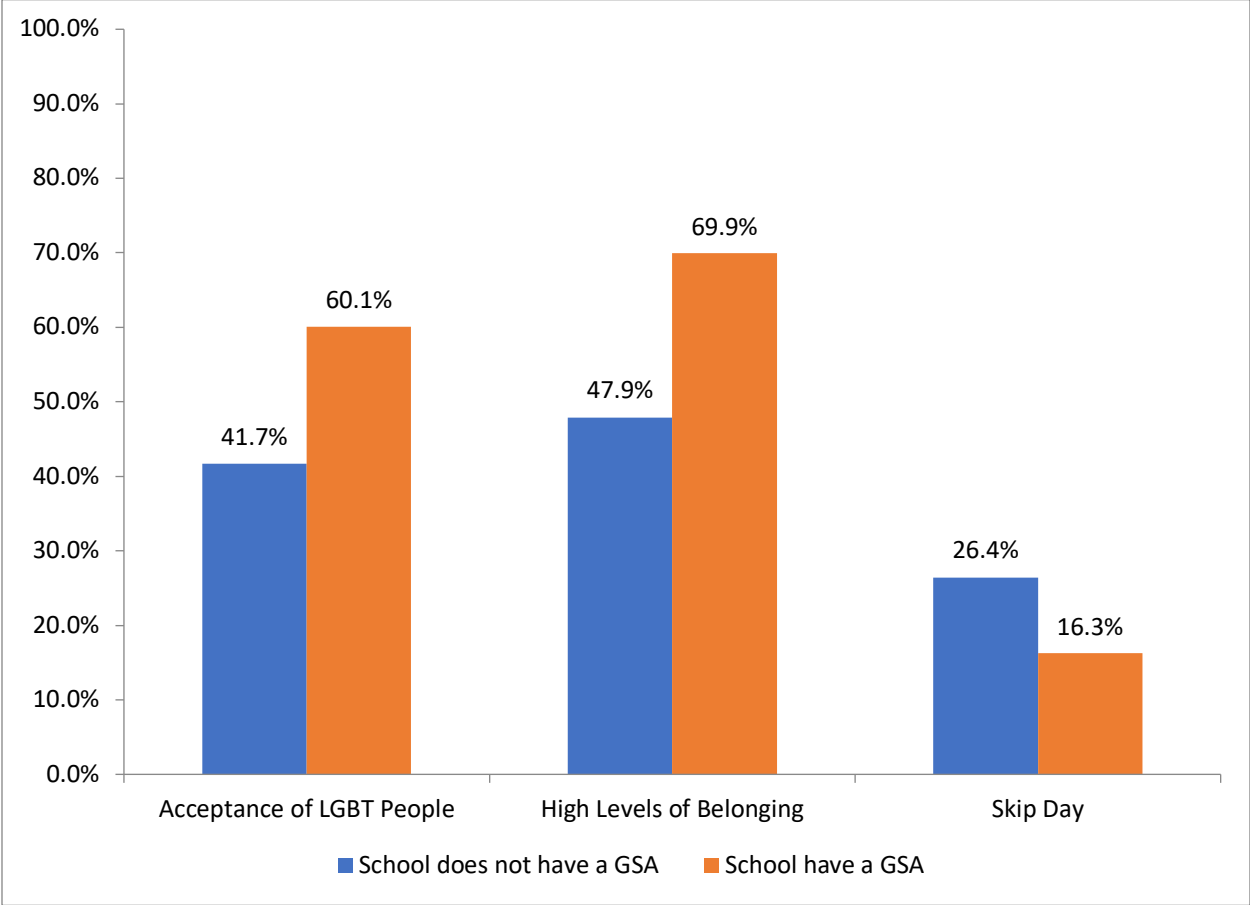


Figure 2.15: GSA Clubs and Frequency that LGBT Students Hear Other Biased Remarks at School

