

The potential and challenge of LGBTQ+ⁱ student groups on Japanese campus

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Abstract

The existence of an LGBTQ+ student group is considered to be a key indicator of a supportive campus environment. However, very little of the existing literature has examined LGBTQ+ student groups' organization and operation at Japanese universities. By collecting digital data and conducting interview surveys with leaders and members of the student groups, this paper aims to get a better understanding of the LGBTQ+ student groups and reveal the potential and challenges these groups have.

Key Words: LGBTQ+, student groups, safe space, higher education, campus environment

1. Introduction

In the past few decades, the queer community seems to have gained more attention in global mainstream media with progress being gradually made in terms of the visibility of queer individuals and efforts for marriage equality. In 2015, Shibuya ward became the first place in Japan to grant certificates to same-sex couples. Since then, the number of cities and prefectures that recognize same-sex partnership has been multiplying. Accordingly, Japanese people's, particularly the younger generation's acceptance of homosexuality has also been growing over the years (PEW Global Research, 2007, 2013, 2020).

In spite of these attainments, queer individuals are still facing discrimination. According to a national survey conducted by *Inochi Risupekuto Howaito Ribon Kyanpen* (The Life Respect White Ribbon Campaign, 2014), LGBT youth in Japan frequently reported feeling unsafe and about 70% of them had experienced bullying at elementary or secondary school. Moreover, reporting bullying did not help the situation as 45% of those who reported indicated that the situation did not change even after seeking help. Studies by international or-

ⁱ LGBTQ (IA) + is an acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning and others. Queer was a derogatory term against homosexuals; now the term has been reclaimed as an umbrella term to denote the diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities. In this paper, LGBTQ (IA) + and queer are used interchangeably to refer to individuals and community of gender and sexual minorities.

ganizations such as The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2015) and Human Rights Watch (HRW, 2016) indicate that bullied queer youth often experience exclusion and loneliness and have a higher risk of attempting suicide and self-harming. HRW (2016) suggests that invisibility of queer students, lack of information about LGBTQ+ in curriculums, and teachers' homophobia/transphobia are among the major problems that take place in pre-tertiary education.

It is clear that experiencing discrimination and bullying at schools will lead to a negative impact on queer youth's well-being and development. However, when it comes to studies on LGBTQ+ youths in Japan, very few of them have focused on a university setting (see Kawashima, 2015). According to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT, 2012), Japan has already entered the stage of universal access to higher education since almost four-fifths of high school graduates will continue their education in colleges or universities.ⁱⁱ Considering the percentage of high school graduates who pursue post-secondary education, it is likely that the discrimination and bullying that queer youth would experience at other stages of school (i.e. elementary and/or secondary school) may be reproduced in their university life as well. In addition, universities are also a microcosm of society as some social problems can be reflected on campuses, and experiences at universities may influence and shape individuals' identities in society (Grumrecht, 2003, Worthen, 2012). Therefore, it is indisputable that the life of queer university students and the environment of universities merit to be considered and acknowledged.

Queer visibility and queer identity studies are at the center of literature on queer issues in higher education (Renn, 2010, Vaserfierer, 2012), particularly in the U.S. scholarship. Meanwhile, many studies concentrate on campus climate based on surveys of queer students, faculty members, and staff members, documenting hostility and alienation experienced by queer students on campus (e.g., Brown, Clarke, Grotmaker & Robinson-Keilig, 2004; Rankin, 2003, 2006; Rankin, Weber, Blumenfeld & Frazer, 2010). Burluson's study (2010) presented a correlation between the college choice process and the campus climate that queer students are likely to consider studying at a gay-friendly institution.

ⁱⁱ In Japan, the percentage of students enrolling in universities and junior colleges has steadily increased since the Second World War to exceed 50% as of now. The total percentage will exceed 70% if the percentages of students enrolling in colleges of technology and specialized schools are included.
http://www.mext.go.jp/english/highered/___icsFiles/afiedfile/2012/06/19/1302653_1.pdf

Campus climate studies provide groundwork data on experiences of and attitudes about queer people and have often been used as evidence for creating, improving, or expanding LGBTQIA+ related programs and services (Sanlo, Rankin, & Schoenberg, 2002). According to Kane (2013), a key indicator of a supportive campus environment is the existence of a queer student group. Historically, since their first appearance in the U.S. in the 1960s, queer student groups have been playing important roles in the larger LGBTQIA+ movement, often provide the basis for the development of other off-campus queer organizations and alliances with non-queer organizations (Beemyn, 2003). Nowadays, queer student groups in both high schools and post-secondary schools are critical resources for queer students, providing social support and activism opportunities (Wall, Kane & Wisneski, 2010). Moreover, the existence of an officially recognized queer student group also indicates a positive, supportive campus climate for queer students (Kane, 2013).

Similar to the case of the United States, in Japan, student groups/clubs are highly valued in the students' campus life. McVeigh (2000) notes that clubs play an important socializing role at the university level for many students. Namely, these clubs form a space for students who share similar hobbies to practice, cultivate friendships, relieve stress and get together. According to Naver Matome,ⁱⁱⁱ a curation website, about 130 queer-related student groups currently exist on Japanese campuses. However, very little of the existing literature has examined the life experiences and issues of queer students on Japanese campuses, nor campus climate for queer students; less known is the organization and operation of LGBTQ+ student groups at Japanese universities. Therefore, this paper aims to contribute to a better understanding of the LGBTQ+ student groups on Japanese campus by examining their organization and issues.

2. Characteristics of LGBTQ+ student groups in Japan

Based on a compiled list of LGBT-related clubs and student groups in Japanese universities published on Naver Matome, the geographical distribution of LGBTQ+ student groups can be seen in Table 1 which shows that LGBTQ+ student groups are primarily concentrated in the Kanto and Kansai regions. Apart from the reason that these two regions are the most populated areas in Japan and have more institutes than other areas, they are often

ⁱⁱⁱ Naver Matome is a curation website that provides various types of information collected and organized by the users. <http://matome.naver.jp/odai/2138323118565009201> (Retrieved July 8, 2018).

considered as the most culturally, historically and commercially salient areas in Japan. It is likely that these areas are more open to diversity and new ideas. Moreover, both areas are known for their gay neighborhoods, local Rainbow Prides, and engagement in hosting queer-related culture events. Besides, these areas also strive to promote LGBTQI+ rights as four out of six places that recognize same-sex partnership in Japan are located in the Kanto and Kansai areas. On this account, it would be easier for universities in these areas to work on queer issues and establish LGBTQ+ student groups.

According to MEXT (2012), among the 778 universities in Japan, 86 of them are national universities, 95 are public universities, and 597 are private universities. Based on the current source, 15% of Japanese universities have or had LGBTQ+ related student groups.^{iv}

Table 1. LGBTQ+ student group in Japan
Region

	Frequency	Percent
Hokkaido	4	3 %
Tohoku	7	5 %
Kanto	63	49%
Chubu	16	12%
Kansai	25	19%
Chugoku	4	3 %
Shikoku	1	1 %
Kyushu	10	8 %
Total	130	100.0%

It is noticed that about one-third of national universities have LGBTQ+ student groups, indicating that students in national universities may be more active in promoting queer issues and providing safe space for queer students. This may result from their relatively diverse campus environment, educational reform activities and international cooperation.^v Meanwhile, LGBTQ+ student groups are rarely found in junior/community colleges.^{vi} Besides, several LGBTQ+ student groups are coalitions that cooperate with other universities across the country, colleges and/or other organizations. The existence of these groups,

^{iv} A number of universities have more than one LGBTQ+ student group.

^v According to National Universities Quarterly Report (2016), national universities promote “various, practical education in response to social needs and internationalization,” and provide “advanced, high-quality education”. www.janu.jp/eng/publications/files/20161227-janu_14-english.pdf

^{vi} No LGBTQ+ student group from a junior/community college appeared on Naver Matome’s “Round-up of LGBT-related club, group for students.”

on the one hand, breaks the boundary of universities to build up regional collaborations, which may provide a more inclusive and diverse space for queer students to meet and hang out. On the other hand, to some extent, it provides a compensation to queer students in universities, colleges that do not have any LGBTQ+ student groups. Moreover, as some of these groups are also collaborating with off-campus NPOs, it may be possible for these groups to expand their activities and improve their efficiency and abilities.

In order to keep events updated, all the LGBTQ+ student groups have their own Social Networking Service (SNS) accounts, which become the most efficient platform for organizers and members to communicate. Initially, many organizers updated information about activities through blogs. For instance, Rainbow College (2006)^{vii} was one of the earliest blogs dedicated to providing information about queer-related activities and policies on campuses. However, recently, Twitter has become a major means to promote and share club activities. The use of Twitter also gradually increased over the years, and it had reached its peak in 2015, with about one-third of LGBTQ+ student groups having joined Twitter. It may have resulted from the increasing coverage of LGBTQ+ related issues in mass media, as the same-sex partnership in Shibuya ward had been discussed early that year. Moreover, Tokyo Rainbow Pride 2015 brought over 50,000 people together to Yoyogi Park, which granted the queer community great visibility. Besides, the Pride also expanded itself into a comprehensive week-long event where people could attend LGBTQIA+ related lectures and presentations, with some of them targeting students, which may inspire the students to establish their own groups at their universities. Besides, regarding the intervals between updates in the groups' accounts, it indicated that groups established after 2015 were more active compared to the ones established earlier.

In terms of the characters of LGBTQ+ student groups in Japanese universities, however, the majority of them are unofficial ones. It is possibly due to administrative issues as an application for official groups needs more time and procedures compared to an application for an unofficial one. For instance, according to the recognition of official student club/group policy at a national university in Western Japan (2015), in order to establish an official club/

^{vii} Rainbow College is an “intercollegiate network for sexual minorities” that connects LGBT students who are willing to make better student life by exchanging information via mailing list and *mixi* community, organizing studying meetings, participating in events like lesbian and gay parades. <http://rainbowcollege.blog68.fc2.com/blog-entry-1.html>

group, one has to meet requirements such as having at least five (undergraduate) students, performance or achievement records for at least three years and support from faculty members (professors, vice professors, lecturers, etc.). It seems very few LGBTQ+ student groups have been established for more than three years. Besides, turning in the name list of the members may increase the risk of the accidental outing of the closeted students in the group. These factors may potentially hinder them from being officially endorsed. However, it is noticed that national universities, compared to other types of universities, have more official LGBTQ+ student groups, which to some extent indicates that national universities are more supportive of LGBTQ+ related issues.

Looking at the descriptions of Twitter accounts of LGBTQ+ student groups, the majority of them are either only open to *tōjisha* (individuals who identify as LGBTQ+) or have no mention of the targeted audience. Only less than one-fifth of the groups clearly mentioned that they welcome allies and supporters of queer people. It is also found that the number of LGBTQ+ student groups that include non-queer identified participants is also increasing over the years. This indicates that more people have started to realize the significant role allies in promoting queer issues as well as their power in spreading the word of LGBTQ+ issues to other non-queer identified individuals.

The data presented above was collected mainly through the descriptions from the Twitter accounts or websites of given LGBTQ+ student groups. Therefore, some of the information may be inaccurate or overlooked. For instance, the date of establishment of the LGBTQ+ student groups may not be the same as the date of joining Twitter. In order to delve into the structure and management of queer student groups and LGBTQ+ students' campus experiences, a follow-up questionnaire interview was conducted. I focused on questions regarding basic information and club activities, members, collaborations and existing problems. Also, I aim to gain a better understanding of the groups from different aspects.

3. Questionnaire Interview

The questionnaire interviews were conducted between 2016 and 2018. The questionnaire was distributed or sent to the recipients listed on Naver Matome's "Round-up of LGBT-related club, group for students" via e-mail (during the early stage), Twitter's direct message, Facebook message, or direct contact with club/group-related individuals at various

queer-related events. In the end, 25 student groups from 23 different universities participated, which represented 20% of the known queer student groups in Japanese universities.

3. 1. Basic information and club/group activities

The student groups are distributed in 7 areas in Japan: Hokkaido (1, 4%), Tohoku (1, 4%), Kanto (11, 44%), Chubu (2, 8%), Kansai (5, 20%), Chugoku (2, 8%), and Kyushu (4, 16%). About half of these groups are in national universities, two-fifths are in private universities and one is in a public university. The majority of the groups are unofficial but three of them are acknowledged by their universities.

In terms of years of establishment, about half of them have been set up for 1~3 years; about one-third of them for 4~9 years; about one-fifth of them for over 10 years. In addition, groups established for less than 3 years are generally run by the club/group initiators. A number of these initiators/organizers designed the group to be a gathering space for queer students and students who have concerns about their gender and sexual identities to share their stories and experiences; additionally, some of them expected to have their groups cater to the specialty of their universities. For instance, a group in a social welfare university was created as a place for students to “get together, think and share thoughts about sexuality from aspects of welfare and well-being.”

3. 2. Activities

Most of the groups have a regular once a week on-campus event, which is usually in the form of a lunch meeting, while each LGBTQ+ student group/club has their own frequency of holding other events. These events range from social-orientated, usually off-campus, such as dinners, drinking parties, and queer neighborhood touring, to education-and-culture-oriented, usually on-campus, such as educational lectures, queer movie screenings, talks, and discussions on LGBTQ+ issues, to action-oriented, such as organizing ally week, hosting a booth during annual university festivals or at the pride parade events. Despite the diversity in the club activities, it is less frequent to see the club organizers host or initiate larger-scale events on and off campus; rather, they would prefer to go to ready-made events held or organized by other LGBTQ+ student groups or organizations at other universities or venues.

3. 3. Members

Although most of the groups have not put a restriction on their members' gender identity, sexual orientation, nationality or school year, under certain circumstances, some clubs/groups may prefer the members to be queer-identified and/or students of their own universities:

The general meetings are open to anyone regardless of sexuality, age, position; however, [we] may put restrictions depending on the purpose of the meeting (e.g., gay only, bisexual women only); administrative members have to be the students of this university but we don't ask about their sexual identities.

(2 years, unofficial, private university, Kanto)

Among the surveyed groups, the majority of the members are undergraduates, however, in some national universities and higher-ranked private universities, a small number of graduate students may participate in the club activities. It is also noticed that comprehensive universities tend to have more diversity in terms of their members' nationalities. Moreover, newly established LGBTQ+ student groups are likely to have more straight allies' engagement. Regarding members' personal information, some groups seem to carefully manage members' information by keeping a record of their members' biological sexes and their gender identities, whereas some groups do not keep these record, focusing less on the identities of their members.

Similar to the previous analysis, all of the surveyed groups have been using at least one Social Networking Service (SNS) account such as Twitter, Facebook, or a blog to update and promote their activities and events. However, in regard to in-group contacts and communication with members, all of the organizers tend to choose a more restricted and more private approach to prevent disclosure of members' information. Therefore, LINE and mailing list are most often chosen as the primary ways of communication among members.

3. 4. Collaborations

As mentioned above, to become established as an official group, an advisor, usually a faculty member, is needed. However, among the collected surveys, only a few of the organizers of the official LGBTQ+ student groups mentioned the involvement of the advisor:

We have an advisor, but the activities are mainly student-centered.

(4 years, official club, national university, Kanto)

[We have] one advisor, but [he] does not attend the activities. If there is any need, we consult with him.

(27 years, official club, private university, Kanto)

In addition, as mentioned in the activities section, on some occasions, student group organizers, along with their members, would participate in some events held by other LGBTQ+ student groups and organizations. According to the survey, about half of the LGBTQ+ student groups have built certain connections with their local LGBTQ+ organizations and some of them have also collaborated with other queer organizations in hosting some local LGBTQ+ related events:

... [We] collaborate with groups from neighboring universities: When doing an event, we advertise it through various platforms; and we have held “getting acquaintance in the neighborhood,” a gathering event with different [LGBTQ+] student groups.

(4 years, official club, national university, Kanto)

3. 5. Problems and concerns

Most of the respondents have expressed concerns for their LGBTQ+ student groups. A number of organizers stated that the division of work in the club was quite imbalanced and only a limited number of members were actually engaged in the club management. Therefore, the club being understaffed, the group leaders have to take on the responsibilities for running the club, organizing and promoting events:

Because the club is relatively open in terms of activities, many members do not want to take any position [in the organizing team]. In the end, the representative and the vice representative have to take on the excessive work and responsibilities.

(3 years, unofficial, private university, Kanto)

Moreover, the budget is another major concern for many unofficial LGBTQ+ student groups. Because of the limited budget, it is more difficult for them to organize larger events:

Because [the club] is unofficial, funds for activities are at my own expense; it is difficult to hold large events.

(6 years, unofficial, private university, Tohoku)

Besides, finding a successor is among the major issues for clubs, along with low participation, low publicity, outing problems:

[I have been] serving as the representative for four years and the second-generation representative will take over from the next year ... [I am] worried if the transition will go smoothly. I have made some materials regarding the transition [and the club]. Even if the club were ruined, the materials would become a resource that they may use as navigation.

(4 years, official club, national university, Kanto)

4. Discussions

Over the course of data collection, only about 20% of the groups responded to the questionnaire. Privacy may be one of the significant factors that contributed to the low response rate. D'Augelli (2006, p. 205) suggested that privacy has always been a major concern for queer organizations. For instance, in the 1970s and 1980s, members of the Gay Men's Alliance (GMA) needed to keep their meeting place secret due to the fear of being assaulted or found out by their friends and families. A similar case was noticed when I was about to attend an on-campus LGBTQ+ event at a university: the information about the event was posted on Twitter, however, details such as the venue were not given. Puzzled at first, I later learned that they were doing this to ensure the safety of their members. The club leader also wrote down a list of ground rules for the club and non-disclosure agreements on a whiteboard and read them whenever a new member joined during the session. By doing so, a private environment is created; thus, the members will feel safe and comfortable. Many other LGBTQ+ student groups have also adopted a similar strategy in organizing on- and off-campus events.

As has been noted that most groups and activities are "social-oriented," whereas "action-oriented" groups and activities may reach out to more people. In order to organize "action-oriented" activities, institutional support seems particularly essential; however only a few

groups (usually the official groups) could meet the university's requirement to get substantial support for their activities. Besides, students are reluctant to initiate such groups or activities due to social prejudice or being closeted (Kawashima, 2017). Indeed, in a country like Japan, where cultural homogeneity and collectivism are valued, coming out could be extremely difficult for some individuals. However, the collectivist sense of self and others is also reproduced in the management of some queer student groups in Japanese universities. I noticed that a number of these groups are exclusively for queer-identified individuals and students from the same university. On the one hand, this will offer the participants a sense of belonging and safety by lowering the risk of information disclosure or outing. On the other hand, it may hinder potential interaction and networking with groups at different universities and non-queer identified allies, who are an impetus in raising awareness of LGBTQ+ issues in the non-queer community.

As presented previously, club organizers or leaders need to invest considerable time and effort to keep the groups rolling. This is especially true for smaller universities since regular members have relatively low involvement in the club management. Moreover, despite a relatively large number of people who have signed up for the groups, in most cases, less than half of the members regularly participate in club activities. The dependence on leadership is not uncommon in organizations and to some extent, it reflects the status hierarchy that is deeply ingrained in Japanese society: *kohai* (juniors) are supposed to respect and obey their *senpai* (seniors), and *senpai* is supposed to take the role of mentor to guide and teach their *kohai*. As LGBTQ+ student groups are primarily designed as a common ground for queer people to meet and chat, each member is supposed to contribute equal effort and empower other members. The leadership dependence and low motivation among members would contribute to the end of the groups and the deprivation of the safe space, which may explain some club initiators' concerns about finding a successor.

Low participation may also result from the popularity of online dating applications. D'Augelli (2006, p. 206) also noticed a similar issue:

Internet contact had emerged as the primary method for meeting others in our area. This form of "social networking" assists individuals find social contacts, but its private nature does not contribute to a gay community that might act to address local problems.

Over the past few years, more and more online dating applications have been made especially for queer people. Equipped with high efficiency and flexibility, these applications offer an alternative space for the users to meet other queer people and help them expand their social circle. Of course, dating applications simplify the way in finding romantic partners; they will inevitably undermine issues such as diversity and inclusion in the queer community. Although socialization is considered the main activity by many LGBTQ+ student groups, other roles of these clubs, such as a resource for LGBTQ+ information, an advocate for LGBTQ+ awareness and queer-friendly policy-making should also be acknowledged and emphasized, especially when the queer community and LGBTQ+ individuals still remain invisible and marginalized on campus and in society.

Another key point is that the challenges these queer clubs are experiencing come not only on a personal level but also on an institutional level. Teaching staff and faculty members in general lack sufficient knowledge of LGBTQ+ issues. According to Kawashima (2017), more than half of the university counselors did not have specific knowledge or training on issues regarding sexual orientation and gender identity, and only 26% of them said they had received special training on these issues. Furthermore, Kawashima also noticed that less than half of her respondents thought providing support for LGBTQ+ students is unnecessary, stating that “their needs are too latent” (Kawashima, 2017, p. 215). It is possible the aforementioned institutional ignorance makes LGBTQ+ students skeptical at institutional stance thus the majority of the LGBTQ+ student groups remain unregistered. Besides, as seen in Naver Matome’s “Round-up of LGBT-related club, group for students,” the groups usually exist in more “comprehensive” universities and humanities-oriented universities, whereas it is rather rare to find LGBTQ+ student groups in STEM-oriented universities in Japan. However, in 2015, in line with “better meet society’s need” proposed by the MEXTs, about two-fifth of Japanese national universities expressed that they would reduce or eliminate their academic programs in humanities and social sciences.^{viii} All the above-mentioned issues will undoubtedly impede the development of LGBTQ+ student groups on campus and consequently affect the cultivation of safe spaces for queer students.

^{viii} See Jenkins, N. (2015). “Alarm Over Huge Cuts to Humanities and Social Sciences at Japanese Universities”. <http://time.com/4035819/japan-university-liberal-arts-humanities-social-sciences-cuts/> and Social Science Space. (2015). “Japan’s Education Ministry Says to Axe Social Science and Humanities”. <https://www.socialsciencespace.com/2015/08/japans-education-ministry-says-to-axe-social-science-and-humanities/>

In the face of these disadvantages, some positive changes are on the way as some “hidden forces” are coming into being – the establishment of gender studies labs. One of the most prominent examples is the Center for Gender Studies (CGS) at International Christian University. The center has been devoting their efforts to promoting human rights, supporting the activities of LGBTQ+ student groups, and has subsequently published a series of publications such as *LGBT in ICU Student Guidebook* (2012, 2015), *Sexuality and Campus Life Vol. 1: Possibilities Guide in ICU* (2016), *Sexuality and Campus Life Vol. 2: 108 Things You Can Do at University* (2016) in advocating LGBTQ+ rights on campus. In addition, the office of CGS also offers an open space for queer students and students who are interested in gender and sexuality studies to communicate, discuss and hang out. Besides, a queer club for faculty members was established at the University of Tokyo in 2016. Although it primarily aims to provide a safe gathering place for LGBTQIA+ teaching staff and faculty members, some members have constantly been working on queer issues on campus and trying to collaborate with the university’s queer student group as much as possible. More recently, a Gender and Sexuality Center (GS Center) was established at Waseda University in April 2017 and has since become the very first center dedicated to supporting LGBTQIA+ students on campus in Japan.

Additionally, off-campus intercollegiate activities and events keep on growing stronger. During the Tokyo Rainbow Week 2016, ReBit, an NPO focusing on LGBT youth issues, initiated a queer university club get-together. The event provided a stage for leaders of LGBTQ+ student groups from different universities to introduce and promote their club activities, recruiting new members, and exchange information with other queer student groups and organizations. During the Tokyo Rainbow Festa and Tokyo Rainbow Pride (TRP) 2016, ReBit also opened a booth for queer students, offering a space for them to sit down and chat regardless of their gender identities, sexual orientations, schools or membership. These events reappeared in later years, and attracted greater attention from pride-goers particularly, queer students.

Moreover, the University of Tokyo started running their booth for their student groups at the TRP 2016 and was later joined by Waseda University’s queer student groups and GS Center in 2017. Similar events have extended to regions outside Tokyo as well. For instance, an information exchange event for leaders and members of LGBTQ+ student groups in Northern Kyushu Region was held at a local queer community center in May

2017 and Kyushu Sexual Minority Student Group made its booth debut at Kyushu Rainbow Pride in November 2017. These events have profoundly helped LGBTQ+ students find community by increasing the visibility of queer students and support groups. On top of that, they have also granted club leaders and members opportunities to break barriers and think outside the box, for the benefit of a long-lasting club and substantial networks and collaborations among LGBTQ+ student groups at different universities.

5. Conclusion

LGBTQ+ student groups serve as a safe space for queer students. They connect different actors on campus and foster an environment where members can communicate and share their experiences with each other. By interacting with other queer individuals, proactive collaboration with existing resources, and organizing education-oriented and action-oriented activities on-and off-campus, students are able to build and enhance their resilience in challenging the predominantly heteronormative and cisnormative campus environment. The development of Social Networking Services has also expanded LGBTQ+ student groups' activities and enable them to effectively and efficiently reach wider audience and raise awareness of LGBTQ+ issues. However, institutional support and involvement should not be ignored, as they may potentially contribute to the sustainability of the clubs and groups. Regarding this matter, the key to a positive campus environment might be held in those newly established gender and sexuality centers.

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