

EXPLORING MALAYSIAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES JAPANESE LANGUAGE STUDENTS' VIEWS ON THE EFFECTS OF LGBT ELEMENTS IN ANIME AND MANGA

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ABSTRACT

Background and Purpose: Anime and manga have drawn a global audience and become popular in a wide range of genres, including in Malaysia. These two popular cultures occasionally include LGBT elements in their storylines. This article examines Malaysian university students' views on LGBT elements in anime and manga. The specific objectives were to (1) identify anime and manga that incorporate LGBT elements, which are consumed by university students in Malaysia, and (2) investigate their views on the effects of consuming these materials.

Methodology: Online Google survey forms were distributed to students studying the Japanese language at five public universities in Malaysia. In these universities, Japanese is offered as an elective or part of a core course and is taken by students from various faculties. 280 students responded to the survey. However, only data from 150 respondents was analysed. There were 56 (37%) male and 94 (63%) female respondents.

Findings: 34 (22.7%) respondents mentioned anime and manga titles that have LGBT elements, with some titles fitting under the LGBT genre. According to 96 (64%) of respondents, consuming anime and manga with LGBT elements has negative consequences, including the normalisation of the LGBT concept, which may lead to individuals identifying themselves as part of the LGBT community, excessive sexual content, going against the norm, the extinction of humans, and becoming anime and manga addicts. In contrast, 37 (24.7%) respondents believe consuming such materials has a positive effect. This group argues that, despite the controversial LGBT elements, anime and manga promote positive ideals in their storylines while also raising awareness of LGBT communities.

Contributions: This study reveals that the consumption of anime and manga featuring LGBT elements has an impact on the acceptance of the LGBT concept among Malaysian youth, despite its contradiction with the religious and cultural values of local communities.

Keywords: Anime, manga, LGBT, Malaysia, Public university students.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

LGBT is an acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender. Some may expand this acronym to LGBTIQ, of which I is for Intersex, and Q is for Queer. Due to its violation of Eastern cultures, religious tenets and ethics, the LGBT community in Malaysia is a controversial issue and is viewed as a taboo by Malaysian society (Mohamad, 2015). The 126th Conference of Rulers declared LGBT behaviour unlawful to practise as a way of life on December 13, 1989 (Haridi, 2016). As a result, the government and religious organisations have implemented a variety of measures, including banning LGBT rights-related events and programmes and censoring content and scenes that promote LGBT lifestyles in music, films and social media like TikTok as they are considered to be inappropriate (Bernama, 2022). Universities also promote negative LGBT stances by creating platforms to deliver anti-LGBT sentiments and conducting anti-LGBT programmes (Human Right Watch, 2022).

However, the internet's stability, readily available websites, and lax enforcement of online media freedom made it simple for media with LGBT elements to be widely available. According to Madill (2021), to meet consumer demands, authors or producers of mainstream television shows and movies are also occupying this space by incorporating LGBT elements

Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are the main platforms used by the LGBT normalisation movement to disseminate LGBT-related information, which has an impact on how Malaysians view this group (Mokhtar, Sukeri, & Latiff, 2019). JAKIM ('Jumlah Homoseksual Meningkatkan', 2018) reports that the number of homosexuals, primarily gay, people in Malaysia has increased by about 100% from 173,000 in 2013 to 310,000 in 2018, while the number of people who identify as transgender has increased by three times, from 10,000 in 1988 to 30,000 in 2018. In addition, LGBT individuals are becoming more prevalent among university students (Muhammad Don, 2018) and other Malaysian institutions (Jamal, Subhi, & Amat, 2021).

Anime and manga are products of Japanese popular culture that have found a place worldwide. These two products are remarkably dear to the heart of many Malaysians, particularly the younger generation, as most have been exposed to anime since childhood through series like Detective Conan, One Piece, Crayon Shinchan, Doraemon and Naruto. Factors contributing to anime and manga's popularity include distinctive drawing skills, exceptional worldbuilding, and stories with strong moral principles and humorous elements (Mamat et al., 2019). This is further accelerated by widespread and fast access to the internet, especially in big cities, allowing anyone to watch anime and read manga online or to download them for offline use. According to Mamat et al. (2015), the attraction towards anime/manga is so paramount that fans who are unsatisfied with the ending or plot create alternative manga or *doujinshi* to satisfy their fantasies of what might or should have occurred.

The prevalence of both mediums in Malaysia has several impacts on how the language is taught and learned. Japanese language instructors incorporate anime and manga in their syllabus (Chan & Wong, 2017; Chan, Wong, & Ng, 2017), while Japanese language learners read manga and watch anime in their free time to learn how to pronounce words, write, greed, and make sentences, and how to converse (Mamat et al., 2018). Japanese language learners also utilise VTuber, song, and *seiyuu* to further hone their conversational skills (Mamat, 2021). According to a study by Pae, Mamat, and Rashid (2020), watching anime has many advantages, including educating Japanese language learners about Japan and its culture, maintaining their interest in the language, enhancing relationships with family and friends, relieving stress, and fostering imagination and creativity. Nevertheless, watching anime excessively or without a strong moral compass can have several negative consequences, including poor time management, exposure to sexual content and adoption of negative values such as foul language, escapism, low morals, nihilism and antisocial behaviours.

Post-war manga is a medium for children to give them space to share frustration, rebellion, optimism and difficulties (Shiraishi, 2000). Along with the increasing age of these

children, the manga genre also develops following their adolescence and later adulthood. After that, manga and anime specifically for workers such as *Densha Otoko* or *Trainman*, and sports fans such as *Yowamushi Pedal* that focuses on cycling (Animeshark, 2020). There are also anime and manga specializing in traditional Japanese games, such as *Super Yoyo*, which eventually catapulted the Yoyo game back to fame worldwide. The Japanese anime industry brought 1.2 trillion yen in revenue from overseas markets and 1.31 trillion yen from the domestic market (Statista, 2022), while manga constituted a large market worth almost 613 billion Japanese yen in 2020 (Statista, 2022). The production of manga and anime is closely banded together in the whole industry in which a successful manga is adapted into serial anime, movie, and another by-product such as tie-in toys and merchandise: schoolbags, dolls and others.

LGBT issues are also featured in anime and manga, particularly in the teen and adult genres. In *the Sailor Moon* series, the heroine is portrayed as sexy, stylish and dashing. This seems to reflect the desire of not only teenage girls and boys but also men and women fans to be like the heroine: “lust for the Sailor Scouts as a sex object” (Allison, 2006, p. 134). Furthermore, lesbian characters are introduced halfway through the *Sailor Moon* series in which the relationship between Sailor Uranus (Haruka Teno) and Neptune (Michiru Kaio) are lovers in the original Japanese version (Hoskin, 2018).

The theme of same-gender romance in manga began in the early 1970s (Madill, 2021). It started when a small group of female artists revolutionised the manga of the *Shojo* genre, which is targeted at teenage girls. Originally this genre was pioneered by male artists. However, it is now dominated by female artists who share the same desires and dreams as teenage girls. This innovative work explores the world of the warm and tragic romance between teenage boys. This is the curtain opener to a new subgenre, namely *Shonen-ai* or Boys Love. *Shounen-ai* or Boys’ Love, and *shoujo-ai* or Girls’ Love in the manga, are often used when there is flirting, hugging, and dates and kisses, obscenely handholding only which may mean that it is not mature themed as compared to *yaoi* and *yuri* which usually contains sexual themes.

According to Rashid et al. (2022), there are three types of LGBT anime and manga used by their participants: LGBT-based relationships, non-LGBT-based relationships and vague relationships. LGBT-based relationships refer to manga and anime that show images or characters containing gay and lesbian elements such as hugging, kissing and so on, such as in *Yuri On Ice*, *Sekai Ichi Hatsukoi* and *Given*. Non-LGBT theme relationships refer to anime and manga with mild LGBT elements, like *Attack on Titan* and *One Piece*, where the anime only shows mild elements of the LGBT, and it is up to the audience to grasp the meaning. The third

theme is vague relationships, in which the relationship is vague or not obvious between friends or family members. However, a third party in the story is imagined or expects such a gay or lesbian relationship to occur because both characters are handsome and 'sweet'. The respondents in this study consumed anime and manga due to the interesting storyline, music, characters' design, genuine emotion, stunning graphics, and the relationship portrayed.

The consumption of anime and manga might lead someone to become a *fujoshi*. *Fujoshi* refers to women fans of love relationships between men in Japanese culture's anime and manga. When used in conversations, *fujoshi* refers to a 'rotten woman' considered unfit for marriage because of her love for unsavoury literature. Amal et al. (2021) conducted an ethnography study using in-depth interviews and participant observation with informants in cyberspace, commonly known as the cyberethnography method. Data was collected from seven informants drawn from a Facebook group named *Fujoshi Indonesia* to analyse the fantasy and representation of females in gay and male homoerotic relationships in the *Yaoi* genre. The findings show several starting points for why the informants started to become *fujoshi*, and one of them is due to the consumption of anime and manga, which eventually triggered their curiosity towards the *Yaoi* genre. Some informants join anime and manga fan communities in Indonesia, and through the communities, they meet up offline or online. Through these meet-ups, some become close to *fujoshi* and are eventually influenced to become *fujoshi* themselves.

The influx of Japanese popular culture can thus be seen growing in Malaysia. Despite these trends, empirical research on the consumption of LGBT-related anime and manga has yet to be undertaken, particularly among young adults (aged 18-25). Young adulthood is among the world's greatest assets. It is a crucial developmental period characterized by physical, emotional, and intellectual changes and changes in social roles, relationships, and expectations. Therefore, this study aims to examine the views of university students in Malaysia towards LGBT elements in anime and manga. The specific objectives of this study are the following.

1. To identify anime and manga that contain LGBT elements among Malaysian university students
2. To explore the views on the positive and the negative effects of the consumption of anime and manga among Malaysian university students

2.0 RESEARCH DESIGN

The present study utilized a descriptive survey methodology incorporating quantitative and qualitative data to address the research inquiries. The systematic survey research method is a

commonly employed nonexperimental research design utilized across various disciplines to gather significant quantities of survey data from a representative sample of the intended population (Cohen, Manion, & Morisson, 2018).

2.1 Sample

The respondents for this study are students taking Japanese courses at five public universities in Malaysia, namely Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT), Universiti Malaya (UM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), and Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS). These public universities enrol students from all over Malaysia. In these universities, Japanese is offered as an elective or part of a core course and is taken by students from various faculties.

A total of 280 respondents provided their feedback. However, some respondents completed the survey form twice, and some never took a Japanese language course. Therefore, their feedback was deleted, resulting in 265 respondents. Of the 265 respondents, 150 said they did not read manga or watch anime belonging to specific LGBT genres, such as *Yaoi* and *Yuri*. In addition, four respondents mentioned they do not watch anime and manga with LGBT elements. Since this study aimed to identify manga and anime with LGBT elements and the respondents' views on the effect of such anime and manga, only data from 150 respondents were analysed. Out of the total sample size of 150 participants, most 135 respondents (90%) expressed their interest in anime, whereas 78 respondents (52%) reported their inclination towards manga. The study participants were 19 to 28 years old, with a mean age of 21.8.

Table 1 displays the demographic characteristics of the participants, categorised by gender, religion, race, university affiliation, and the amount of time allocated for consuming anime and manga every week. The survey yielded a sample of 150 respondents, of which 56 (37%) were male and 94 (63%) were female. Regarding religious affiliation, most of the sample population identified as Muslims, comprising 58% of the total, followed by Buddhists at 29.4%, Christians at 11.37%, and one individual as Hindu and Taoist. Most respondents were of Malay ethnicity, comprising 56% of the sample. Chinese individuals constituted the second largest group, accounting for 36% of the respondents, while individuals of other ethnic backgrounds comprised 8%. The ethnic groups comprised three Iban, three Bidayuh, two Dusun, and one each from the Indian, Kayan, Lunbawang, and Bumiputera Sabah. The survey results indicate that approximately 50 participants were affiliated with UMT, while 36 respondents were associated with UKM. Additionally, 25 individuals were affiliated with UNIMAS, 20 with UPM, and 19 with UM. Regarding the time allotted for viewing anime and

reading manga every week, most respondents (43.4%) indicated a range of 2-4 hours, followed by 30% who reported 1-2 hours, and 13.3% who reported 5-7 hours. Merely 11 respondents, accounting for 7.3% of the total sample, reported a consumption of manga and anime that exceeded 10 hours per week.

Table 1: Demographic profile of the respondents

Demography	Category	Respondent N	Percentage
Gender	Male	56	37.3
	Female	94	62.7
Religion	Islam	87	58.0
	Buddhist	44	29.4
	Christian	17	11.3
	Others	2	1.3
Race	Malay	84	56.0
	Chinese	54	36.0
	Others	12	8.0
University	Universiti Malaysia Terengganu	50	33.3
	Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia	36	24.0
	Universiti Malaysia Sarawak	25	16.7
	Universiti Putra Malaysia	20	13.3
	Universiti Malaya	19	12.7
Anime/manga consumption hours/week	1-2 hours	45	30.0
	2-4 hours	65	43.4
	5-7 hours	20	13.3
	8-10 hours	9	6.0
	More than 10 hours	11	7.3

2.2 Instrumentation

The information was gathered using Google Forms in the form of a questionnaire with multiple-choice answers and open-ended questions. In addition to ticking numbers and boxes, the open-ended question allows respondents to write honest or personalised comments. These

open-ended responses may contain valuable information that would otherwise go unnoticed due to the limitations of predefined response categories (Cohen et al., 2018).

The form is divided into four sections: 1) respondent demographic, 2) LGBT anime and manga, 3) the effect of consuming LGBT anime and manga, and 4) LGBT-themed anime and manga. The present study employs solely the information gathered from sections one through three to address the research questions posited in this article. The survey questions were formulated to tackle the matter at hand, specifically on the consumption of anime and manga with LGBT elements by the participants. LGBT-related issues are deemed as socially unacceptable conduct, particularly in the context of Malaysia.

Before distributing the Google Forms to the respondents, they were told that this study was about the involvement of university students in the consumption of LGBT manga and anime. Moreover, they are not forced to write the anime or manga titles they consume. A few students did not answer certain questions, and some respondents stated only part of the required information. The authors validated the information upon data collection using their YouTube observations and subsequent interviews with six respondents. A few respondents exhibited uncertainty regarding the difference between LGBT elements and LGBT genres, though with minimal frequency. Subsequently, the validity of this data was corroborated via alternative questions within the same Google Form.

2.3 Data Collection Procedure

The present study emphasized maintaining confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity. The act of participation was entirely voluntary. The participants can withdraw from the study at any time or decline to respond to specific questions in the questionnaire. The Google Form link was disseminated to students through WhatsApp, and university blended learning tools. Before dissemination, consent was obtained from the corresponding Japanese language instructors. The hyperlink was enabled for seven days to guarantee engagement from diverse participants.

3.0 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The questionnaire's open-ended and closed-ended items were used to collect quantitative and qualitative data for this study. The study data is checked to see any missing data or other defects before a more thorough analysis is done. Themes were created from the qualitative responses, and the researchers manually analysed and interpreted the data according to the research questions.

The study findings consisted of (1) the title of anime and manga that contain LGBT elements consumed by the respondents and (2) views on the positive and negative effects of consuming anime and manga that contain LGBT elements.

3.1 The Title of Anime and Manga Containing LGBT Elements Consumed by Respondents

Only 34 (22.6%) of the 150 respondents mentioned specific titles in response to the question, "Please name your best three manga and anime with LGBT elements." The rest did not respond, and those who did responded with "no" and "x". These 34 respondents named 47 titles, five of which were mentioned twice: *Given*, *Attack on Titan*, *Dakaichi*, *One Piece*, and *Wotakoi* (Love is Hard for Otaku). Some anime and manga titles mentioned belong to a specific LGBT genre, such as *yaoi*, *yuri*, or *queer*. *Yuri* examples include *Yuri on Ice*, *Dear Brother*, *Netsuzou Trap*, *Bloom into You*, *Sweet Blue Flowers*, *Otherside Picnic*, and *Sasameki Koto*, while *Yaoi* include *Angel Beats!* (*Dakaretai Otoko*), *Given*, and *Sekai Ichi Hatsukoi* (*The World's Greatest First Love*), and *Queer* includes *Wonder Egg Priority* and *Citrus*. Table 2 lists the titles of LGBT-themed anime and manga series respondents consumed.

Table 2: The title of anime and manga with LGBT elements consumed by Malaysian public universities students

Ah! My Goodness	Dragon Ball	Otherside Picnic
Angel Beats! (Dakaretai Otoko/Dakaichi)	Fairy Tail	Our Dreams at Dusk
Attack on Titan elemen	Gintama	Our Sound
Banana Fish	Given	Ouran High School Host Club
Battle Athletes	Hiroko Kamijo	The Boy and The Beast
Black Butler	Hunter X Hunter	Ranma ½
Black Clover	Inuyasha	Sailor Moon
Bloom into You	Katekyo Hitman Reborn!	Sasameki Koto
Cardcaptor Sakura	Kimetsu no Yaiba	Sekai Ichi Hatsukoi
Castlevania	Kiss Him, Not Me	Sk8 the Infinity Element
Citrus (only Tiktok)	Kiss x Sis	Sweet Blue Flowers
Claudine	Naruto	Wonder Egg Priority
Date a Live	Netsuzou Trap	Wotakoi: Love is Hard for Otaku
Dear Brother	No 6	Yuri on ice
Devilman Crybaby	One Piece	
Doraemon	One Punch Man	
	Oregairu	

The respondents watch anime and manga containing LGBT elements, particularly due to the interesting storyline, cool characters, and the message conveyed, such as moral principles, friendship and positive attitude towards life. Some respondents realised the LGBT element incorporated in the story, and some are hard to realise, such as in Sailor Moon. The following are the explanations provided by respondents on why they were consuming such materials.

Fun

- *Ranma ½* - The storyline is interesting and funny
- *One Punch Man* - I don't know why I enjoy action anime more than girly anime. It's just so COOL and EPIC ANIME EVER that I've ever watch. More epic battle, comedies, an attitude from Saitama that do not show off his strong powerful and much more.
- *Ouran High School Host Club* - It so funny
- *One piece* - Because it's funny.

Storyline

- *Ranma ½* - The storyline is interesting and funny
- *Attack on Titan* - Passionate
- *Attack on Titan* - It's so awesome, lots of actions, tragedy, rise up my spirit, so emotional, sadistic and kinda creepy when there's blood everywhere from titan attacks (titan eat humans).
- *Attack on Titan* - One of the characters (Ymir) likes her girlfriend (Historia) with the intention of marrying her. I like the plot of this story as a whole because it is nerve wracking and interesting. Also, the LGBT moments was not too much (they didn't end up together) so it's acceptable for me.
- *Naruto* - This is my favourite anime since childhood because it's full of sadness, loneliness, slice of life, love story, friendships, spirit to rise from failure and more.
- *Gintama* - All-time favourite, most random anime that has almost every element including LGBT.
- *Sailor Moon* - Was a good anime, hardly realised there were elements of LGBT
- *Sailor Moon* - Because its popular.
- *That time I got reincarnated as a slime* - Because the capability of slime is great.
- *Black Clover* - (Has episode lesbian couple) I like the story as a whole and the plot that involves the LGBT couple was only in a few episodes and was not too direct.
- *Sk8 Infinity* - (One of the villains liking one of the main characters) I like the story

Cute/cool characters

- Jakotsu (a character in *Inuyasha*) - Very cool girl. Released my tension.
- *Hunter X* - Qiya's younger brother looks like a cute, beautiful girl. I was shocked when I learned that the girl is actually a boy.
- Because it's cool

Moral Principle

- *One Piece* - Among the best anime, and the reason I enjoy it is because of its moral principles.

3.2 Views on The Positive and The Negative Effects of Consuming Anime and Manga that Has LGBT Elements

The participants' views on the effect of consuming anime and manga that have LGBT elements were framed into two main themes: positive effects and negative effects. The researchers

identified two emergent sub-themes that fell under the positive effects while six emergent sub-themes under the negative effects.

3.2.1 Positive Effect of Consuming Manga and Anime that Contain LGBT Elements

The respondents' responses can be categorised into four types: (1) Yes, (2) No, (3) Not Sure, and (4) No answer. 37 (24.78%), or about one-fifth of the 150 respondents, agreed that reading manga and watching anime positively influenced them. More than half of the respondents, or 89 (58.3%), thought that reading manga and watching anime had no positive effects on them. The other 19 respondents (12.7%) were unsure. The remaining 5 (3.3%) respondents only typed "-" in the response field. Table 3 shows respondents' responses to the question, "Is there any positive effect of consuming anime/manga that contains LGBT elements?".

Table 3: Positive effect of consuming anime and manga that contain LGBT elements

Response	Positive effect (N)	Percentage
Yes	37	24.7
No	89	59.3
Not sure	19	12.7
No answer (-)	5	3.3
Total	150	100

From the 89 (59.39%) respondents who disagreed with the statement "Anime or manga that contains LGBT elements gives a positive effect," the majority just wrote non-explanatory denials such as "NO," "No!" "Not at all," "Totally no," or "Nope." From the 19 (12.7%) respondents that are not sure about the statement "Anime or manga that contains LGBT elements gives a positive effect," the majority answered with "maybe," "not sure," "not really," "I think," and "I do not think so." Some respondents stated they were unsure because they rarely consume anime and manga with LGBT elements.

Most of the 37 (24.7%) respondents who agreed with the statement "Anime/manga that contains LGBT elements gives a positive effect" included an explanation in their responses. The respondents' views can be further categorised into two sub-themes: Understanding LGBT and Positive Values. Some respondents wrote 'Yes' without providing any further detail.

3.2.1.1 Understanding LGBT

The majority of people who agreed with the statement "Anime and manga that contains LGBT elements gives positive effect" mentioned that they first began to understand LGBT people and to be accepting of them through anime and manga. This group contends that society should be open to understanding LGBT groups as LGBT individuals, and those who support them are also human beings. Two respondents mentioned the equality of same-sex and heterosexual partnerships in terms of pure love. The following is a list of some of the respondents' comments.

- Since manga, a genre that originated in Japan, is known for its slice-of-life themes, everything written and illustrated enables the reader to experience life. And I believe something is to be said about how those individuals are taught to live peacefully and how well they struggle in real life. We are aware that many LGBT individuals have experienced discrimination and have ended their lives. Then, when manga appeared, they began to educate kids on how to live.
- Yes. If LGBT persons can identify with a character or setting in an anime, manga, or video game, they may feel more confident in themselves and may eventually come out to those around them.
- The anime serves as a reminder that members of the LGBT community are also people. We don't really know much about LGBT people because it's taboo in Malaysia, but despite their different sexual preferences, they are still people just like us. Even though I don't support the behaviour, excluding them won't do any good.
- Yes, since you can gain some insight into homosexuality. Being open-minded and refusing to judge a book by its cover are virtues.
- You grow more accepting of the various ways that people define their sexual preferences as you become more receptive to and compassionate toward other people's sexual orientation.
- Yes, it demonstrates how pure love transcends gender.
- Yes, I had faith in the existence of love between lovers.

3.2.1.2 Positive Values

Even though a particular anime or manga contains LGBT content, some respondents still choose to watch it because of the great values it promotes. Among the positive values mentioned are the frequently portrayed optimistic attitudes toward life in anime and

manga, such as perseverance, politeness, love, and friendship. Consuming anime and manga with LGBT elements may assist LGBT individuals in making decisions when they relate what is being portrayed in anime or manga or another medium, such as video games, idols, VTubers, and YouTubers, to what they are going through in real life. Meanwhile, one respondent said it helped them enhance their Japanese language skills. The following are some of the responses from respondents:

- Yes, because it implies positive values
- The manga gives these people hope for their future.
- Finding a connection to something or someone they love/adore/admire through mediums such as anime, manga, video games, idols, Vtubers, or Youtubers inspires many people to make life decisions.
- Yes, but not the LGBT elements, like friendship and love.
- Yes, some of it is talking about life principles
- Yes, I learn not to give up easily. Plus, the characters are good-looking.
- YES. GOOD MANNER
- Learning Japanese Language

3.2.2 Negative Effect of Consuming Manga and Anime that Contain LGBT Elements

Among the 150 participants who responded, a majority of 96 respondents (64%) reported negative effects. In contrast, 41 respondents (27.4%) expressed disagreement with the assertion that anime/manga featuring LGBT elements has an adverse impact. Specifically, 37 out of the 41 respondents wrote 'no', while the remaining four offered some explanation. Meanwhile, eight respondents (5.3%) expressed uncertainty regarding the potential adverse effects of consuming these materials. Their responses included phrases such as 'maybe,' 'not sure,' 'not really,' 'I think,' and 'I do not think so.' Table 4 presents the responses of the participants to the inquiry, "Is there any negative effect of consuming LGBT anime/manga?"

Table 4: Negative effects of consuming anime/manga that contains LGBT elements

Categories	Negative (N)	Percentage
Yes	96	64
No	41	27.4
Not sure	8	5.3
No answer (-)	5	3.3
Total	150	100

Out of 96 (64%) respondents who agreed with the statement “Anime/manga contains LGBT elements give negative effect”; 94 respondents provided a rationale for their agreement, while the remaining two responded with a single word, "Yes." The views of the participants can be classified into six distinct sub-themes, namely: Normalising LGBT, Becoming LGBT Individual, Excessive sexual content, Against Norm (Religion/cultural/belief/nature), human Extinction, and Addiction. The following are selected responses from participants in response to the inquiries presented.

3.2.2.1 Normalising LGBT

The respondents think that including LGBT elements in anime and manga would promote LGBT not only among kids and teenagers due to their immature mindset and inability to filter the negativities but also among mature adults. Consuming anime and manga that have LGBT elements might affect their way of thinking towards normalising and promoting LGBT. Based on the views of these respondents, there are concerns about children or early adolescents consuming anime and manga that have LGBT elements because they still cannot distinguish clearly between good and bad, and these elements are not necessary to include in anime and manga.

- Yes, it will influence people to normalise LGBT.
- Yes. It would promote the LGBT idea to people who look at that anime, especially teenagers who do not know anything about LGBT. I respect LGBT, but I dun think it is a must to involve the element
- Yes. People will think that LGBT is just a regular thing
- Yes. Many people will be open-minded to exposure to this kind of culture.

3.2.2.2 *Becoming LGBT Individual*

Some respondents believe that the consumption of anime and manga will increase the number of people who become LGBT, such as Lesbian or Gay, in their relationships if not monitored. As for younger teenagers, the consumption of anime and manga with LGBT elements may cause problems such as mental problems due to experiencing identity crises because they cannot accept who they are or are confused with their sexual orientation. There are also possibilities that they will opt to try out LGBT. Below are examples of the responses given.

- Yes. Many people will become lesbian or gay in their love relationships.
- Yes, especially if not supervised, because it could increase the number of LGBT people
- If they keep influencing youngsters to become 'unnatural', it will cause many weird problems like gender swaps because it will cause many mental problems because they can't accept who they are.
- It probably would encourage more people to try out LGBT, as anime and manga are also catered to younger teenagers. They may also be confused about their sexual orientation due to this.

3.2.2.3 *Excessive Sexual Contents*

The respondents opined that sexual content would affect particularly younger teenagers and it is not necessary for any entertainment. Some examples of their responses are shown below.

- The negative influence is some anime or *manga* will reveal too much sexual content that will affect younger readers' mindset.
- Yes, I don't think that over-sexual content is necessary in any entertainment.

3.2.2.4 *Against the Norm (Religion, Cultural Value, Belief and Nature)*

As LGBT is contrary to Islamic teaching, consuming anime and manga containing LGBT can corrupt the minds and is strictly prohibited in Islam. Some Muslim respondents said they do not support LGBT due to their religion. However, that does not mean they do not accept people who enjoy consuming anime, and manga contains LGBT elements. One of the Muslim respondents wonders why many people, particularly on TikTok, read one of the LGBT genres, *Yaoi*. Some of the respondents also took an open attitude to respect individual freedom and can accept people who are in the LGBT community, become friends, or work together with them. Apart from being contrary to religious teachings, some respondents mentioned that LGBT is

against the nature of human beings, where males and females are meant for each other and not the other way around. At the same time, some respondents still believe in traditional values even though we are already in the 21st century, as LGBT is not a good culture. Examples of their responses are shown below.

- I can detect Attack on Titan (AoT), especially Ymir and Historia, aka Crista (I forgot the spelling), through their relationships. I think they are lesbian and like each other's. Yuck, kinda gross with that relationship.
- Yes, LGBT is opposed to Islamic teachings.
- YES OF COURSE, cause I, as a Muslim, cannot support LGBT, but I do not know why many people, especially on TikTok many people read about yaoi, hahahahah maybe that character in manga is handsome, or mature or cute.
- I am a Muslim, and, in my religion, LGBT is prohibited strongly. Watching/reading LGBT series might cause me to be accustomed to them, which is considered wrong. I don't support LGBT. However, I don't have a problem being friends or working with people who enjoy the series or even people in the LGBT community. I believe being respectful to others is what is important.
- I think it is not a good culture, although nowadays is the 21st century, for me I still cannot accept this kind of culture as I'm a traditional person
- yes, there is because in human biology, males and females are meant to be with each other, and it's not the other way around.

3.2.2.5 Others

One respondent mentioned human extinction if we were to accept or agree with the idea of LGBT, and another respondent wrote the word ADDICTION in big letters, showing that those who consume anime and manga that contain LGBT elements will become addicted to anime and manga with LGBT elements.

Human Extinction Human will extinct if every people prefer lgbt

Addiction YES. ADDICTED

4.0 CONCLUSION

The study's objectives were to identify manga and anime with LGBT elements and to explore the respondents' views on the effects of consuming those anime and manga. For the first

objective, about one-fifth of the respondents stated the title of the anime and manga with LGBT elements. However, some of the mentioned titles are specific to LGBT genres, such as *Given*, *Sekai Ichi Hatsukoi*, *Yuri on Ice*, *Kiss x Sister*, *Sailor Moon* and *Dakaretai Otoko/Dakaichi*. To the respondents, what was displayed in these anime or manga was insensitive and has already been accepted and become a norm. It is time for parents or guardians to check their children's or loved ones' activities in their spare time and then take note of the types and titles of manga and anime their children consume. This is to allow the child or teenager to stop reading or watching the stated title, preventing them from getting caught up in manga and anime in the LGBT genre explicitly. There is also the possibility of becoming LGBT individuals or *fujoshi*. Adolescence (ages 10-17) and young adulthood (ages 18-25) are crucial developmental periods characterised by physical, emotional, and intellectual changes and changes in social roles, relationships, and expectations.

The study's second objective was to explore the respondents' views on the effects of the consumption of anime and manga with LGBT elements. The findings showed most respondents (64%) or two third of the respondents believe consuming anime and manga have LGBT elements and have negative effects, especially towards children or early adolescents, as they are not mature enough to distinguish between good and bad. Some respondents mentioned that Islam strictly prohibits the LGBT community and therefore does not endorse the LGBT community. However, they adopt an accepting approach as a sign of respect for their fellow human beings. While most individuals believe that engaging with anime and manga featuring LGBT elements results in adverse outcomes, approximately 25%, or one-quarter, of survey participants maintain that such activities yield favourable consequences. The presented data indicate a growing acceptance of LGBT issues among the younger generation in Malaysia, even though such issues conflict with local communities' religious and cultural values. According to Muhammad Don (2018), there is an increasing prevalence of LGBT issues as a significant issue among university students.

It is essential to note that the present study is limited in several ways. First, this research was conducted only among Japanese language learners at five public universities. Second, the present study relied on self-reports to investigate the samples' view on the effect of consuming manga and anime that have LGBT elements and were, therefore subject to various biases. Future research may conduct in-depth qualitative studies, such as interviews and case studies, to obtain more specific and comprehensive data. using samples from private universities and colleges in different regions of the country and procedures that confirm a higher degree of randomization and, eventually, more generalizability.

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