

COMING OUT FROM THE CLOSET: EXPERIENCES OF HOMOSEXUAL YOUTH

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Abstract

This phenomenological type of research used the case study method to deal with the coming out process of homosexual youth. Ten participants, ages 15 to 21 years, were covered in this study using criterion sampling. They were those who have been open regarding their sexual preferences as disclosed to their loved ones and friends. Findings showed that there are common themes in terms of the participants' personal history and family background. They all had loving and supportive mothers and physically and emotionally absentee-fathers. They were also quite attached to their sisters but not to their brothers, and they have had a gay history in the family.

For this research, the term "effeminacy" or "sissiness" was used to describe some significant childhood experiences of the homosexual participants who have manifested a cross-gender identification since childhood. They were noted to have had a number of female playmates whom they preferred over their male playmates. Accordingly, they preferred the girls' toys and played the girls' games. Surprisingly, they also started cross-dressing during their early childhood days. Realization as to sexual inclination among the participants occurred during their pre-pubescence age (6 to 13 years old), but they admitted to having come out only during pubescence age (10 to 13 years old); revealing such sexual preference usually to their female relatives, especially their mothers and sometimes their sisters. The fathers and the male siblings of the participants initially refused to accept their real sexual predilection while most of their female and gay friends readily understood and accepted them.

The participants claimed to have been happier with their lives after their "coming out of their closets" because they can perform both male and female roles. They can wear dresses and join beauty contests such as "Miss Gay" and other similar competitions. Significantly, one of the plans, most of the participants have cited was their desire to become transgender and to have at least one child. Finally, these participants enjoined other homosexuals who have not come out of their closets to follow their lead and to enjoy their lives in the open.

Keywords: Homosexual, youth, sexual inclination

INTRODUCTION

In studies made about the adolescents' sexual development, one of the most frequently established patterns is heterosexuality, where sexual attraction and behavior are directed at the opposite sex. Nevertheless, some teenagers are found to have not followed this path. Instead, these adolescents experience homosexual feelings and sexual attraction toward members of their sex (Rogers & Rogers, 2001).

The factors that lead or influence people to develop a heterosexual or homosexual orientation are not well understood. Pieces of evidence put forward by some studies suggest that genetic and biological factors may have played an essential role in the development of sexual identity. In the past several decades, a large body of research in the areas of biological differences in the brains of heterosexual and homosexual males, genetic influences on sexual orientation, and even prenatal influences such as hormones on sexual orientation has been amassed by various scientists and psychologists. One of the earliest studies done by Ellis and his colleagues (1988) found that severe stress experienced by pregnant women during the second trimester of pregnancy (the time during which the sexual differences in genitalia are formed) results in a significantly higher chance of any male children becoming homosexual in orientation.

Aside from biological causes, researchers began looking into possible environmental influences on the development of human sexual orientation. Bailey and Zucker (1995) carried out research finding out that childhood gender non-conformity is the highest predictor of homosexuality in adulthood, which suggests that some children who prefer activities that are typical of the other sex become homosexuals upon reaching adulthood.

Bearman and Bruckner (2002), on the other hand, support the hypothesis that less gendered socialization in early childhood and preadolescence shapes subsequent same-sex romantic preferences and attractions. This means that if a boy has lesser socialization time with other boys or if a girl does not do much socialization with other girls, then this tendency influences them later on to become homosexuals.

Other research focused on the effect of family dynamics on the sexual orientation of people. Bieber et al. (1962) argue that parental psychopathology causes homosexuality, as evidenced by certain family patterns that suggest their being responsible for the formation of such sexual identity. From this research, Bieber's group came out with the "weak father" perspective of homosexuality. Nicolosi (1991) likewise concluded that the failure of the father-son relationship could lead to the son's homosexuality. He also discovered that homosexuals tend to have distant, hostile, or rejecting childhood relationships with their fathers or father figures.

Moreover, some studies also showed that a history of homosexual child abuse (Bramblett et al., 1997), as well as seduction (Brown, 1963), was linked to both an adult homosexual orientation and sexual attraction to children. From these studies, it may be gleaned that sexual orientation is an important and complex psychological variable, which is a complex mosaic of biological, psychological, and socio-cultural factors (Byne and Patsons, 1993).

While there continues to be much discussion in the ongoing debate on homosexual etiology and implications for therapy, it is unfortunate that in the meantime, homosexuality is still considered sexual deviance and even mental illness, as it was in the past. Thus, some homosexuals here in the Philippines find it difficult to “come out of their closet.” In many places in the world, coming out of the closet even results in these homosexuals losing their jobs, homes, families, friends, religious and political memberships, and sometimes taking their own life, as was the case in Iran.

The term “*closeted*” and the phrase “*hiding inside the closet*” are used in this study to describe gay people who are keeping their sexual behaviors or orientation a secret. The reason is usually that the person does not want to face the environment’s homophobia (Corrigan et al. 2009). Aside from this reason, other homosexuals with difficulty acknowledging their situation, either to themselves or to others, find themselves subjected to anti-homosexual attitudes and bias not only from strangers but also from their own families and communities (Drescher et al. 2005).

On the other side of the pendulum, the term “*coming out of the closet*” or “*coming out*” refers to accepting oneself as gay, lesbian, or bisexual, and to integrate this sexual orientation into the spheres of one’s life. Coming out is a subjective experience of inner recognition of one’s true sexual identity, which leads to excitement, trepidation, or both (Drescher, 1998).

Being closeted and later on coming out of one’s closet can be stressful and can provoke intense anxiety, depression, fear, and confusion for young homosexuals. Along this line, Mays and Cochran (2001) suggest in their study that homosexuals are at greater risks than their heterosexual peers in experiencing anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and suicide attempts; thus, the rate of attempted and completed suicides among homosexual youth is much higher compared to heterosexual youth.

To document the “coming out” experiences of the participants in this study, the researcher referred to several authors, among them are Cass (1979), Troiden (1989), and Coleman (1982).

Cass (1979) wrote that individuals go through six non-age specific stages namely: (1) Stage 1 - *identity awareness or confusion* – the individual is conscious of being different; (2) Stage 2 - *identity comparison* – the individual believes that he or she may be homosexual but tries to act heterosexual; (3) Stage 3 - *identity tolerance* – the individual realizes that he or she is homosexual; (4) Stage 4 - *identity acceptance* – the individual begins to explore the gay community; (5) Stage 5 - *identity pride* – the individual becomes active in the gay

community; and (6) Stage 6 - *identity synthesis* – the individual fully accepts himself or herself and others. This is one of the earliest models of gay and lesbian identity formation.

Troiden (1989) puts forward the same proposition but with the stages reduced to a four-stage model which describes the following sequence: (1) an early stage of sensitization to same-sex attractions marked by first recognition of attraction usually in childhood or early adolescence; (2) a stage of identity confusion in adolescence during which sexual experimentation occurs with both opposite-sex and same-sex partners; (3) a stage of identity assumption, marked by the event of first self-identifying as gay, lesbian or bisexual usually in late adolescence or young adulthood, and (4) a final stage of identity commitment during which the individual becomes deeply connected with the identity and begins to disclose to others, usually first to a friend or sibling, followed by disclosure to parents usually mothers before fathers.

Likewise, Coleman (1982) described the five developmental stages of the coming out process, which include: pre-coming out, coming out, exploration, first relationships, and identity integration. In the pre-coming out stage, individuals know something is different about them, but are not conscious of same-sex feelings. In the second stage of coming out, individuals admit to themselves that they have homosexual feelings. Individuals then move into the exploration stage, where they experiment with their newly recognized sexual identity. In the fourth stage, they develop romantic relationships. In the final stage, they bring together both their public self and private self to create an integrated homosexual identity.

The present study aims to describe the coming out process of homosexual youth, through the recall of significant events in their childhood that led them to confirm not only their sexual preference but also to accept their identity and which paved the way for their realizations as to how such “coming out” has affected their lives and relationships with loved ones and friends.

This study hopes to achieve the following: a) help in understanding the difficulties encountered by homosexuals from the time they have accepted their sexual preference to their experiences in the process of “coming out” and the post-coming out period; b) serve as a medium to help open the minds of the immediate family members of Filipino homosexuals, their friends and those who interact with them regularly, especially those they look up to, including their teachers (in a school setting), their supervisors (in a work setting) and their fathers, in realizing their significant role in accepting the homosexuals as rational human beings albeit having a different sexual preference; c) help in encouraging other homosexuals who have not “come out” to do so in order that they can begin their process of transcending their fear of being shunned by their friends and relatives due to their sexual preference; and d) be an instrument in helping enjoin the education sector to take notice of the predicament of homosexuals who have not “come out” and to serve as change agents to help these

individuals find their actual place in society in a manner that would reduce their embarrassment and feeling of rejection.

METHOD

This study used the phenomenological research method and the case study approach in studying the coming-out process of homosexual youth. Phenomenology is a qualitative research method initially developed by the philosopher Edmund Husserl (Wertz, 2005), the purpose of which is to illuminate the specifics and to identify the phenomena through how they are perceived by the actors in a situation (Groenewald, 2004). In the human spheres, this translates typically into getting in-depth information and perceptions through inductive, qualitative methods such as interviews, discussions, and participant observation and presenting the results from the perspective of the participants or respondents of the study (Moustakas, 1994).

Participants in the study included 10 homosexual youth. The age bracket of the participants was 15 to 21 years old. Using criterion sampling, the participants chosen were those who have been open regarding their sexual preferences and have accepted the fact that they are homosexuals. This means that they are those who freely disclosed their sexual orientation to their loved ones and friends.

Chain referral or snowball sampling was likewise resorted to in order to identify additional participants for the research. This technique is a method of expanding the sample by asking one informant or participant to recommend others for an interview (Groenewald, 2004).

The research question for this study was first developed, followed by the formulation of a sampling plan to ensure that the appropriate respondents were available and willing to answer the interview questions. The data were then analyzed using a process of coding and categorizing the information. These data were collected through interviews and were either recorded or written in diaries to include accounts from other persons or through personal observation. Finally, the interview results were verified and confirmed to ensure the credibility of the conclusions.

The interviews were conducted based on a set of guide questions, although the participants insisted on sharing other experiences that came into their minds during the actual interview sessions. These interview questions were pre-approved and validated by two professors, one is a Psychology graduate, and the other is a Social Science professor. The participants were allowed to answer in a language that they were most comfortable with in expressing themselves. The interviewees' permission was requested for the use of a tape recorder to record all their statements, with a separate tape utilized for each participant. Field

notes were also taken while the interview was going on. This was deemed crucial in qualitative research to ensure that even non-verbal responses were observed and recorded.

After the participants were identified, they were each requested to sign a consent form. The letter seeking their consent notified the participants of the nature, purpose, and procedures of the research, the voluntary nature of research participation, and the confidentiality of the study. It also contained the permission to record the entire interview.

The interviews were conducted depending on the availability of the participants, and they chose the place and time of the interview. All the interviews were audio-recorded, with the permission of the participants. Each interviewee was assigned a codename for identification purposes in the narrative report. These codes were "Natasha," "Heidy," "Diana," "Anne," "Diosa," "Rosanna," "Josie," "Chantal," "Krizzy," and "Celine." The date, place, and time of the interviews were also recorded as labels for each of the cassette tapes. Before transcribing, the recordings were played repeatedly to get more familiar with the complete content of the interview. Afterwards, the entire interview was transcribed verbatim. This means noting all statements and significant non-verbal responses. All of the respondents answered in either Pampango or Filipino, and such is the reason why their statements were translated into English for the analysis.

Finally, content analysis was done on the data collected. After reading the transcriptions repeatedly, all the relevant information gathered in the interview process were listed and tabulated for comparison. Afterwards, the responses of the participants were coded into themes, using phenomenological content analysis.

To validate the themes and categories for consistency and relevance, three practitioners of psychology were requested to serve as raters: (1) a registered guidance counselor and Director of the Guidance Office of an established university in the region; (2) a professor in a reputable university who has a bachelor's and master's degree in Psychology and is currently finishing her doctorate in Educational Psychology from the same university she is affiliated with; and (3) a professor of Psychology with a master's degree in Social and Community Psychology. Two out of the three evaluators had to agree on a particular theme and category before such was accepted. With this process, some initial groupings were changed, merged, and omitted. The data were synthesized by adapting the methods used in Junio (2011). Explicit explanations and accounts of the participants were referred to all the time. Empirical studies were also cited to explain a particular phenomenon based on the themes and categories. Some theoretical frameworks were also used to relate findings with broader concepts.

Finally, conclusions were drawn based on the responses of the participants, which were used to form the emerging paradigm.

FINDINGS

This section presents the data obtained from the interviews which cover the significant events in the participants' lives that influenced their sexual orientation, their acceptance of their homosexual identity, and their feelings about their coming out decision and their realizations.

CASE # 1 - "NATASHA"

Significant Events Influencing Sexual Orientation. Natasha is 18 years old and is the fourth child among six siblings (four boys and two girls). He is a college dropout. His parents are still living together. He claims to have a very close relationship with his mother. However, he has a strained relationship with his father. He said his father worked abroad when he was young. As a result, he did not feel the presence of his father when he was growing up. His father was also not demonstrative with his feelings and did not talk to him much.

When it comes to his sisters, Natasha claims that he has a closer relationship with them compared to his brothers. He favors his sisters because they acted as his friends and playmates when he was young, and until now that he is older.

Although he was close to his brothers, he believes he has a better relationship with his sisters. Natasha has a constant feeling of being a woman.

Natasha revealed that he had very few boy playmates when he was growing up. He was more comfortable in the company of girls than boys; his playmates were his female cousins and sisters. As for his toys and games, Natasha preferred playing with Barbie dolls and indulging in games such as *lutu-lutuan* (playing with toy cooking sets) and jackstones. He admitted to having started cross-dressing at the age of seven years old when he began to use curtains as dresses.

He also said that he loved to imitate 'Marimar' (the lead female character in a television drama series of the same title that was popular at that time). As a young boy, Natasha revealed that he experienced being bullied by other boys who teased and called him demeaning names such as "*bakla*" (homosexual). He remembered that some boys would sway their hips and imitate his speech patterns and pronunciation.

Acceptance of Identity. Natasha recalled that he was 12 years old when he realized that he is gay. He felt that he was different from other boys. Natasha felt confused and puzzled as to why he was attracted to his male classmate. That incident was a vital affirmation that he is gay. Natasha came out at that time to his mother. His

mother was not surprised when he disclosed to her about his being gay because she already had an inkling of it.

When it came to his father, Natasha said that his mother was the one who told him about his true sexuality. Surprisingly, his father had no violent reaction about his being gay. He calmly accepted Natasha's homosexuality. As for his siblings, Natasha confessed that there was an initial reluctance in the acceptance of his sexual preference by one of his brothers.

As far as his friends were concerned, there was no problem with his disclosure, as his friends are also homosexuals.

Natasha got attracted to other boys at the same time he "came out" at 12, making him realize his sexual inclination. He admitted having his first sexual experience with another boy when he was fourteen years old.

He claims he was shocked at first, but he just wanted to satisfy his curiosity about sex. His gay friends urged him to do it. However, despite this early sexual encounter, his first romantic relationship only happened when he was 17 years old. He recounted his happy moments with his first boyfriend.

Feelings about the Decision. Natasha seems quite happy coming out as a homosexual because now he can do whatever he wants, like dressing up in women's clothes, wearing makeup, and joining the Miss Gay beauty pageant as well as work in a beauty parlor.

Realizations. Natasha revealed his desire to become a real woman through the process of sexual realignment or sex change. He relayed his thoughts to those homosexuals who are still hiding in their closet.

CASE #2 - "HEIDY"

Significant Events Influencing Sexual Orientation. Heidy is 15 years old and is the second among four siblings (one girl and three boys). He is a high school dropout. His parents are still living together. Heidy claims to be very close to his mother, who is a stay-at-home housewife; constant togetherness and strong emotional attachment bind them. Unfortunately, he did not have a good relationship with his father, who was an alcoholic. While he was growing up, he could not feel his father's love and support despite his physical presence at home. On the other hand, Heidy enjoyed a close relationship with his sister, contrary to his relationship with his other brothers, who tended to be very strict with him.

It is interesting to note that Heidy has another brother who was already showing an early manifestation of being gay. This situation made it easier for him to show his true identity because homosexuality seems to run in his family.

Heidy asserted that during his childhood, he hated playing with boys. He was more comfortable playing with girls and shared toys with them like Barbie and *lutu-lutuan*, among others. He also revealed his feeling of being a “woman by heart.”

Heidy also manifested his inclination to cross-dress during childhood, which is a measure of feminine identification. He also disclosed that he was bullied by boys who called him “*bading*” (homosexual).

Acceptance of Identity. Heidy realized that he was gay when he was six. For unexplained reasons, he confessed that he felt it in his heart that he is a girl. He “came out” at 10 years old. He first revealed his homosexuality to his mother, who already knew about it because of his actuations and nuances. His father, on the other hand, did not talk to him for days after his confession of being gay, but he accepted his situation afterwards. His siblings already knew that he was homosexual, and they accepted him as such.

Regarding his friends, acceptance was easier because most of them were also gays. Heidy had his first crush toward a male neighbor when he was 12 years old. As to his first sexual encounter, he revealed that he had sex with a man when he was only 13 years old. As for his love life, he had his first boyfriend at 16. He claims to be single at the moment.

Feelings about the Decision. Heidy is happy once he revealed that he is gay.

Realizations. Heidy wants to adopt a child, but he does not see himself marrying a girl.

CASE #3 - “DIANA”

Significant Events Influencing Sexual Orientation. Nineteen-year-old Diana comes from a big family and is the seventh among 10 siblings. He is a high school dropout. His father died when he was three years old, so he practically grew up without a father figure. Diana, however, received all the love and care from his mother, who served as his only parent. Although he grew up having many siblings, he tended to favor his sisters more than his brothers. He treated his sisters as his friends and playmates while he was growing up.

From the start, Diana felt that he was a girl because of a strong feminine identification that was prevalent during his childhood. He had lesser socialization with other boys when he was a child because he was afraid of them. He was happily playing with girls, enjoying games such as *Chinese garter*.

He remembered trying on some of his mother's clothes and makeup. He felt good seeing himself in the mirror, looking like a real girl.

He also loved to imitate his mother and sisters, their actuations, and ways. Like other homosexual youth, Diana also experienced being teased by boys. According to him, boys imitated his nuances and the way he talked. He felt bad about this; that was why he did not make friends with other boys because he was afraid of being laughed at.

Acceptance of Identity. At nine years old, Diana already realized he was gay. He was reluctant to open up to his family because he was not sure of their reactions. He, however, disclosed his real self to his sister when he was 13 years old. It was also during this time when Diana first had a crush on a male neighbor.

There was an initial ambivalence on the part of his sister to accept him as a homosexual, but eventually, his other siblings accepted his situation on condition that he remained decent, and he did not go out at night. His friends, who were mostly gays, likewise accepted him. Diana had his first boyfriend at 16 years old.

Feelings about the Decision. Diana's feelings about coming out as gay include gladness from being able to do whatever she wishes, just like wearing dresses and joining *Miss Gay Beauty Pageant*.

Realizations. Diana emphasizes the importance of being himself and not hiding anymore.

CASE #4 - "ANNE"

Significant Events Influencing Sexual Orientation. Anne is 19 years old. He is the only boy among three siblings, making it difficult for him to reveal his true sexual preference later in his life. He is a college dropout. His parents are still living together. Just like the other interviewees in this study, Anne disclosed a very close relationship with his mother. His father's job required him to stay in Manila during weekdays, so he was home only during weekends. Because of this unusual set-up, Anne did not develop a strong emotional tie with his father as he only got to see him once a week.

Anne related that he developed a closer relationship with his sisters, who were, in fact, his playmates while he was growing up. Interestingly, he has a lesbian sister. This could indicate a cross-gender identification problem in his family.

Anne had very few male childhood friends, and he did not play with them. The majority of his playmates were girls. He remembered playing Barbie dolls. He also recalled that one of the things he enjoyed doing as a child was to wear girls' clothes.

He also acted as if he was Princess Sarah (a well-known cartoon character on television at that time). Growing up, he knew that something was different with him, such as the way he moved, which was why people called him names such as "*bakla*" (homosexual).

Acceptance of Identity. Anne realized he was gay when he was eight years old. He started to develop a powerful attraction toward a male classmate whose face he loved to stare at even from a distance. Anne felt this undeniable urge to be with him all the time, during which he felt happy. Anne's coming out was a bit difficult because he was the only boy in the family, and he needed to live up to his family's sex-role expectation. However, despite his fear of his family's rejection, Anne eventually told his mother that he was gay. This happened when he was 13 years old. His mother understood his situation. However, the opposite was true for his father, who did not talk to him for three years and refused to give him financial support for one month after his "coming out."

His other relatives, particularly his uncles and an aunt, had a hard time accepting his sexual inclination. Anne sadly confessed that his relatives insisted that he should act like a man and stop acting like a fool. He even got negative comments such as he was a disgrace to the family. It took quite a while for his family to accept him finally.

Anne developed a huge crush toward his classmate when he was in the fourth grade. Anne admitted that he considered this person as his first love because up to now, he still carries a strong feeling for the man, especially considering that this person treated him well, did not put him in any embarrassing situation, nor did he say offensive words to him. Anne experienced his first sexual encounter with a classmate when he was 13 years old with his drinking buddy.

He had his first boyfriend when he was in third-year high school at 15 years old. It was a long relationship that lasted for four years. During the interview, Anne was heartbroken because his boyfriend just broke up with him after having found a real girlfriend. Fortunately, as he said, his gay friends were there to cheer him up.

Feelings about the Decision. Anne is happy about having come out as gay.

Realizations. Anne, surprisingly despite his sexual identification, wants to have his own family, even going as far as marrying a girl who will accept him. His advice to gays who still hide in the closet is not to be pretentious and not to fool themselves.

CASE #5 - "DIOSA"

Significant Events Influencing Sexual Orientation. Diosa, a college student, is 21 years old and is the third child among four siblings. His parents are still living together. Diosa has a supportive and loving mother, but his father does not have a permanent job. While his father was always around the house, Diosa said that this was not enough for them to build a good relationship. Diosa is also closer to his sister than to his brothers. He also has a gay history in the family, particularly on his father's side.

He believes he was trapped in another person's body because he felt sure of being a girl. As a child, Diosa did not play with boys because he preferred having girl playmates instead.

Like the other interviewees in this study, Diosa loved playing *Chinese garter* and Barbie dolls. He also loved to imitate his female classmate's actions and actuations. He, however, experienced being bullied by boys, who called him "*bading*" (homosexual).

The realization of being gay came to Diosa when he was 13 years old. He immediately came out to his mother, who was accepting and understanding about his revelation. His mother was not surprised by his disclosure because she already had an idea about her son's sexual preference. His father negatively reacted to his initial disclosure, forcing him to take it back, but later, he had to come out to his father, who gave him the cold shoulder because of this. His siblings understood his situation because they already knew that he was gay.

Diosa had a crush on a boy when he was 10 years old. He had his first sexual encounter at fourteen years old. He also had his first relationship when he was in second-year high school.

Feelings about the Decision. Diosa is happy being gay because he could wear anything, be it girl's clothes or even boy's apparel. He claims to be talented. He is a hairstylist and a freelance choreographer.

Realizations. Diosa wants to adopt a child in the future. He advises other gays to be themselves and not to hide their real identities.

CASE # 6 - "ROSANNA"

Significant Events Influencing Sexual Orientation. Eighteen-year-old Rosanna is a college student. His mother is a housewife, and his father is a butcher in the marketplace. He is second to the youngest among eight siblings (six boys and two girls). He said that growing up, they were treated equally by his parents, and they also shared things equally despite their number. He was much closer to his mother than to his father.

Growing up as a child, Rosanna felt different; he preferred playing alone. He was not comfortable playing with others because he had different preferences compared to them. Rosanna used to play with his brothers at their games, but when these involved guns and fistfights, Rosanna stopped playing with them because he was not interested in competitive games. He, however, enjoyed the company of girls and loved to play with them.

Acceptance of Identity. Rosanna realized that he was gay when he was 10 years old. He confessed his homosexuality to his mother, who was not at all surprised because she already knew due to his actuations and nuances. His mother accepted him without hesitation. Likewise, he also made the same revelation to his lesbian sister, who readily understood him because of her predicament.

Rosanna did not personally tell his father about his inclination out of fear, primarily due to his father's intense dislike of gay people. However, he eventually accepted him after months of not talking to him because of Rosanna's adamancy regarding his sexual preference.

Rosanna has relatives who are either bisexuals or homosexuals. He grew up in the company of his cousins, who had a significant influence on his decision to come out. Despite his acceptance, Rosanna still tried to become a real man because he felt that it was not right to be gay, feeling ashamed of his predilection. Finally, when he was 13 years old (at first-year high school), he decided to "come out" due to his gay peers' and classmates' advice that he stop pretending and express his real self.

Feelings about the Decision. Rosanna said he had no regrets "coming out" because having done so allowed him to do anything he wants such as putting on makeup during beauty pageants, more bonding with his gay peers, and enjoying a closer relationship with his siblings, now that they have accepted him.

Realizations. Some people considered gays as "ugly" and a disgrace to the society, but for Rosanna, there is nothing wrong with being gay. He urged people who are still hiding in the closet to accept their true sexuality because one cannot hide

such things for an extended period. He hopes to help his family in the future and be a productive member of society by sharing his talents and living decently.

CASE #7 - "JOSIE"

Significant Events Influencing Sexual Orientation. Josie is 18 years old and is the third child among four siblings. He has a very close relationship with his mother, whom he regarded as his best friend. Josie's eldest brother is gay, which he believes contributed to his becoming gay. Josie has a younger sister who was adopted by his parents because of their desire to have a girl member in the family.

While growing up, Josie found himself inclined to play with girls, just like his older brother, who shared the same interests because they were both gays. However, his other brother was "indifferent" to him.

Acceptance of Identity. Josie realized he was gay when he was 10 years old. He had a schoolmate to whom he developed a strong attraction and admiration. He first revealed his homosexuality to his mother when he was 12 years old; his mother did not appear surprised about this because it was evident in his actions.

There was no acceptance issue with his mother, but this was not the case with his father, who gave him and his other gay brother the cold shoulder treatment. His father favored his other brother, who was a straight heterosexual. As a result, he felt unwanted and discriminated against as a child because of this treatment from his father.

Admittedly, Josie's eldest brother served as a significant factor in him becoming a homosexual himself. As a child, he witnessed the playful acts of his "kuya" (elder brother), who used to sneak out of the house to bring dresses he could wear and be out and happy with his gay peers. At 16, Josie was out with his homosexuality, which he readily shows in the presence of men. He admired men around him and became weak-kneed when they surround him.

Feelings about the Decision. Josie is happy being gay because his family accepted him. He can do both chores of men and women. More importantly, he is accepted by his family.

Realizations. Though Josie is happy being gay, there is a side of him that wants to be a man so that he could have his own family someday. He wants to have children in the future if there is a woman who would want to marry him despite his sexual preference.

CASE #8 - "CHANTAL"

Significant Events Influencing Sexual Orientation. Chantal is 19 years old and works as a beautician in a beauty parlor. He is the second child among three siblings and claims to be close to his loving and supportive parents, as he describes them. He had a strong relationship with his siblings when he was a child. His love for dancing was manifested in his childhood as he participated in different dance contests in school.

At five years old, he started to wear girl's clothes. He also loved to play *Chinese garter*, jumping rope, and jackstone. He enjoyed playing those games. It is interesting to discover that Chantal has cousins who are also homosexuals, which somehow influenced his being gay, as his father believes that being gay runs in his family.

Acceptance of Identity. At seven years old, Chantal already knew that he is gay because of his interest in dancing. Moreover, he confessed to having enjoyed the company of girls more than boys. Most of his friends are girls, so there is a possibility that Chantal was able to adapt the way they talk, move, and the other nuances. He first revealed his true identity to his sister, who was not shocked by his disclosure because it was evident by the way he moves and talks.

His family accepted him without any hesitation, including his father, who believes that being gay is hereditary. He started cross-dressing at 13 years old. He feels happy whenever he does this.

He first had an attraction toward the same sex during his elementary days. He also experienced the same attraction in his high school days. His classmates and friends already knew that he is gay, the reason why whenever his crush is around, they would tease him. He first had a boyfriend when he was 17 years old. The relationship lasted for four months. He felt loved and appreciated like a real girl. However, the relationship ended because of a lack of communication, as she stated. It was difficult for him to recover from that experience, but, according to him, he managed to move on with the help of his friends.

He first had his sexual encounter at 15 years old. He did this to satisfy his curiosity. He believes that gays can have sex with real men because they tend to satisfy them even without paying them money.

Feelings about the Decision. Chantal is proud of being gay. He is happy because he can support his family financially because of his job as a beautician. Chantal is free to do everything he wants with no restrictions whatsoever. He wants

to be accepted as a functioning and productive member of society and stop discrimination among gay people.

Realization. Chantal seeks to be accepted as a functioning and productive member of the society and likewise hopes that discrimination on gay people shall stop. With this, he advises other gay people to show their real selves in order to become free and find happiness.

CASE # 9 - "KRIZZY"

Significant Events Influencing Sexual Orientation. Krizzy, a college student, is 19 years old and is the youngest among five siblings (four boys and one girl). His parents are still living together. He has a very close relationship with his mother. During childhood, he is more comfortable in the company of girls than boys, because for him, he too, is a girl. He loved to play *Chinese garter* and "*bahay-bahayan*" (playing house), where he was tasked to do the household chores.

His parents wanted to have a daughter after having three sons consecutively. Their wish was granted when finally, they had a girl, their fourth child, after years of waiting. However, their only girl became a lesbian. Since the participant is the *bunso* (youngest child) among the five children in the family, he expected to receive special attention just like other kids who are the youngest in the family. His parents gave all their attention to his sister. That is why when he was growing up, he kept wondering that if he became a girl, he would have been given the same attention as what his sister enjoys. This thinking persisted in his mind and was reflected in the way he moved and acted because he thought that if he were to act like a girl, he would get the attention he wanted from his parents.

Acceptance of Identity. Krizzy realized that he is gay when he was eight years old. He revealed his real personality to his mother, who was not surprised by his disclosure because, like the other participants in this study, Krizzy's acts and nuances were those of a gay person, admitting to his family that he was such no longer surprised them. His father, on the other hand, gave him the cold shoulder when he found out that he is gay. There are four boys in the family, so his father was disappointed with his revelation.

At 12 years old, Krizzy started cross-dressing because he envied his female friends. He wanted to wear what they wore. He loves fashion; he gets inspiration from famous fashion designers and makeup artists who are well-respected for their craft. This is one of the reasons why he decided to come out because he believes that being gay is not something to be ashamed of; that he can be successful one day just like his so-called "idols" in the fashion world.

Feelings about the Decision. Krizzy is happy about his decision to come out because he does not want to pretend anymore. He is proud and happy being gay. He can do everything he wants without limitations. Having lots of friends who love and accept him also makes him happy.

Realizations. Krizzy wants to become a fashion designer someday. That is his ultimate dream. He wants to undergo a sex change procedure because he wants to become a *real* girl. Krizzy's advice to those homosexual youth who are still hiding in the closet is to be themselves.

CASE # 10 - "CELINE"

Significant Events Influencing Sexual Orientation. Celine, 18 years old, is a college student. He is the second child among four siblings. Celine claims to have a stable relationship with his mother. He said that he could be open to his mother about his feelings and innermost thoughts. Celine, however, has a strained relationship with his father. He finds no chance to be close to him. For some reason, his father tends to be aloof and hostile towards him.

Celine has two sisters whom he regarded as his friends and playmates while growing up. He had very few boy playmates because he is more comfortable playing with girls. He loves to play *Chinese garter* and "*bahay-bahayan*" (playing house), among others. He started wearing girl's clothes when he was nine years old. Often, he would borrow his sister's dress and pretend that he was a real girl. Celine revealed that he enjoyed doing this because he felt in his heart that he is a real girl.

Acceptance of Identity. Celine realized that he is gay when he was seven years old. He realized that something was wrong with him because he seems to be more comfortable being with girls and like to do girly stuff. He first revealed his identity to his mother when he was 12 years old. His mother readily accepted him with open arms. When his mother told his father about him being gay, his father refused to accept him initially. He did not talk to him for four years. According to him, it was as if he did not exist. He felt his father rejected him.

As far as his siblings were concerned, they accepted him wholeheartedly. Most of his friends are gay; that is why it was no longer difficult on his part to reveal his true identity to his gay friends.

Celine had a same-sex attraction when he was 10 years old. He got infatuated with his classmate. He just loved staring at him whenever he was close by. At 13 years old, Celine had his first sexual encounter through the prodding of his gay friends for his so-called "baptism of fire." He felt odd and weird after his first sexual encounter.

He never felt the same again after that incident. As a result, he did not have any serious relationships. He claims that “boys will always be boys” (meaning men are by nature polygamous), and should not be taken seriously because he does not want to get hurt in the end.

Feelings about the Decision. Celine is happy being gay because he can express himself freely.

Realizations. Celine wants to adopt a child in the future. Just like the other participants in the study, Celine wants someone who will take care of him when he grows old. He wants to adopt a child; he has no plans of marrying a girl.

Summary of Interview Results

The following tables summarize the significant results of the interviews conducted, showing the categorization of data and the themes formed. The significant events in the life of homosexual youth that influenced their sexual orientation are presented in Table 1; Table 2 lists the milestones in personally accepting their sexual identity and in being accepted by their loved ones; their feelings when they came out are contained in Table 3; while Table 4 presents their realizations and their plans and dreams for the future.

Table 1
Significant events in the life of the participants that influenced their sexual orientation

CATEGORY	THEMES	NUMBER OF RESPONSES
Relationship with mother	Loving and supportive	10
Relationship with father	Physically absent	3
	Emotionally absent and has a negative image	7
Relationship with sisters	Very close attachment	8
	Better relationships with sister than with brothers	6
Gay history in the family	With gay relatives	7
Boy playmates	Few or no boy playmates	6
Girl Playmates	Prefer girl playmates	8
Toys and games	Prefer girls' toys	9
Crossdressing	Wear girls' clothes	9
Imitating female models	Act like a girl	5
Female identification	Cross gender identification	8
Childhood experiences	Bullied by classmates	5

Table 2
Acceptance of identity

CATEGORY	THEMES	NUMBER OF RESPONSES
Age of realization	Realization during pre-pubescence age (6 to 13 years old)	10
Age of coming out	Came out during pubescence age (10 to 13 years old)	10
To whom did they first come out	Came out to their female relatives especially to their mother	8
	To the sister	2
Reactions of mother	More accepting	10
Reactions of father	Initial refusal and reluctance	7
First same-sex attraction	During pre-pubescence age to early adolescence (10 to 14 years old)	8
First same-sex sexual experience	During high school days (13 to 14 years old)	7
First same-sex relationship	During high school days (14 to 17 years old)	6

Table 3
Feelings about decision

CATEGORY	THEMES	NUMBER OF RESPONSES
Happy being gay	Does the role of both male and female	6
	Wear girls' clothes	4
	Join beauty contests for gays	2
	No restrictions	3

Table 4
Realizations

CATEGORY	THEMES	NUMBER OF RESPONSES
Plans for the Future	Become a transgender	3
	To have a child	4
Advice to those hiding in the closet	Acceptance of sexual inclination	10

Overall, the results of the study showed (1) that realization among the participants occurred during their pre-pubescence age (6 to 13 years old), an age known in developmental psychology as the middle childhood period (Shaffer & Kipp, 2010). This particular outcome is consistent with earlier researches conducted in the United States (D'Augelli, 2002; D'Augelli & Hersberger, 1993; Dube and Savin-Williams, 1999; Rosario et al., 1996; Savin-Williams & Diamond, 2000) in terms of first awareness of homosexual tendency among gay boys, yet, it is worth noting also that the Chinese participants of Wong and Tang (2004) in their study realized that they were gay at around 16 years old; and (2) that coming out by the gay participants in the study occurred during pubescence age (10 to 13 years old), after their realization stage.

DISCUSSION

The participants in the study were asked regarding the significant events in their lives, and all were found to have loving and supportive mothers, resulting in their building very close relationships with their mothers. Due to this closeness and trust, it is to their mothers that they came out first later on.

The mother substituted the father as the parental model and source of identification for all participants in the study who described their mothers as having been the dominant figure at the home who are viewed as giving love and care to them, making decisions for them, carrying out discipline, and showing greater drive and involvement in their lives. This outcome is supported by a certified Filipino specialist in Developmental Psychology, Dr. Liane Peña Alampay, who is also an Associate Professor of Psychology and a member of the Psychological Association of the Philippines (PAP). Dr. Alampay was quoted in an article for having said the following:

"For gay children, who undoubtedly experience confusion, isolation, even rejection from others at some point in their lives, the positive regard of their parents is all the more important and can protect them. Research in family psychology shows that children who can "come out" to parents (especially the mothers) who support them and affirm their sexualities report fewer problems of depression and self-harm, feel more confident, have lower suicide risk, and experience greater well-being. Certainly, these are outcomes parents desire for their children.

"Parenting Gays" (Page 2)

On the other hand, the 10 gays in this study reported that their fathers were physically not around when they were growing up. Two of their fathers were working elsewhere while one of them died when he was young.

Aside from physical absence, the fathers of the participants tended to be likewise emotionally absent in the lives of their sons; i.e., their fathers were not close enough to their

sons to have any emotional connection. Further, some fathers even have a negative image in the minds of their sons because of their behaviors, such as being alcoholic and not working to support the family. This tendency of the fathers is explained in Armesto and Weisman (2001), where it was pointed out that the Philippine society is patriarchal with the power vested on the male members of the family, especially the fathers. Similarly, in this study, the fathers of the participants tended to refuse to accept their sons' sexual identity. The fathers' emotional responses include pity, sorrow, anger, worry, and blame. In some of the participants, their fathers stopped talking to their sons, and one even refused to provide support in the studies of the son. However, later on, the father-son relationship improved when the father broke the ice and started to communicate with his son by congratulating him on his high school graduation.

Additionally, the participants of this study showed a strong tendency in favor of their sisters over their brothers. The sisters were their friends and playmates from childhood until their adulthood. They shared the same toys, enjoyed the same games, and had similar clothing preferences. Such behavior is a possible affirmation to the research done in Bearman and Bruckner (2002), which suggested that less gender socialization in early childhood and pre-adolescence may lead to same-sex romantic preference or homosexuality. It was noted that the participants in this study had preference over their female siblings, relatives, and friends and lesser socialization with other boys in their childhood. Socialization refers to the process by which children acquire beliefs, values, and behaviors considered desirable or appropriate by their culture or society (Shaffer & Kipps, 2010). Thus, if a boy socializes less with other boys and more with girls, then what they would think as appropriate behavior would be that of the girls. This leads them to have effeminate behavioral patterns and personality traits.

On the other hand, these gay participants seemed to have strained behavioral patterns in their childhood; their brothers resented them for this. Some of the gay interviewees even said their brothers bullied them by calling them derogatory names such as "*bakla*" (homosexual).

The same bullying experiences, which served as stressors to some Filipino-American gays and lesbians, were cited in an exploratory study titled "Tomboys" and "Baklas": Experiences of Lesbian and Gay Filipino Americans (Nadal et al., 2013). The said study used focus groups (N=24) with lesbian and gay Filipino-Americans on both the East and West coasts of the United States. Findings indicated that religion, culture, and family expectations influenced one's ability to accept one's sexuality and that lesbian and gay Filipino-Americans experienced several psychological stressors as a result of balancing their multiple identities. Participants described the types of racism they experienced in the Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual-Transgender community, as well as the heterosexism they faced in their families and their ethnic communities.

Significantly, in this study, 7 out of the 10 homosexual participants have other relatives who are also gay or lesbian, an indication that homosexuality runs in the family. As suggested

in Byne and Patsons (1993), Bailey et al. (1993), Hamer, et al. (1993), biology and genetics can be a possible cause of homosexuality. However, this proposition requires more investigation and research because it is hard to tell whether or not the genes or a person's social learning (imitation) leads to other members of the family becoming gay as well.

Meanwhile, part of gender identification by children is the kind of toys and games they prefer. The participants showed a definite preference to play with dolls (Barbie), role play cooking (*lutu-lutuan*), jackstones, and *Chinese garter*, not conforming to the supposed "appropriate" toys and games for them. While some research had shown that childhood gender non-conformity could be one of the most significant predictors of homosexuality in adulthood (Bailey & Zucker, 1995), one psychologist who acted as a resource person (Dr. Camille Garcia) in the daily morning show, *Good Morning Club*, posited a different view when she said:

"Others may say that doing something effeminate is already a sign of gayness like playing with female toys, being effeminate in some ways, etc. Remember the child, at this age, does not know the girl-boy gender yet."

Also, cross-dressing during childhood and adolescence is another measure of feminine identification early in the lives of male homosexuals. In the case of the participants, their cross-dressing was only done occasionally for some and consistently for the others, which they carried on in their adult lives.

Some of the participants' growing up years were marked by "bullying" perpetrated by boys of the same age. These gays were teased by other people who called them derogatory names like "bakla" (a local term for gays). Some bullies even went as far as imitating their actuations like swaying of the hips or their unique speech patterns and pronunciation. Such bullying could lead to emotional adjustments and distress or health issues on the part of the participants, as revealed in two University of Arizona studies (Russell, Ryan, et al., 2013) on bullying, which showed the long term effects on children of such action. The first study explored the impact of bullying on gay and lesbian youth and found bullying to be related to health and adjustment differences among these teens later in their lives. Ninety percent of the respondents in the Family Acceptance Project Report in Russell and Ryan (2013) said that the word "gay" was used to refer to them offensively; 85% reported being verbally harassed because of their sexual orientation, while 44% reported being physically harassed because of their sexual orientation. The second study on "Bullying of Gender Nonconforming Teens" showed that 66% of the teens reporting verbal harassment at school, while 33% reported physical harassment at school. Another study in Finland found that having been bullied by age eight was linked to anxiety 10 to 15 years later. Additionally, two studies from the United Kingdom also found adverse effects of bullying for homosexual adults, with some of them showing higher depressive symptoms later while others who were bullied longer showed more stress symptoms.

Coming out, as defined earlier in this research, refers to accepting oneself as gay, lesbian, or bisexual, and to integrate this sexual orientation into the spheres of one's life. Coming out starts with the self, and then, later on, the decision about telling other people is made.

Filipino gays tend to come out early because of the kind of family system that exists in the country, i.e., tightly knitted family dynamics make the coming out process much smoother. In Filipino culture, family members are accepted for who they are and whatever they are. Research had shown that adolescents from highly supportive families tend to come out at a younger age because of their higher self-esteem, greater feelings of security in terms of their relationships with family members, and a more positive attitude about their sexual orientation (Beaty, 1999). Thus, this strong parental and familial support helps Filipino gays reduce the personal and social conflict that plague many homosexual youths during this challenging period, making coming out easy for them.

Most of the participants came out to their mothers first. This is consistent with numerous studies pointing out that gays disclose more often to their mothers than to their fathers (D'Augelli et al., 1998; Remafedi, 1987; Savin-Williams, 1990). Compared to fathers, mothers typically have an advantage whereby they usually interact more with their children, and their children trust them so much (Boon & Miller, 1999). Because of this closeness and interpersonal trust, gays tend to come out first to their mothers.

After their mothers, gays tend to open up to their sisters and later their brothers. At first, their siblings were reluctant to accept their sexual orientation, but later on, they embraced their sexual preference. Just like the parents, they already have an idea that their brother is gay; that is why it is easier for them to accept it. Sometimes, they partially accept them with some conditions. For example, they can be gay, but they cannot cruise and have sex with other guys, just like in the case of Diana in this study.

The saying "Birds of the same feather flock together" is very true for gays. Being gay is easier if friends are accepting, loving, and understanding. Thus, gays prefer gay friends. The interviewees claimed that gay friends are better because they know what they feel, and are also experiencing what they are experiencing. So their gay friends are a vital source of support and love.

During their physical and psychological maturity, a majority of the homosexual men become aware at an early age of their "different" romantic and sexual inclinations. In the present study, the participants had their first same-sex attraction during their pre-pubesence age to early adolescence (10 to 14 years old). As soon as they realized that they are gay, they started to get attracted to other boys. Some even realized that they are gay because of this.

They had their first same-sex sexual encounters during their high school days (13 to 14 years old) or adolescence period. Soon after getting attracted to other boys, gays started to have the same sexual encounters or sexual relations. They had their first sex with other guys at the age of 13 to 14 years old.

Based on this study, sexual practices of gays begin relatively early in their lives. At this age, the sexual contact most often includes mutual masturbation with another male, *fellatio* (oral sex), and anal intercourse. The participants recounted that during this period, their homosexual practices became more intense and pervasive. There is usually a multiplicity of partners with “one night stands” who are picked up by gays through cruising (*libut-libut*) parks and other public places to look for sexual partners. The participants likewise mentioned having a short-lasting relationship, and this is reported in the next theme or category.

One of the reasons why gays engage in sexual contact at an early age is because of the influence of their gay friends, which was especially true for the respondents in this study. They were encouraged by their gay friends to do it, and it was even their gay friends whom they did it with. Later on, these friends were their companions when they are cruising public places to look for potential sexual partners.

They had their first same-sex relationship around the ages of 14 to 17 years old. Most of their boyfriends are also their classmates or friends. They were happy when they were in the relationship because they enjoyed the feeling of belongingness and love. So, they come out early, and they also engage in a same-sex relationship early as well.

In the United States and other parts of the world, gays are considered minorities. They are often targets of ridicule, victimization, and discrimination in a variety of settings (Corrigan & Matthews, 2003; Savin-Williams, 1994; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). This sometimes happens in the Philippines, yet, the majority of gays in the country consider themselves happy.

All of the respondents said that they are happy being gay because they can be androgynous, meaning they may not fit cleanly into the typical gender roles in the society that are specific for a man or a woman. Thus, they can be either. They can do the roles of men or of women as well as their behavioral patterns and personality traits making them very flexible. They can wear girl clothes. They are also happy because they can do cross-dressing openly. They wear clothes customarily worn by girls or women such as skirts, blouses, high heels as well as accessories and makeup as part of their cross-gender identification.

One of the indications that homosexuality is accepted or tolerated in the country is the proliferation of *Miss Gay* contests everywhere. The respondents asserted that joining beauty contests is the pinnacle or ultimate expression or freedom of being gay because this is where they exhibit their beauty, talents, and intelligence. They even said that one is not gay if he has not joined a *Miss Gay* competition in his life.

Transgender people are people who identify as members of the opposite sex to that assigned at birth and the desire to live and be accepted as such. Three of the participants of the study want to have a sex realignment surgery so that they will become women because they think they are “women” trapped in a man’s body. They are not contented with just cross-dressing, so they want to have an operation to have breasts, vagina, as well as hormone replacement therapy to have a woman-like body.

Surprisingly, despite their previous statements about their sexual orientation, the majority of the respondents want to have a child of their own. It does not matter if the child is adopted, a relative, or of their own. They have this desire because they do not want to grow old alone. They feel that their child will take care of them in their old age.

Just like what they did, outed gays are suggesting and advising closeted gays to come out of the closet. They are saying that once one accepts himself as gay, that is the time that other people will accept him for who he is.

To address the concerns of homosexual youth, guidance counselors must develop an appropriate program that would cater to the peculiar needs of homosexual youth, such as gender identity and self-awareness, among others. One possible program may be a mentorship program. Guidance counselors may invite successful and well respected gay students in the mentorship forum to allow young gays to interact with mature gays who are better established, well respected, and achievers in their fields. This provides a good model for young gays to emulate.

In addition to that, a value formation seminar must be conducted by the guidance office of academic institutions to homosexual youth as one of the findings of the study revealed the alarming sexual promiscuity of gays at such an early age. Moral values must be instilled in the minds of gays that such promiscuity is not suitable for them, mainly for health reasons as well as the scientifically proven effects of such behavior on their physical, psychological, moral, spiritual, and emotional make up.

It would also be helpful to initiate a program for community education through forums, parent workshops, and written materials. These have the potential to socially construct a new meaning about family identity for all parents and families, thereby establishing the normative coexistence of being gay or raising a gay adolescent along with other roles inherent in parenting and family experience. This will also help parents support their sons, who had revealed their true sexual identity without the feeling of shame, guilt, and disappointment.

The Emerging Paradigm

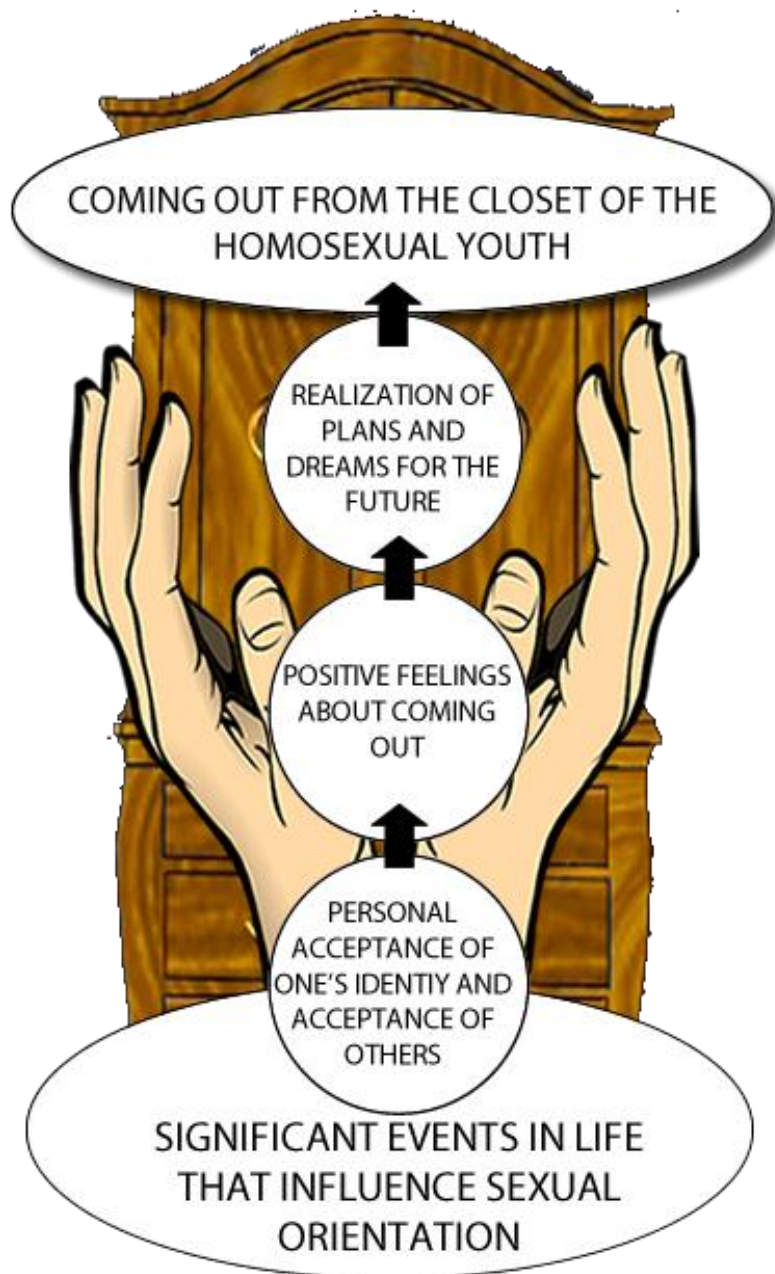
Figure 1 encapsulates the *Coming Out* process of homosexual youth from the time they experience significant events in their lives that influenced their sexual orientation.

The dynamism of familial relationships was found among homosexual youth to have facilitated their *coming out*. These include a strong mother-son bond, a physically and emotionally absent father, a closer relationship with sisters compared to the brothers as well as a gay history in the family.

Most of the participants of the study tended to exhibit quite early their cross-gender identification as well as cross-gender behavioral patterns, which are related to homosexuality. This was a manifestation of their acceptance of their identity as well as the acceptance of such sexual orientation by others. Some of these include feminine identification, preference for girl playmates and girl toys and games, childhood cross-dressing, and emulation of female role models.

The *coming out* process experienced by the participants was deemed easier, bringing about positive feelings and bringing to the fore the realizations of their plans and dreams for the future.

The hand in the paradigm signifies the events, personal and other people's acceptance, positive feelings, and realizations of plans and dreams toward the eventual "coming out from the closet" of the homosexual youth. In perspective, these factors have pushed the hands of the homosexual youth to finally open the closet and face the possible reactions and criticisms of society.



**Figure 1. Emerging Paradigm:
The Coming-Out from the Closet of the Homosexual Youth**

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